

Final Report
ICT Track Workshop of Helsinki Process
Cairo, Egypt
13-14 September 2006

The ICT Track Workshop of Helsinki Process was held in Cairo, Egypt on 13-14 September 2006 gathering 32 experts from 10 countries of the Friends of HP.

The Workshop was inaugurated by H.E. Ambassador Hagar Islambouly, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt who stressed in her statement on the significance of building a sound partnership in ICT within the Helsinki Process as a very important area for cooperation within the Process. Her Excellency noticed that deliberations of the workshop focusing on e-learning, e-health, and e-content will have to contribute largely in addressing the challenges facing development in its wider scope and represent a successful model for cooperation on the international level. Realizing the commitments out of the World Summit on Information Society, held on two phases (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005), Her Excellency observed that it is imperative for the recommendations out of the Workshop to fully reflect the desire of the Friends of Helsinki to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society. Her Excellency pointed out to the need to have a concrete plan of action for future cooperation in the selected three areas in a way that could bring Friends of Helsinki much more closer in ICT sector, and present a model of partnership on the international level.

H.E. Ambassador Hannu Halinen, Ambassador of Finland to Egypt referred to the identification of ICT and digital divide within HP countries as one of the main issues to be tackled globally, and noticed that through the ICT Workshop, the Friends of Helsinki would not only touch the core of the Process but also the core of development problems of our world. He noticed that ICT has been the major enabler for the development of modern global economic processes and social transactions, and pointed out to the need to deal with the issue of connectivity which remains a problem in most of the developing countries as well as the issue of the digital divide that exist in rural and poor communities, among special groups of people and between women and men.

Mr. Omary Mjenga, Tanzania's National Secretary of the Helsinki Process Secretariat gave an expose of the pace of the HP touching on the different milestones for the years 2005 and 2006. He noticed that as we endeavour together to make globalization work and benefit all, we should recognize that the work is still far from done, and there is a need to play our part to ensure that globalization creates equal opportunities for all people in the world regardless of their race and origin.

Ms. Ghada Howaidy, Director of International Relations in the Ministry of Communication & Information Technology of Egypt made a presentation on the "Background Document" informing of the prospects of future cooperation and partnership in ICT among Helsinki Friends in e-learning, e-health and e-content.

Ms. Howaidy focused on the mission of HP-ICT Track as to draft an applicable and effective plan of action among the Friends of Helsinki in order to:

- Move from principles to actions in building the global information society.
- Explore the potential of all stakeholders, within Helsinki Friends, in using ICT for development.

- Capture the full potential of ICT revolution for human development by pursuing and promoting the concept of the "knowledge Society" that goes in its application beyond the technology and connectivity issues.
- Improve the identification and measurement of the actual dissemination and impact of ICT.

Ms. Howaidy referred to each of the selected themes proposed to be the focus of cooperation, namely e-learning, e-health and e-content, touching on the possibilities offered by ICT in their development. She also pointed out to the challenges faced by some of HP members in the three areas and accordingly proposed the Workshop to adopt an action in each of them.

The First Working Session (E Learning):

- Two presentations were presented by Egypt and Finland showing their national experiences in using ICT in Education.
- The Egyptian presentation focused on the following:
 - Education as a top priority and ICT as a component in ICT education.
 - Smart Schools Network (SSN) a pilot project being implemented in Egypt.
 - The Egyptian Education Initiative.
- The Finnish presentation addressed:
 - Education Training and Research in the Information Society.
 - Information Society Programme for Education, Training and Research in Finland.
 - Teachers' In-Service Training, Virtual School, the Finnish Virtual University.

Discussion focused on :

- the Egyptian Smart Schools Network model,
- Impact Evaluation,
- Public Private Partnerships,
- Technology Inclusiveness,
- Copyrights, Transfer of Content,
- International Standards,
- Intellectual property Rights.

Area(s) for future focus:

- Egypt proposed to exchange views and share experiences on the issue of the Impact Assessment of investing in ICT in Education as it occupies the concerns of many countries, and offered to share its experience on the Smart Schools Network.
- Based on the consent of other delegates, and upon the proposal made by Canada, it was decided to establish a "Task Force for Impact Assessment of ICT in Education" within Helsinki Group of Friends coordinated by Egypt and open for experts of member states as well as experts from other stakeholders. Canada and Finland expressed their readiness to help the coordinator (Egypt) in this regard.
- The Task Force shall:
 - Coordinate the process of sharing experience on the Impact Assessment of ICT investment in Education including drawing upon the expertise available in HP partners.
 - Develop the scope of work and deliverables for the future.
 - Hold a mid-course workshop of experts (by the second quarter of 2007).
 - Present the conclusion of its work by October 2007 to the ICT Track Coordinator (Egypt).

The Second Working Session: E Health

Three presentations were presented by three countries:

1. Brazil: "Tele-health & Telemedicine Applied to Primary Healthcare in Brazil", tackled the following points:
 - § Main Challenges & Participant institutions.
 - § Brazil telemedicine project.
2. Finland: "ICT in Finnish Health Care", tackled the following points:
 - § The organizational structure of the Finnish health care system.
 - § Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Healthcare Systems.
 - § The Finnish Macro Pilot for e-health.
 - § Objectives of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health for 2003-2007.
3. Egypt: "The E-Health in Egypt: How it was done and What is the roadmap", tackled the following points:
 - § Main Challenges & Objectives.
 - § Egypt e-health Initiative.
 - § Two success stories: Egyptian Telemedicine Network (ETN) pilot project and Primary Health care initiative.
 - § On going efforts: Egyptian e-health Initiative.

Discussion focused on:

- The benefits citizens/ patients would gain from health systems.
- Difficulties faced in the usage of ICT in health (examples of what does not work with e-health)

Area(s) for future focus:

- Egypt proposed that the Friends of Helsinki could address the issue of Telemedicine through designing a network project with the objectives of including the sharing of best practices in the early detection of diseases; especially breast cancer (screening) and diabetes, the exchange of medical consultants & expertise and the identification of e-Health standards in telemedicine.
- Upon further discussion and based on clarification made by Finland concerning the limited scope of telemedicine, it was recommended to launch an "**E-Health Project**" within HP; and to that end a Task Force shall be established by Egypt, Malaysia, Tanzania and Brazil to prepare a concept paper on the issue and hold a workshop during the first quarter of 2007 open to experts from all Friends of Helsinki with a view to come up with an implementation plan for the Project.

The Third Working Session: E Content

Three presentations were presented by three countries:

1. Finland: "Cluster Development Activities in Digital Content in Finland", addressed:
 - § Finnish Digibusiness.
 - § A triple helix in motion.
 - § Finnish Digital Content Business as a centre of Expertise for Digital Media, Content Production and Learning Services.
2. Tanzania: "ICT Initiatives in Tanzania", addressed:
 - § National ICT Policy
 - § Initiatives
3. Egypt: "Arabic E-Content Initiative", addressed:

- § Vision, strategy and objectives
- § Arabic E-Content Initiative: framework, objectives and partners.
- § ICT for Illiteracy Education.
- § Community Development Portal.
- § E-Heritage
- § Scientific content.

Discussion focused on:

- Public private partnership.
- Copyrights (IPRs).
- Digitisation of media.
- Development of sustainable business models benefiting all parties.
- Setting E-Content standards (technical specifications).
- Role of the government (Finland's 3 As: Accessibility, Availability, and Awareness).

Area(s) for future focus:

- Upon a proposal by Egypt that the Friends of Helsinki should address the issue of standards in E-Content and Capacity Building in this respect, it was decided to hold a workshop during the first quarter of 2007 open to experts from all Friends of Helsinki with a view to come up with an implementation plan for the proposal. Egypt, Malaysia, and Finland will coordinate for holding this workshop.

Egypt in collaboration with the HP Secretariat will be communicating with the Friends of Helsinki on the proceedings of this workshop.