

**Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)**

Capacity Building for Promoting Gender Equality in African Countries

AIDE-MEMOIRE

**Workshop on
Strengthening the capacity of national machineries through the effective use of ICTs**

Windhoek, Namibia
19 – 23 April 2004

1. Introduction

The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and the United Nations Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Task Force Secretariat within the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination (OESC) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) are collaborating in the organization of a meeting-cum-training workshop for representatives from thirteen national machineries for the advancement of women from countries in the Southern African region. The meeting-cum-training workshop will identify common strategies for institutional capacity-building for promoting gender equality through the effective use of ICT, and develop an e-based network of national machineries. The five-day meeting for senior representatives of the national machineries will include a two-day training workshop for expert representatives and for information managers/specialists from national machineries on the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) for knowledge management and information sharing. Participants from the United Nations Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Task Force are also invited.

The meeting-cum-training workshop will take place in Windhoek, Namibia, from 19 – 23 April 2004. The following countries will be invited to participate: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (13).

This meeting-cum-training workshop in Namibia is the first in the series of five such events the Division for the Advancement of Women is organizing for national machineries. The first meeting-cum-training workshop will develop the approach and methodology to be utilized in subsequent events.

II. Background

The project, entitled “Capacity-building for national machineries for the advancement of women in promoting gender equality in African countries”, has the overall objective to build institutional capacity for promoting gender equality in Africa. The meeting-cum-training workshop aims to strengthen the capacity of national machineries of participating countries to take full advantage of new information and communications technologies to strengthen networking, information sharing and knowledge management that will enhance their effectiveness in national policy-making and planning processes for gender equality.

The Beijing Platform for Action emphasized that national mechanisms for the

advantage of new information and communications technologies to establish and/or strengthen the types of networking, information sharing and knowledge management that will enhance their effectiveness in national policy-making and planning processes for gender equality. The creation of an e-based network of national machineries will enhance the effectiveness of national machineries within each country. It will serve as a tool to strengthen the capacity of national machineries to implement their mandates, for example, by supporting their work as advocates and catalysts for gender mainstreaming, as well as support the design and use of an adequate information infrastructure for the achievement of gender equality. The development of a website prototype for national machineries for the advancement of women will expand opportunities for networking and information sharing on common priorities.

The project will draw on the expertise of African professionals, including from the United Nations ICT Task Force.

III. Meeting-cum-

The meeting-cum training workshop will produce the following outputs:

- a) Common strategies for institutional capacity-building in use of ICTs will have been identified.
- b) Representatives from national machineries from thirteen countries will have been trained in the substantive and institutional aspects of use of ICTs;
- c) Information specialists from thirteen countries will have been trained in the technical aspects of use of ICTs;
- d) The prototype of a website for national machineries will have been designed;
- e) A framework for an e-based network of national machineries will have been developed.

Participants in the five-day meeting will convene in plenary as well as in working groups. Brief country presentations on current institutional set-ups, networking and use