

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVED DURING THE DISCUSSION ON ROUNDTABLE "GENDER AND WSIS"

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro

Hotel Hyatt, 17 October 2003

The Round Table "Gender and WSIS" held in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro on 17 October 2003, organized by NGO "Equal opportunities" in cooperation with Ministry for Science and Technology Republic of Serbia and WSIS Gender Caucus and with participation from government, international organizations, NGOs and other players from info-communication sector:

reflecting: on global consensus and **reaffirming** commitments made at previous international conferences and summits, in particular, the UN World Conferences on Women, Beijing and Beijing +5 and the agreed conclusions on ICT and Women at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2003;

confirming Declaration and Recommendations approved by The Forum on ICT and Gender: Optimizing Opportunities held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, August 20-23, 2003,

having in mind Declaration from Pan European Preparatory Conference for WSIS, Bucharest 2002.

noting: that objectives of the Round Table are to increase awareness on the gender dimension in preparation for WSIS process,

further noting: that objectives of the Round Table are to draw attention of inclusion of gender perspective in all processes of preparation of National programmes for Information Society,

the participants of this Round Table **call upon** Government, Civil Society Organizations, Non Governmental Organization, Private Sector Entities, Research and Educational Institutions, Academia, Media and other stakeholders to recognize:

- That in the process of bridging the digital divide gender divide should be eliminated
- The importance of ICT as a tool to promote women's empowerment, rights and dignity and full participation in the information society
- That ICT offers immense possibilities for enhancing women's participation in socio-economic and political development that will reduce poverty and improve quality of life
- The potential of ICT to overcome women's isolation, give all women a voice and improve governance with a view to achieving gender equality.

The participants of this Round Table recommend:

a) to government:

1. To ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective and coordination of the gender activities in all domains of national ICT policies and legislation,
2. Support the creation of locally relevant and gender sensitive educational materials that uses local languages for use on the Internet and in other media,
3. Build ICT capacity of marginalized groups and provide ICT skills to young people,
4. Support programs that give instructors especially females the skills to effectively teach ICT skills and use ICT in education delivery,
5. To put in place favorable and enabling financial and procurement policies to assist women to establish and sustain SMEs, for poverty reduction,

6. Encourage the development of partnerships between and among governments, NGOs, private sector, corporations, community, academic institutions, and different stakeholders to promote ICT in SME and entrepreneurship development,
7. Provide affordable ICT assets, resources, and bandwidth to rural areas through regulations on obligations for universal access.
8. Ensure that State delegation for WSIS will have 30% of women members.

b) To state delegation for WSIS:

1. To include gender dimension in state statement for WSIS,
2. To support gender inclusion in WSIS Declaration and Action plan.

c) To UN and other International organizations in Serbia and Montenegro:

1. Support ICT capacity building for women to enhance their capability to transfer knowledge to different target groups.
2. Support the partnership with NGO's to prepare and held seminars, workshops and courses on gender mainstreaming in ICT sector.

d) To private sector:

1. Encourage the development of web content that is relevant and useful for women,
2. Strengthen ICT based networks,
3. Mobilize resources to invest in ICT for development with specific reference to the advancement and benefits for rural women like telemedicine.

e) To NGOs:

1. Encourage and organize the training of women to use ICT,
2. Encourage the training of women and children with disability and promote the application of Web-accessibility principles in Web design to have equal access to information,
3. Provide training on how to incorporate gender perspectives in planning processes in ICT projects, particularly for rural communities.

f) To media

1. To promote the benefit of ICT in improvement of human lives
2. To encourage women from rural areas to use ICT printing articles and broadcasting suitable programmes.
3. To promote the use of ICT in improving democratic processes and empowering the women in politics.