Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

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KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS THROUGH ICT ACCESS POINTS IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

By

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Knowledge Networks through ICT Access Points in Disadvantaged Areas

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Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Knowledge networks through ICT access points for disadvantaged communities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementing partners</td>
<td>ICT Division at all UN Regional Commissions (ECA, ESCAP, ECLAC, ECE and ESCWA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead agency</td>
<td>ESCWA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>36 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>September 2006 – March 2010 (6-month extension)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>United Nations Development Account</td>
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Objectives

To empower poor and disadvantaged communities, women in particular, through transforming selected existing ICT access points into knowledge hubs of global knowledge networks, providing, developing, organizing, sharing and disseminating knowledge pertinent to these communities.

Predecessor projects

- **Multipurpose Technology Community Centre (MTCC):**
  - Telecentre in rural/disadvantaged area
  - Partnership with NGOs and local municipalities
  - North Lebanon (Akkar) and Yemen (Taiz)

- **Smart Community Project (SCP):**
  - Coupling of MTCC and an agro-food processing unit (dairy products, coffee processing, etc.)
  - Iraq (Altun Kopri in the north and Sayid Dikhil in the south), Syria (Qusaybeh in the south west), Yemen (Hadrán, Bani Matar)
Disadvantaged Communities:
Communities in underserved areas, both urban and rural, that include the following target groups:
• Women
• Disabled
• Unemployed
• Poor
• Youth
• Elderly
• Immigrants
• Micro-enterprises

ICT Access Points:
Centres that provide citizens with access to technology and to the Internet

Telecentres:
Centres that use ICT for community development (i.e. employment, poverty reduction)
Disadvantaged Communities: Communities in underserved areas, both urban and rural, that include the following target groups:

- Women
- Disabled
- Unemployed
- Poor
- Youth
- Elderly
- Immigrants
- Micro-enterprises

ICT Access Points:

Telecentres:
ICT access points that acquire, organize and disseminate knowledge directly related to socio-economic development.

Knowledge Hubs:
ICT access points that acquire, organize and disseminate knowledge directly related to socio-economic development. They also:

- Facilitate the creation and dissemination of knowledge on socio-economic development.
- Build a reservoir of knowledge on topics relevant to the community’s needs (e.g., agriculture, fishing, etc…).
- Provide value-added services to the community, beyond communications.
- Help people find employment, enhance job efficacy and improve quality of life.

Knowledge Networks:
Decentralized structures that promote cooperation between knowledge hubs via a virtual space such as an Internet-based portal. They aim at knowledge sharing and bridge local and global knowledge. They are facilitated by knowledge managers.

Help people find employment, enhance job efficacy and improve quality of life.
Project Structure

Global Knowledge Network

ESCWA

ESCAP*

ECLAC

ECA

* ESCAP handled the operations of ECE in this project.

Access Points in the ESCWA Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Nb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian Arab Republic</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KN4DC project
Relationship to the MDGs (1/2)

- Goal 8 of the MDGs, which includes “accelerated transfer of technology and improved employment opportunities for the growing ranks of young people in the developing world."

  - Target 8.F “In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.”

Relationship to the MDGs (2/2)

- MDG 1: Promoting employability, job creation and entrepreneurship
- MDG 2: Dissemination and use of e-learning applications
- MDG 3: Access to education, health services, jobs and political participation
Strategy - Global/Regional Level

- Promoting bilateral, regional and international cooperation in the areas of ICT access centres and community development by establishing a network of activists, actors and policymakers

- Creating global/regional knowledge platforms for learning, sharing experiences, and exchanging best practices

Strategy – Community Level

- Revitalizing and enriching selected ICT access points by enhancing their services and knowledge management capabilities

- Networking selected ICT access points to share experiences and best practices

- Activating and promoting the engagement of beneficiaries at the community level in the services offered by the established knowledge hubs

- Promoting the engagement of knowledge hubs with partners from their respective communities, schools, hospitals, and other entities

- Developing and promoting value-added services of ICT access points to better serve local communities

- Developing, developing, organizing, sharing and disseminating knowledge pertinent to communities

- Compiling and publishing success stories on project Websites
Main Activities of the Project

- Review and assessment of existing ICT access points
- Setting a global framework and detailed implementation plan
- Transformation of access points into knowledge hubs
- Activating knowledge hubs and engaging beneficiaries
- Implementation of global/regional networks
- Launching knowledge networks amongst stakeholders
- Project evaluation and feedback

Progress (1/7)

- Inception meeting at the UN House in Beirut during November 2006 attended by focal points from all five regional commissions.
- Recommendations included:
  - Strengthening and networking existing knowledge hubs;
  - Making use of regional meetings to create regional networks;
  - Development of implementation plans at the RC level.
Progress (2/7)

- Regional reviews and assessments that:
  - Assessed existing community ICT access points and the communities they serve
  - Indicated priority areas of service while highlighting best practices for each priority area
  - Identified operational models for sustainability and required resources as well as the role of governments and potential partners
  - Investigated the relationship between ICT and socio-economic development in the region
  - Described successful multi-stakeholder partnerships and governance schemes for ICT access points and proposed business models
  - Suggested priority areas where telecentres may have strongest local impact

Progress (3/7)

- Global review and assessment that:
  - Consolidated the five regional assessment reports into one global report
  - Narrowed down the choices pinpointed by regional reviews and singled out recommendations that would be most feasible for the successful implementation and sustainability of regional and global knowledge networks
Progress (4/7)

• Regional stakeholders meetings that:
  – Brought together the selected ICT access points
  – Made them aware of the purpose of the project and various activities and responsibilities
  – Discussed knowledge network strategies, possible mechanisms and tools for their implementation
  – Identified common concerns, activities and partnerships
  – Defined the role and tasks of the regional manager
  – Recommended the creation of a portal for networking

Progress (5/7)

• A global knowledge manager and four regional knowledge managers who:
  – Developed regional and global strategies for knowledge networking
  – Drafted strategies for upgrading ICT access points to knowledge hubs and networking them at the regional level
  – Prepared elements of regional plans of action for discussion with stakeholders, adoption and implementation
Progress (6/7)

- A portal that allows:
  - Telecentres to create Websites and disseminate information about their activities, locally, regionally and globally
  - The networking of knowledge hubs/access points at the regional and global levels
  - The creation of specialized discussion forums and communities of practice at the local, national, regional and global levels

Progress (7/7)

- Four workshops on knowledge sharing and networking that cover:
  - Regional knowledge strategy and its implementation;
  - Training of participants on knowledge management and marketing for serving the community;
  - Training of participants on using the portal;
  - Managing the knowledge hub as a small business;
  - Knowledge hubs for the disabled;
  - Networking and sharing knowledge at the regional and global levels.
Next Steps

2009 Implementation of regional and global networks

2010 Project evaluation

Thank you!
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