Capacity Building Workshop on Measuring the Use and Impact of ICT on Social and Economic Development in the Arab Region
Tunis, Tunisia, 17-18 December 2013

Information Note

1. **Background**

As ICT infrastructure developed and its use became widespread, the potential impact of these technologies on individuals, businesses, governments, communities and socio-economic development in general became apparent. To fully benefit from the advantages of ICT, statistics should be collected and analysed.

In order to ensure that these statistics would be available, measuring the use of ICT and its impact became paramount. A list of common core ICT indicators, developed by the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, was adopted, allowing for the collection of data on ICT infrastructure; access and use of ICT by households and individuals; use of ICT by businesses; the ICT sector; trade in ICT goods; ICT in education; and ICT use in government. Through these indicators, it became possible to measure the accessibility and availability of ICT, a necessary step towards assessing the progression towards the information society.

With time, however, the maturity of ICT infrastructure gave rise to demands for improved usability and effective ICT services, leading to initial developments in e-services specifically e-government and e-commerce. The fast and continuous growth and development of ICT brought to light the need to understand the use and impact of ICT to develop improved and accessible services.

As the information society gives way to the knowledge society and economy, the focus shifts toward the added value of products and processes. As individuals and communities become increasingly knowledgeable, they demand better governance and expect even better services from the government and industry.

Determining the use and impact of ICT makes it possible to understand the effectiveness of ICT initiatives and projects that have been undertaken. The manner in which recipients use ICT, and the impact that they experience reveal which initiatives are successful or have failed, and more importantly the reasons for the success or failure. Understanding the use and impact of ICT, whether negative or positive, could assist in the development of improved services and initiatives tailored to the needs and expectations of various target groups, especially youth.

Measuring the use and impact of ICT, specifically as it relates to the benefits experienced by various targeted groups, such as youth, or through its implementation as e-services, such as e-government, can be challenging. This is due to the nature of impact or the method of use which can be diverse, distributed, and contextual, making it challenging to quantify. However, in order to fully embrace the knowledge society and contribute to the knowledge economy, the need to understand the impact and use of ICT become more evident. Such an understanding will ultimately lead to improved services, tailor-made to the needs and priorities of individuals, thus moving into advanced stages of economic and social development at national and regional levels.
2. Objectives

The main objective of the workshop is to raise the awareness and build the capacities of relevant institutions in the region with regard to the understanding and application of ICT use and impact measurement. The workshop aims to examine available frameworks and measurement models and build the capacity of member countries in utilizing them to assess and measure the use of ICT and its services, specifically e-government, as well as its impact, especially on Arab youth. By showcasing selected national experiences and practical examples, the workshop will facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned among participants. The result of these analyses is necessary to better understand the perspectives and developmental priorities of specific communities and groups so that targeted ICT initiatives and services can be created.

3. Topics

Following is a list of topics that will be discussed during the course of the workshop:

(1) The importance and challenges of ICT use and impact assessments for economic and social development of countries in developed and developing countries.
(2) The identification and application of measurement models that could provide insight into ICT use and impact on ICT application especially e-government and e-commerce.
(3) The measurement models that could provide insight into ICT impact on employment and youth.
(4) Country level presentations illustrating examples of ICT impact assessments, as well as best practices and lessons learned in the area.

ESCWA will present during this workshop its latest related studies: "Impact of selected e-services on socio-economic development" and "Impact of ICT on Arab youth”.

4. Outcomes

The workshops expected outcomes are:

(1) Build a better understanding, among countries of the region, of the recommended ICT use and impact measurement models.
(2) Enhanced capacity of member countries to assess and measure the use and impact of selected e-services, mainly e-government and youth related issues on their social and economic development.
(3) Enhanced capacity to understand and apply the results of measurement in future formulation of policy and strategy and in the developments of ICT services that meet needs and priorities of citizens of the region.

5. Participation and registration

Participants in the workshop will include representatives from ICT ministries, government institutions and agencies in charge of developing the information society, academia, National Statistical Offices (NSO), as well as decision-makers in the ICT sector.

Participants are requested to register for the workshop by filling out the registration form and returning it by email, to escwa-ictd@un.org and dimassi@un.org before [22 November, 2013].
6. **Organization, format, venue and dates**

The workshop is organized by the ICT division at ESCWA and in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies (MINCOM) in Tunisia. It will be held during 17-18 December 2013 at the Carthage Thalasso Resort in Gammarth, Tunisia.

It will include a number of specialised and general presentations, case studies from selected ESCWA member countries on the above topics, as well as discussion sessions focusing on measuring the impact of ICT.

7. **Working language**

Arabic and English are the working languages of the workshop; *simultaneous interpretation between both languages will not be provided.*

8. **Travel and accommodation**

All participants are expected to inquire on their visa requirement to Tunisia and secure one ahead of their anticipated travel date.

ESCWA will cover the travel and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) of one participant from invited organizations in selected countries, especially those coming from least developed countries.

9. **Additional information**


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