

**WSIS Gender Caucus Call to Action adopted at
The African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on the
Information Society (WSIS)**

The WSIS Gender Caucus meeting at Bamako 2002 supports the WSIS and states that urgent action must be taken to bridge the gender digital divide.

We therefore call on all actors to include gender concerns and targets whenever ICTs are discussed – from policy and planning to action and evaluation.

We urge the following to plan, implement and evaluate programs and projects that address the gender digital divide:

- The UN system and agencies, including the ITU, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNESCO, UNECA
- African regional and sub-regional organisations including the ADB, ATU and OAU/AU
- National governments and public–sector bodies particularly policy making and national regulatory authorities involved in ICT sectors and in sustainable development
- African private sector and African entrepreneurs in the diaspora
- African Civil Society
- African research and academic communities
- Public, private and community media
- African women movements and organisations
- International partners and investors

The WSIS Gender Caucus identifies the following actions that must be taken by the involved stakeholders, agencies and institutions:

- A commitment to acknowledge gender concerns as a cross-cutting principle;
- Training and capacity building at all levels to increase gender awareness and to increase ICT skills among girls and women especially in the areas of science and technology;
- To ratify and implement conventions on women’s human rights;
- Include women as leaders and decision-makers in all policy making processes and at all levels of policy formulation;
- Use ICTs as a tool for women’s empowerment especially in the areas of health, education, trade, employment and other development arenas;
- Establish the appropriate gender specific data and reporting mechanisms to monitor the impact of policy and actions adopted;
- Design ICT Projects to take women’s needs into account, for example by developing technology solutions suited to the African context and the specific obstacles women face in accessing technology;
- Establish standards for fair participation by women in the ICT sector especially in ownership and control structures of the firms within the ICT sector;
- Increase the reach of ICTs to women in all sectors by using local languages and various media such as radio, drama and print;

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

Existing Members of the WSIS Gender Caucus

ABANTU for Development
ACWICT
African Connection Programme
AIS-GWG
AMARC-WIN
AMARC Africa
APC Africa Women's Programme
Association of YAM-Bukri
ENDA
GEEP
FEMNET
MISA
NDIMA
Network of African Women Economists
UNDP/SURF West Africa
UNIFEM
Unite d'appui au programme de la cooperation Canada-Malienne
WomensNet (SA)
WOUGNET
ZWRCN
Zimbabwe Ministry of Transport and Communications

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