



UN-ESCWA

**Regional Stakeholders' Meeting on Knowledge Network Strategies,
Mechanisms and Tools
Beirut, 3-4 September 2007**

Information Note

1. Background

ESCWA is implementing the project, entitled "Knowledge networks through ICT access points for disadvantaged communities", as lead agency along with the regional commissions of the United Nations over a period of 36 months, starting in 2006.

The project is being funded by the United Nations Development Account, its main objective being to empower poor and disadvantaged communities, and women in particular, by transforming selected existing ICT access points/telecentres into hubs of knowledge and their networking at the national, regional and global levels. This will be accomplished by providing, developing, organizing, sharing and disseminating knowledge pertinent to these communities in key areas of sustainable development such as employment, education, gender and health.

So far the activities undertaken for the project have been the review and assessment of ICT access points in different regions, and a regional commissions' meeting that resulted in the development of a detailed implementation plan for transforming these access points into knowledge hubs and networking them. The aforementioned reviews were conducted by each United Nations regional commission and provided the basis for formulating the global review.

In each of the five regions, a first regional stakeholders' meeting is planned, as part of the second phase of the project, namely the implementation of regional and global networks.

2. Objective

The main objective of the meeting is to develop consensus among stakeholders in the ESCWA region on strategies, mechanisms and tools to make ICT access points evolve into knowledge hubs and build a regional knowledge network. The agreed strategies, mechanisms and tools will be implemented or used in the course of the project during the coming two years. For that purpose, the meeting will bring together managers and coordinators of ICT access points in the ESCWA region that have been identified as potential partners in the project and nodes in the knowledge networks to be established.

3. Topics to be discussed

The meeting will revolve around the design and implementation of recommended knowledge management and networking facilities, tools and services. Topics will include:

- Review of the Knowledge Networks Project with focus on the roles of various partners and stakeholders;
- Review of experiences regarding knowledge hubs and networks in and outside the region, including those related to community development based on telecentres and related resource facilities;
- Transformation of ICT access centres into knowledge hubs: Strategy, mechanisms and tools;
- Design and implementation of a pilot knowledge network.

4. Expected outcome

Participants will be expected to develop knowledge management strategies, coordination mechanisms and tools in line with the global framework of the project. This should ultimately result in participants identifying existing or new tools; commissioning the customisation of these tools and their implementation through consultancy and contractual services, and providing pilot business plans for the implementation of the knowledge hubs and networks.

5. Participants

The workshop will be attended by managers and coordinators of selected ICT access points and project coordinators from affiliated ministries/government agencies in the ESCWA region. The ICT access points have been identified as potential partners in the project in the review and assessment report carried out by ESCWA as prime candidates for transformation into knowledge hubs and nodes in the knowledge networks to be established.

6. Venue and Dates

ESCWA will be hosting the meeting from 3-4 September 2007 in Crowne Plaza Hotel, Hamra Street, Beirut.

7. Language

The working languages of the workshop will be Arabic and English. Simultaneous translation from Arabic to English and vice versa will be provided.

8. Additional Information

Any inquiries and requests for additional information should be addressed to:

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