



ACSIS

African Civil Society for the Information Society

NETWORK ON ICT4D

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PRESENTATION

The Representatives and Delegates of the African civil society organizations, participating in the **WSIS** process since the beginning, have felt the need to better organize themselves, in a light, smooth running and efficient coordinating mechanism. This became a prerequisite at this critical phase of the process, for an effective and dedicated action. After months of online discussion, the African Civil Society entities engaged and active during the First Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 2003 constituted their network – the **Africa Civil Society for the Information - ACSIS**, a Network with a non-profit aim;

The action domain being the use of Information and Communication Technology for African Development.

With support from the Economic Commission for Africa (**ECA**) and the government and people of Tunisia, the **ACSIS** official lunching took place in Tunis in April 2004. This launch was the realisation of a long-time dream of African civil society entities as was shared in the general civil society online forum of the African Information Society Initiative.

To better pursue its development goal, and in accordance with the objectives of the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, the African Civil society, based on Discussions carried on in its virtual plenary before, during and after the first phase of the WSIS, has moved ahead to an enabling phase in the Africa Information Society Initiative (**AISI**).

Motto

Information and Communication Technology for African Development: ICT4AD

Mandate:

ACSIS acts as an umbrella structure through which African Civil Society can influence policy and ensure that strategies and programmes enable the promotion of development: poverty alleviation, use of appropriate ICT for balanced development, participation of communities/civil society in policy and strategy development and the implementation of development initiatives.

ACSIS:

PROMOTES the views and interests of African CS to ensure that new and traditional ICT can be utilised for promotion of sustainable development and the formation of an Information Society based on social justice and human development;

ADVOCATES & LOBBIES for the development of comprehensive and inclusive ICT strategies to address the digital divide;

INFORMS CS generally on national, regional, continental and international deliberations regarding ICT for development policies, strategies and initiatives for the promotion of balanced development;

ADVISES national, regional, continental and international institutions on the needs and interests of African CS;

BUILDS CAPACITY: develops capacities and promote action-oriented dialogue on our key aims;

NETWORKS and PARTNERS with grassroots organizations, national, regional, continental and international institutions to develop and add value to existing policies and initiatives aimed at promoting ICT

Tasks:

The chief tasks of **ACSIS** include, among others:

Advisory

- Develop and add value to existing ICT policies, strategies and initiatives;
- Advise on ICT policies and strategies that advance the social, economic and political development of Africa and African communities;
- Co-ordinate and support African CS input/participation into a range of national, regional, continental and international ICT policies and programmes;
- Ensure African CS representation (as appropriate) on a range of ICT related commissions or bodies

Information

- Draft text, conduct research and collate information including drafting an African CS position document;
- Provide information in an accessible format (including research/analyses) on ICT policies, strategies, initiatives and best practice;
- Promote and disseminate information on the use of a range of ICT for the promotion of human development, to a range of stakeholders;

Advocacy & lobbying

- Participate, as appropriate, in conferences, seminars and other activities related to ICT in order to advocate on behalf of and inform African CS and other partner stakeholders;
- Policy formulation and development

Capacity Building

Develop human capacities and promote action-oriented dialogue in partnership with grassroots organizations, national, regional, continental and international Institutions

Partnerships & Networking

- Establish contact and partnerships with a range of stakeholders to enable the African CS to have input into policy formulation and implementation;

- Facilitate networking to enable the sharing of information, expertise and best Practices.

Organs

- 1- The General Assembly.
- 2- Cabinet
- 3- The Sub-Regional Co-ordination.
- 4- The National Co-ordination
- 5- The Executive Secretariat

Structure

ACSIS aims to be a very light, functional and efficient structure. Its inclusiveness approach makes the national focal points the critical actors at the grassroots level.

Membership

Membership is open to all organizations officially registered in their countries of origin as well as to any African willing to contribute to the use of Information and Communication Technology for African Development.

Virtual Forums

ACSIS relies heavily on discussions, ideas and exchanges of all members on its virtual Plenary. Members are permanently aware in contact through the virtual forum. The membership options to the list as well as message archives are open and transparent. At the moment, about five hundred (500) persons and organizations are using this list for active exchange, announcements, networking and learning. The address is

[Http://mailman.greenet.org.uk/mailman/listinfo/africa](http://mailman.greenet.org.uk/mailman/listinfo/africa)

Realizations

ACSIS has, beyond all reasonable doubt, demonstrated the strength of a network. In Keeping with its mandate of Civil Society promotion, advocacy, lobbying, information, training, advising, partnership, networking and capacity building, it has:

- Contributed largely to the official documents of the WSIS as well as the Civil Society Declaration;
- Contributed to a better functioning of the international Civil Society Bureau in the WSIS process by heading the Youth, Science and Technology, and Media caucuses;
- Hosted the International WSIS Civil Society Bureau on the African soil, being the very first time the international bureau met outside its traditional base of Geneva, in Switzerland;
- Hosted the Louder Voices Symposium on Internet Governance on the African soil, bringing the question home and giving the majority of African Civil Society entities the voice in the IG debate;
- Held bilingual (English and French) online consultations on the capital issues of ICT4D – Priorities, Internet Governance, and Finance;
- Conducted a training forum parallel to the Second Africa Regional Preparatory Conference for the Phase II of the WSIS;
- Co-organized a Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) Forum in the WSIS process;
- Organized a continent-wide preparatory forum dedicated to the issues in ICT for African development to kick start the Ministerial committee and the Africa Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Telecommunications Development Conference (Qatar 2006) and the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis 2005).
- During the 2nd Phase of the WSIS in Tunis, **ACSIS** made a declaration for the 4th plenary session of the Head of state and the Governments

We reaffirmed our commitment to continue to insure actively the promotion of the Principle declaration and the realization of the objectives declined in the Action plan adopted by the Head of state in 2003 in Geneva. And we recommended in United Nations, in our African Governments, as well as in the International Organizations:

- To involve completely the African civil society in the mechanisms of follow-up this will be set up for it after Tunis.

- · To support effectively the projects and the programs of the civil society relative to the information society.

Affiliation:

ACSIS is Member of:

- Board of Director for the Digital Solidarity Fund **(DSF)**
- International Civil Society Bureau,
- Advisors Internet Governance Group (ONU)
- Champions Network on ICT4D (**GAID**) (ONU)

Support, Collaboration and Partnership

ACSIS has received the trust, the support and the collaboration of the following, to which it wishes to also express its gratitude:

- The people and the government of Tunisia
- The people and the government of Guinea
- The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- The people and the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
- The people and the government of Ghana
- The people, the presidency and the government of Senegal
- The People and the Government of Congo Brazaville
- The People and the Government of Gabon
- The People and The Government of Egypt
- The People and the Government of Cameroon
- The People and the Government of Mali
- The People and the Government of Benin
- The People and the Government of Togo
- The Nigerian Communications Commission – NCC
- The Regional Council of Dakar
- The French National Institute of Telecommunications
- The United Nations’ Secretary General, Kofi Annan
- The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa – ECA
- The International Telecommunications Union
- L’Organisation Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie – OIF
- L’Agence Nationale des TIC au Cameroun (ANTIC)
- The United Nations ICT TaskForce

- UNESCO
- UNDP
- UNITAR
- The Digital Solidarity Fund – DSF
- The United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service – NGLS
- Heinrich Boell Stiftung
- The Global Alliance on ICT4D (GAID)
- The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN – CONGO
- The Global Knowledge Partnership – GKP
- The Association for Progressive Communication – APC
- The International Conference Volunteers – ICV
- The United Nations Online Volunteers – UNV

Non-exhaustive list.

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