

**Division for the Advancement of Women  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Capacity Building for Promoting Gender Equality in African Countries**

**AIDE-MEMOIRE**

**Panel on  
Strengthening the capacity of national machineries through the effective use of  
information and communication technologies**

Tunis, Tunisia  
18 November 2005

**I. Introduction**

The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), is organizing a panel on strengthening the capacity of national machineries through the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICT), to be held as a parallel event during the World Summit for the Information Society in Tunis, Tunisia in November 2005.

The panel will take place on 18 November 2005, from 3 to 5 pm in Conference Room Béja, Kram Conference Centre. The panel will draw on lessons learned from four sub-regional workshops and one regional meeting organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women for all national machineries in Africa during 2004 and 2005.

regional and international processes related to media and ICT issues, and enhance coordination among ministries responsible for ICT, national machineries for the advancement of women, the private sector and gender advocacy NGOs within countries.

The Declaration of Principles, adopted on 12 December 2003 at the World Summit on the Information Society, emphasized that the development of information and communication technologies provided enormous opportunities for women, who should form an integral part of, and be key actors in, the Information Society. Member States expressed their commitment to ensuring that the Information Society enabled women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. They agreed that gender perspectives should be mainstreamed into all sectors of development and ICT used as a tool to that end.

The panel is organized as part of the project “Capacity-building for national machineries for the advancement of women in promoting gender equality in Africa and Western Asia” that has the overall objective of building institutional capacity for promoting gender equality.

Within this project, four sub-regional workshops have been held in Africa, in Namibia, Senegal and Ethiopia (2) in 2004 and 2005 with the objective of developing 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 to enhance their effectiveness in national policy-making and planning processes for gender equality.

During these workshops, sub-regional lists of national machineries were established to encourage national machineries to use ICT to implement their mandates, for example, by facilitating exchange of information on advocacy and on working as catalysts for gender mainstreaming. The development of a website prototype for national machineries for the advancement of women was initiated to expand opportunities for information management and dissemination within the national context, as well as at sub-regional and regional levels.

At the regional meeting, held in Addis Ababa in September 2005, representatives of national machineries and ICT policy makers adopted a Declaration and a Strategic Framework for Further Advancing Opportunities for information

Panellists will:

- Highlight lessons learned and progress made in establishing national websites, national and sub-regional e-networks, and in utilizing ICT to support advancement of their goals, including by integrating gender perspectives into national ICT policies, including the status of implementation of national gender and ICT action plans;
- Emphasize the specific challenges that national machineries face as they use ICT in their work;
- Present the regional e-network of national machineries as well as the Declaration and Strategic Framework for Further Action, adopted at the meeting in Addis Ababa in September 2005.

The meeting will be conducted in English with interpretation into French.

**D. Contact persons**

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