ASSOCIATION FOR PROGRESSIVE COMMUNICATIONS[1]

HIGHLIGHTS FROM APC'S CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTATION OF WSIS GOALS
Prepared for the Communication on Science Technology and Development, 31 January 2011

APC's efforts towards achieving goals outlinsed in the Geneva Declaration and the Tunis Agenda have been focused generally in the following WSIS action lines:

- C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
- C2. Information and communication infrastructure
- C3. Access to information and knowledge
- C4. Capacity building
- C6. Enabling environment (policy)

With regard to the Tunis Agenda we have been active in the Internet Governance Forum and have worked towards the international management of the internet being "multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations".

APC engages in five interrelated areas: research, advocacy, network building, capacity development and strategic communications and outreach. The application of this approach, combined with our long standing prioritisation of linking 'practice' to policy advocacy, and linking local (through our network of national and programme members and partners) to regional and global work, makes APC's work unique.

Contributions in the following areas to implementation of the WSIS outcomes can be highlighted:

1.   WSIS ACTION LINES AND MONITORING OF OUTCOMES

a) The Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch)

In 2007 APC, in partnership with Third World Institute, and with HIVOS in 2008, launched an initiative called Global Information Society Watch. GISWatch is a space for collaborative monitoring of implementation of international (and national) commitments made by governments towards the creation of an inclusive information society, and for building national level civil society awareness of WSIS goals. It focuses on monitoring progress made towards implementing the WSIS action agenda and other international and national commitments related to information and communications. It also provides analytical overviews of institutions involved in implementation. Each year, GISW focuses on a different theme, all of which relate to the WSIS action lines – 2007 (participation), 2008 (access to Infrastructure), 2009 (access to information and knowledge), and an emerging theme in 2010, ICTs and environmental sustainability. http://www.giswatch.org/

2007 – Participation: http://www.giswatch.org/en/2007
2008 – Access to infrastructure: http://www.giswatch.org/en/2008
2009 – Access to online information and knowledge: http://www.giswatch.org/en/2009
2010 – ICTs and Environmental Sustainability: http://www.giswatch.org/en/2010

2.   UNIVERSAL AFFORDABLE AND OPEN ACCESS

a) *Catalysing Access to ICTs in Africa (CATIA)*

CATIA was a three-year project (2004 – 2006) to gain maximum benefits from the opportunity

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1   http://www.apc.org/

offered by ICTs and to act as catalysts for policy reform. APC, as the lead implementer for CATIA on African-led advocacy for ICT policy reform, supported six national advocacy processes in Africa. In the process, we developed a practice of how to support
national ICT policy advocacy campaigns.
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/accessibility/africa/catalysing-access-icts-africa-catia

b) Open access in Africa: EASSy, SAT-3/WASC research and advocacy

The "SAT-3/WASC post-implementation audit: Country case studies" was a large scale research project (*(2006-2007)* that documents the effect that the SAT-3/WASC submarine cable has had on communications on the African continent, as well as the opportunities
that have been missed and the reasons behind these. The overriding objective of the research was to identify and document both positive and negative lessons that can be learned from the development, implementation and management of the cable.
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/open-access-africa-eassy-sat-3-wasc-research

We also conducted to advocacy and capacity building events, one in Mombasa around the EASSy cable, with about 150 East African stakeholders from business, government, civil society, the media and regulators (March 2006) and one in Johannesburg with West African regulators on Sat 3.

c) Communication for influence in Central, East and West Africa (CICEWA) / Communication for influence in Latin America (CILAC – Andean Region)

CICEWA (*2008- 2010)* sought to identify the political obstacles to extending affordable access to ICT infrastructure in Africa and to advocate for their removal in order to create a sound platform for sub-regional connectivity in East, West and Central Africa. Participant action researchers brought an approach to ICT policy research, dissemination and advocacy through the building of sub-regional networks. They operated using the principle of multi-stakeholder partnerships developed through the CATIA experience to engage in evidence-based policy change. http://www.apc.org/en/projects/communication-influence-central-east-and-west-afri

CILAC (*2008 -2009)* built on the lessons of CICEWA and sought sought to integrate research, research communications, network-building and advocacy for affordable universal broadband i the Andean region. Research was undertaken to identify obstacles to universal affordable access to ICT infrastructure in the sub-region and a subregional. ICT policy advocacy network (AndinaTIC) was developed that disseminate research and undertakes advocacy on ICTD and access to infrastructure at the subregional level.
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/cilac

d) National Broadband Campaigns in South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana

*T*he project (2009 – 2010) was carried out to mobilise a number internet service providers (ISPs), communications workers, content providers, academics, alternative energy experts, a number of civil society organisations and private sector associations to advocate for affordable broadband access for all. Read more about the South African initiative at:
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/south-african-national-broadband-forum

e) Digital broadcast migration in West Africa: What's the dividend?

This project (2010) aims to work with civil society, broadcasters, policy-makers and regulators to produce the data and tools required to make informed decisions about the digital migration and the balance of costs and benefits they might choose. Research has been conducted in Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal and a comparison analysis with five countries where the digital transition is more advanced (Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda).
http://www.apc.org/en/news/whats-digital-dividend-west-african-digital-broadc

f) Open spectrum for development

APC's "open spectrum" initiative (2010) aims to provide an understanding of spectrum regulation by examining the situation in Africa and Latin America. The initiative looks at how spectrum is assigned, who assigns it and what policy or regulatory framework they use, as well as the issue of spectrum scarcity.
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/open-spectrum-development

g) GISWatch 2008

Access to infrastructure: http://www.giswatch.org/en/2008

3.   INTERNET GOVERNANCE

a) Participation in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

APC has been consistently committed to the development of the Internet governance forum (IGF) since its creation and see its as the most important international policy area aimed at improving the governance of the internet. At the IGF, APC advocates for policies and regulatory approaches that ensure a development agenda for internet governance, for increasing meaningful participation of women, and expresses its concern about the erosion and diminishing visibility of a rights-based approach to how the internet is governed.
 http://www.apc.org/en/projects/internet-governance-forum-igf

APC has displayed efforts to contribute to the process mainly by:
  • offering a civil society perspective of the issues to enrich the debate
  • supporting the structuring of the IGF programme
  • regionalising the IGF process by promoting and organising regional internet governance meetings in Latin America and Africa
  • organising workshops and pre-events

b) Code of good practice in access to information, public participation and transparency in internet governance

Working with the Council of Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to develop a Code of good practice in access to information, public participation and transparency for all bodies involved in internet governance in order to provide an element of public accountability with regard to internet governance institutions. The code builds on existing internet governance experience and the principles concerning internet governance which were adopted at the World Summit on the Information Society.
http://www.apc.org/en/pubs/research/code-good-practice-information-participation-and-t

3. ICTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

a) GISWatch 2010

ICTs and Environmental Sustainability: http://www.giswatch.org/en/2010

b) GreeningIT – ICTs, climate change and environmental sustainability

Through this initiative (2008 – ongoing), APC aims to address two critical challenges: *How do national ICT policy environments address ICTs, environmental sustainability and climate change?* and *How can ICTs be used more sustainably by ICTD practitioners, civil society organisations and service providers?* Action research at national level is undertaken to address both of these
questions, which aims to generate better understanding of the challenges facing us, especially in developing countries, in using ICTs sustainably (particularly in the context of climate change) and to identify gaps in the linkages between policies, standards and implementation.
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/greeningit-apc-icts-climate-change-environmental-s

The GreeningIT directory is an open online database of resources that focuses on the

intersection of ICTs and environmental sustainability. The directory aims to gather and present a comprehensive annotated list of initiatives, tools and online communities, featuring both innovative and traditional applications of ICTs to address climate change, environmental issues and the environmental impact of ICTs. http://www.apc.org/en/resources

c) ICTs and Water under a Changing Climate: Key Issues and Research Priorities

This research project conducted in Africa, Asia and Latin America (2011) will explore the potential of the integration of ICTs into efforts to address the impacts of climate change on water security.

APC is committed to placing sustainable development at the core of its thinking and practice. Accordingly, an emerging programme area focused on ICTs and environmental sustainability is being structured.

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5.   HUMAN RIGHTS, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

a) MDG3: Gender Equality - Using ICTs as a tool to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals

Take Back the Tech! (2006 - ongoing): During the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence each year, APC calls for everyone – especially women and girls – to Take Back the Tech! and reclaim technology for the fight against violence against women. Initiated in 2006, the campaign creates awareness on how ICTs are connected to violence against women, strengthens the ICT capacity of women's rights advocates, creates original and varied content and is building a community to strategise around eliminating violence against women through digital platforms. *The MDG3 - Take Back the Tech! to end violence against women (2009-2011)* aims to help women participants negotiate the fraught terrain of ICTs where freedoms go hand in hand with growing privacy and security concerns.
http://www.apc.org/en/projects/mdg3-take-back-tech-end-violence-against-women

b) EroTICs

EroTICs, an exploratory research, aimed to narrow the gap between political assumptions and a better understanding of content and "harm" based on women's real experience of sexuality online. Starting in 2005, the APC began to investigate issues related to sexuality and the internet especially in the context of content regulation and women's communication rights. Through a cross-country research, EroTICs answered to the question of *In what ways do internet and ICT policy shape the sexual practices of women living in different socio-political, economic and cultural contexts.* http://www.apc.org/en/pubs/research/erotics-first-findings

c) Internet rights are human rights – Monitoring and defending freedom of expression and association on the internet

This project (2011) will build understanding of the importance of freedom of expression and association on the internet as a pre-condition for people to exercise their civil and political rights. It will raise awareness of how increasing restriction of these freedoms undermine democratisation. It will engage global policy forums such as the Human Rights Council and the Internet Governance Forum to advocate these rights and influence global policy and regulation. National policy will be influenced through local advocacy led by local actors. It will build the long term capacities of human rights defenders to advocate for human rights on the internet, at national, regional and global levels, and promote the safe and effective use of the internet, through a programme designed to build long term capacity and support.