

WSIS Gender Caucus Call to Action adopted at The PrepCom I for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

The WSIS Gender Caucus is a multi-stakeholder group consisting of representatives of parliaments, national governments, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the United Nations system. The WSIS - Gender Caucus affirms its support for the WSIS and commits to work towards the expected outputs of the WSIS by sharing information and ideas on strategies for including gender equality goals and ensuring women's participation in the WSIS process and its outcomes including follow-up programmes.

The WSIS Gender Caucus believe that all stakeholders must take urgent action to ensure that gender equality and women's rights are integrated into the Summit and its follow-up programmes. Unless these actions are taken, there is a grave risk that the Summit will not succeed in its aim of creating a vision of the Information Society that contributes to human development.

We recognise the importance given to gender equality issues by member states and delegations, recalling the contributions of Canada, Denmark, South Africa and the European Union. We welcome the report from the UN-ECA on Bamako 2002, which acknowledged the insufficient attention paid to the concerns of women in the first regional preparatory conference.

We therefore call on all actors to include gender equality concerns and targets in every facet of the Summit - from policy and planning to action, monitoring and evaluation.

In particular we urge the decision-makers involved in planning the WSIS and its outcomes including follow-up programmes to:

- Commit to acknowledging gender equality and women's rights as a cross-cutting principle;
- Include women as leaders and decision-makers in all planning processes for the Summit;
- Facilitate and encourage participation of women as members of national delegations and representatives of civil society and business by setting targets for delegations to include at least 30% women including gender and ICT experts;
- Include in the theme of applications --design of ICT projects which take women's needs into account, for example by developing technology solutions suited to rural women, women in conflict areas, and applications that assist with the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- Develop projects that will collect and, analyze, appropriate gender specific data and reporting mechanisms to evaluate and monitor the impact of ICT developments on women and girls; and
- Implement an information dissemination campaign that includes a wide range of media such as radio, drama and print and variety of languages.

We invite all Governments, organisations and individuals to participate in and support the WSIS Gender Caucus.

For further information contact: secretariat-wsisgendercaucus@wougnet.org.

Website : www.wougnet.org/WSIS/wsisgc.html

Existing Organisational Members of the WSIS Gender Caucus

1. ABANTU for Development
2. ACWICT
3. African Connection Programme
4. AIS -GWG
5. AMARC-WIN
6. AMARC Africa
7. APC Africa Women's Programme
8. APC/WNSP
9. Association of YAM-Bukri
10. AQ Solutions
11. ENDA
12. GEEP
13. Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE)
14. ISIS-Manila
15. ISIS-WICCE
16. IWTC
17. ITU Working Group on Gender Issues
18. ITU Group on Gender Issues
19. FEMNET
20. MISA
21. NDIMA
22. Network of African Women Economists
23. South African Dept. of Communications
24. UNDP/SURF West Africa
25. UNIFEM
26. Unite d'appui au programme de la cooperation Canada-Malienne
27. University of Ottawa
28. WomensNet (SA)
29. WOUGNET
30. ZWRCN
31. Zimbabwe Ministry of Transport and Communications

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