



**Preliminary Information Note**  
**Workshop on the Management and Sustainability of Knowledge Hubs**  
**Project: Knowledge Networks through ICT Access Points for Disadvantaged Communities**

## **1. Background**

Launched in mid-2006, the United Nations Development Account project entitled "Knowledge Networks through ICT Access Points for Disadvantaged Communities" is currently in its final stages of implementation. Led by ESCWA and co-jointly managed with the other UN Regional Commissions, its main objective is to empower disadvantaged communities by transforming selected ICT access points/telecentres into networked knowledge hubs. By providing, developing, organizing, sharing and disseminating knowledge in areas of sustainable development that include employment, education, gender and health, the project will improve the living standards of the targeted communities.

Past project activities have included: (a) The review and assessment of ICT access points; (b) The development of a detailed implementation plan; (c) The selection of ICT access points and planning project activities; (d) The preparation of regional and global strategies on the transformation and networking process; (e) The design and implementation of a knowledge network portal; and (f) Workshops aiming at building the capacities of telecentre managers.

The next planned activity, subject of this information note, is the "Workshop on the Management and Sustainability of Knowledge Hubs". Scheduled to take place in Khartoum between 11 and 14 January 2010, it is being organized in collaboration with the Sudanese telecentre that is participating in the project, namely the Gedaref Digital City Organization.

## **2. Objective**

The main objectives of the workshop are: (a) To bring together telecentre managers from various parts of the ESCWA region in order to establish or consolidate relationships that will lead to the strengthening of knowledge networks; (b) To familiarize telecentre managers with concepts and methods that are relevant to the goals of the project; (c) To train telecentre managers on the establishment and management of small business ventures with a particular emphasis on the creation and sustainability of knowledge hubs.

## **3. Topics**

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

- A short introduction to the ideas, concepts, aims and objectives of the project targeting participants who did not attend past meetings and workshops;
- A training course on the management of small businesses that include sessions on planning and scoping, scheduling and time management, budgeting and cost management, quality management, human resource management, procurement management and risk management;
- A session that introduces the ideas and concepts of entrepreneurship with emphasis on the creation and funding of micro businesses in disadvantaged communities;

- The activities of participating telecentres with special attention paid to telecentres that are attending their first project-related event.

#### **4. Expected outcome**

The main outcome of the forum will be the introduction of small business management concepts to telecentre managers who are participating in the project. In turn, telecentre managers are expected to transfer this newly acquired knowledge to potential small entrepreneurs in the project's target communities. Another outcome would be the selection of a regional knowledge network secretariat that will help ensure the sustainability of knowledge networks beyond the lifetime of the project at hand.

#### **5. Participants**

The workshop will be attended by the managers of telecentres which are part of the "Knowledge Networks" project.

#### **6. Venue and dates**

The four-day workshop will take place between 11 and 14 January 2010 at the Sudan Academy of Sciences in Khartoum, Sudan.

#### **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**

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