



Telecentre Leaders Forum Amman, 15 and 16 July 2009

Preliminary Information Note

1. Background

In late 2006, the five UN Regional Commissions (RCs) launched a United Nations Development Account project entitled "Knowledge Networks through ICT Access Points for Disadvantaged Communities (KN4DC)". Related activities were planned to take place over a period of 3 years ending in 2009. The main objective of the project is to empower disadvantaged communities by transforming selected ICT access points/telecentres into knowledge hubs that are networked at the regional and global levels. This objective will be reached by providing, developing, organizing, sharing and disseminating knowledge pertinent to targeted communities in key areas of sustainable development such as employment, education, gender and health.

ESCWA and other RCs have already implemented the following project activities: (a) Review and assessment of ICT access points in various regions of the globe; (b) Developing a detailed implementation plan for the project; (c) Holding regional stakeholder meetings to discuss with selected access points the various activities of the project; (d) Preparation of regional and global strategies covering the transformation and networking process; (e) Preliminary design and implementation of a regional knowledge-based portal; and (f) Training key telecentre staff on transforming access points to knowledge hubs and their networking.

The next planned activity, subject of this information note, is a forum that will assemble representatives from the aforementioned telecentres and from regional and global telecentre networks that share similar objectives. To maximize the reach of this forum, a partnership was formed between ESCWA, Telecentre.org, World Links, the Jordanian Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and the Egypt ICT Trust Fund to organize and implement the Telecentre Leaders Forum.

2. Objective

The main objectives of the workshop/forum are: (a) to convene telecentre practitioners, network leaders and support organisations in order to build functional relationships that will lead to the foundation of new or the strengthening of existing telecentre networks; (b) to share and highlight individual telecentre activities and experiences that may be beneficial to other telecentres; (c) to introduce participants to the ESCWA Regional Knowledge Portal as well as to similar online knowledge sharing tools that were developed by event partners; and (d) to address the sustainability challenges of individual telecentres and of knowledge networks.

3. Topics

The workshop will include presentations, panel discussions and hands-on training sessions. It will cover the following:

- An introduction to the ideas, concepts, aims and objectives of the KN4DC project and of the "Regional Knowledge Strategy" that was developed by ESCWA to ensure the sustainability of the project, mainly targeting participants who did not attend past KN4DC meetings and workshops;

- The various features of the Regional Knowledge Portal that has been recently developed by and is being hosted at ESCWA;
- Online sharing tools and mechanisms that help with the transformation of telecentres into networked knowledge hubs;
- Recent activities of participating telecentres that are relevant to the work and activities of telecentre communities and to knowledge networks at large;
- The challenges of and suggested solutions for the sustainability of telecentres and knowledge networks.

4. Expected outcome

The main outcome of the forum will be the wider exposure of telecentre leaders participating in the KN4DC project to the ideas and concepts of similar regional and global initiatives. This exposure will lead to the widening of a pilot regional knowledge network that was created during the project and its possible merger with similar regional and global networks, the ultimate goal being its sustainability beyond the lifetime of the ESCWA-led project.

5. Participants

The workshop will be attended by key staff of ICT access points which were identified in an earlier phase of the project. It will also include telecentre leaders from telecentre networks selected by event partners.

6. Venue and dates

The two-day workshop will take place on 15 and 16 July 2009 at the Jordanian Ministry of Information and Communication Technology in Amman, Jordan.

7. Language

The main working language of the workshop will be Arabic. English may be used as a second working language. Participants are expected to understand both languages as there will be no simultaneous translation.

8. Additional information

Enquiries and requests for additional information should be addressed to:

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