



**WSIS GENDER CAUCUS: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
TO THE SECOND WSIS AFRICA REGIONAL PREPARATORY CONFERENCE
ACCRA, GHANA, 2-4 FEBRUARY, 2005.**

The WSIS Gender Caucus places great importance in aligning the WSIS preparatory process and outcomes with achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and urges Governments and the International Community to acknowledge and treat the integration of gender equality and women's rights in the IS and ICTs as a fundamental issue. The Gender Caucus acknowledges the significance of the African Regional Preparatory Conference for the second phase of WSIS, commends the theme "**Access - Africa's key to an inclusive Information and Knowledge Society**" and recommends collective action of all African stakeholders for the integration of a gender perspective in the IS in general and ICTs in particular.

This is the WSIS Gender Caucus' statement of recommendations on the major IS issues presented at the Accra meeting. We underline the fact that **ACCESS** is key; access to financing, infrastructure, technologies etc. and we urge proactive, committed and gender-sensitive actions and attitudes on the following:

Issue 1: Financing the Information and Knowledge Society

Adequate and sustainable resources are required to fulfil the goals of WSIS. We recommend gender-sensitive budgeting, support for the Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF), creative financial investment schemes and facilities which do not restrict women only to micro credit, the allocation of targeted funds for gender and ICTs and the involvement of Development Banks (national and continental) in the creation of ICT investment products and services.

Issue 2: Indicators and benchmarking

Measurable performance indicators must be defined within a gender and cultural analysis framework as a basis for the generation and collection of appropriate statistics and indicators on the Information and Knowledge Society. The Gender Caucus recommends that all IS and ICT indicators be engendered and all data gender disaggregated.

Issue 3: ICTs for socio-economic development

There is a great deal of faith in the potential of ICTs to positively support **socio-economic development**. We recommend more profound gendered analysis of impacts, training and capacity development for women and men, literate as well as non literate, "**ICTs and Development**" and entrepreneurship as a means to improve the positive effects on enduring development.

Issue 4: Access and infrastructure

Infrastructure is paramount and basic telephone connectivity in Africa is significant but not a sufficient condition for enduring development. We recommend that infrastructure be made available at **within walking distance of all** and should include mobile as well as other options such as optic fibre to reach all parts; rural and urban. Hardware, equipments and software should be made available and affordable to the majority.

Issue 5: Industrialisation

Growth of the ICT industry is important for developing economies and ought to benefit both men and women. The WSIS gender Caucus recommends that ICT industries (including computer refurbishment industries should be supported and that more women should be involved and engaged as producers and workers in both hardware and software industries and enterprises.

Issue 6: Internet Governance

The global Information and Knowledge Society depends heavily on the Internet as its main infrastructure and this global resource should be governed so as to enable the full participation of Africans; women and men. We recommend consideration for a gendered dimension of impacts and implications of the policies of **Internet Governance** and that both men and women are equally represented in global ICT governance structures and institutions.