

## IANWGE Task Force on Gender and ICT Contributions to Draft Action Plan and Section II

Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

### Draft action plan

Based on discussions in the Working Group of Sub-Committee 2  
(WSIS/PC-2/DT-3 revised)

*[NOTE: The whole text is in square brackets]*

### Section I

1. The Information Society is an evolving concept, the realization of which is driven by all societies—and in this process all of them can learn from each other. At present, the Information Society has reached different levels of development across the regions and countries of the world. As such, it would be necessary and more effective to design a flexible Action Plan that can be used as a reference framework and as a source of guidance and inspiration at regional and national levels, and that is established in accordance with the Millennium Declaration Goals.

#### A. List of issues

- 1) **Information and communication infrastructure: financing and investment, affordability, development and sustainability**
2. **Bridging the digital divide**: Our countries are committed to taking action to overcome the digital divide, which reflects and is a factor in the differences that exist between and within countries **as well as among men and women** in terms of economic, social and cultural aspects, education, health and access to knowledge.
3. **Universal access**: In order to achieve affordable and gender-responsive universal access in basic services it is essential:
  - To utilize existing and new technologies to provide connectivity to **women and men**
  - To develop connectivity for institutions accessible to the public such as **educational and training centers**, libraries, post offices, **hospitals**, etc.

- To study and promote relevant solutions adapted to the environment for ICTs in remote and rural areas.
  - To establish multi-purpose community access points to ensure inclusive access to information and social services, particularly in rural areas.
  - To evolve the concept of universal access/service to reflect advances and opportunities offered by technology, existing infrastructures, market development and changes in **female and male** user demand.
4. **Broadband:** It is essential to strengthen regional and international broadband network infrastructure in order to provide the capacity to match the needs of countries and their citizens and for the delivery of new services.
  5. **Low cost equipment:** The creation and provision of low-cost access equipment shall be an integral part of the agenda for reducing **both** the digital **and gender** divide **in access to** ICT.
  6. **Low cost connectivity:** Universal access policies shall promote the best possible level of connectivity at a reasonable cost for under-served areas. In particular, unused satellite capacity should be used to improve low cost connectivity in developing countries. **For example, establishing regional (e.g. rural vs urban) tariffs.**
  7. **Convergence:** Technological convergence must be monitored with a view to integrating traditional and new ICTs in order to create alternative forms of access that can help narrow the digital divide.
  8. **Interconnection:** The optimization of connections among major information networks should be promoted through the creation of regional traffic hubs to reduce interconnection costs and allow the penetration of access networks to be broadened.
  9. **Interconnection fees:** Interconnection fees for the use of networks and infrastructure shall be set on the basis of objective, and market-led parameters **that do not exacerbate inequalities.**
  10. **Regional infrastructure:** Regional ICT backbones and exchange points should be implemented to facilitate traffic exchange between countries.
  11. **Environmental protection:** Governments and the business community must initiate actions as well as develop and implement programmes and projects for the environmentally safe disposal (including recycling) of discarded ICT hardware and parts.
- 2) **Access to information and knowledge**
12. **Women and men** and organizations should benefit from enhanced access to knowledge and information.
  13. **Access to public domain information:** Information in the public domain should be of high quality, easily accessible for **women and men**, including the disabled.
  14. **Open standards and open-source software:** Development and deployment of open-source software and standards for ICT networking should be encouraged:
    - Open and flexible international and interoperable standards should be promoted to ensure that **women and men** can utilize the technology and associated content and services to their maximum potential.
    - Open-source software, including UNESCO software CDS/ISIS, multi-platform and open platform as well as interoperability standards, should be used more broadly to provide freedom of choice and to facilitate access to ICTs by all citizens, at an affordable cost.
    - Standardization efforts in the field of terminology and other language resources should be intensified.
  15. **Information flows:** Guidelines on Internet contracts should be established and existing contracts for Internet traffic renegotiated.
- 3) **The role of governments, the business sector and civil society in the promotion of ICTs for development**
16. The full and effective involvement of all stakeholders is vital in developing new ICT applications. The role, responsibilities and goals of each stakeholder should be clearly defined.
  17. **Cooperation among Stakeholders:** Increased cooperation and partnerships are needed between governmental and intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society

and the media, for effective design and implementation of various initiatives, giving priority to locally-available human resources:

- The public sector should explore innovative ways to correct market failures and foster competition to bring the Information Society to all sectors of the economy and society, especially those living in poverty and **under-served communities**.
- The private sector should play an important role in the development and diffusion of ICTs.
- Civil society, including NGOs (**Women's, environment, youth...**), should work closely with communities in strengthening ICT-related initiatives.
- Mass media – in their various forms **advertisements, commercials**,... – are recognized as important means of fostering public information **and opinion**, societal development, social cohesion and **movements, and gender equality**.
- International and regional organizations, including financial and development institutions should play an important role in integrating the use of ICTs in the development process and making available the necessary resources.
- International organization should be mandated to mainstream ICTs in their work programmes and asked to prepare action plans to support the fulfillment of the goals indicated in the declaration of principles and in this action plan.

18. **Resource mobilization:** All stakeholders are urged to mobilize resources for the development of the Information Society. This could include:

- increasing investment in telecommunication infrastructure,
- **R&D on developing technologies for the illiterate and neo-literate**
- building human capacity,
- developing policy frameworks,
- developing culturally sensitive local content and applications **in local languages**.
- **Developing media monitoring mechanisms and capacities to identify abuses**.

19. **ICT manufacturing capabilities:** It is essential for governments to encourage technology transfer and investment, including venture capital, in the creation of national and regional ICT production facilities:

- Priority shall be placed on strengthening local micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through their integration into the digital economy. Partnership mechanisms and business models should be developed for fostering clustering and partnership between SMEs in developing countries and industrialized countries.
- Public policies must foster innovation and entrepreneurship.
- The development of technology-based firms should be encouraged through venture capital funds, technology parks and business incubators, franchising IT clubs, together with the participation of academic institutions and research networks.
- Joint stakeholder efforts to address local obstacles and seek sustainable solutions for infrastructure in underprivileged areas should be encouraged.
- Governments should implement targeted monetary and fiscal policies to support the development of SMEs in the ICT sector (for instance, by relaxing duties and import taxes, and by initiating investment funds).
- **Government ICT policies should take into consideration gender-differentiated constraints to access to ICTs, as well as impacts on rural areas.**

4) **Capacity building: human resources development, education, and training**

20. An ambitious and innovative approach is required in **gender-equal** capacity building, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ICTs. **Gender-differentiated and need-based training opportunities should be available not only for technology professionals but for non-professionals to use ICT.**

21. **ICTs in education:** The use of ICTs could contribute to more efficiency and better quality in education services **including distance education**. They should also contribute to reaching broad target groups:

Information regarding the potential of new technologies in education should be disseminated through exchange of information on best practices, awareness campaigns, pilot projects, demonstrations and public discussions.

- ICTs should be incorporated in **all** school curricula **There should be a large-scale integration of ICTs in primary education to generate a dynamic process towards e-literacy.**
- **Advantage should be taken of the potential outreach capacity of ICTs to improve access to learning (formal and informal) through distance education programmes.**
- ICTs should be used to train trainers and to ensure better delivery of education at all levels, including outside the educational structure, at the workplace and in the home.
- Teacher's skills **development** and curriculum resources need increased support so that teachers can act as a gateway to the Information Society.
- The capacity of developing and least developed countries to apply ICTs effectively in education must be enhanced through regional and international cooperation.

22. **Capacity building for ICT use: Women and men in rural areas** must have enhanced levels of ICT literacy and ICT skills to make the best use of the Information Society:

- Relevant education and training should be promoted at every level, from primary to adult, to open up opportunities for as many people as possible, and especially **the socially and economically** disadvantaged.
  - Women should be given equal opportunities for obtaining training in ICT fields **to ensure that newly acquired skills would lead to appropriate employment.**
  - **Girls and boys** should be equipped with knowledge and skills in ICTs to prepare them for full participation in the Information Society.
  - E-literacy courses should be aimed at training the population in the use of ICTs with a view to producing useful and socially meaningful content for the benefit of **women and men.**
  - Intergovernmental organizations should provide resources for capacity building in ICTs.
  - All those still outside the reach of the formal education system should be offered education and information tailored to their need and culture.
  - Community media should be used in capacity building programmes **that address gender-differentiated needs for technology and knowledge.**
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- awareness of information security issues, and the rapidly evolving complexity, capacity and reach of information technology, the anonymity offered by these technologies, and the trans-national nature of communication frameworks.
  - Special mechanisms shall be put in place to encourage the banking sector to develop secure and reliable applications to facilitate online transactions.

27. **Fighting cybercrime**: Protection from civil and criminal offences ("cybercrime" **especially pornography, pedophilia,**...) is essential in order to build trust in information networks:

- A multi-pronged approach is needed to tackle cybercrime, on all fronts, with emphasis on preventive approaches, national guidelines and regional and international cooperation. At the same time, action to address cybercrime and to ensure a safe and secure Information Society must respect the sovereignty of nations and maintain respect for the constitutional and other rights of all **women, men, girls and boys,** including freedom of expression.
- Existing legal instruments, such as the *Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime*, offer the international community a foundation from which to build.
- **Develop media monitoring mechanisms and capacities to identify abuses.**
- **Legal measures for the prevention of exploitation of women and children through ICTs-driven trafficking should be a national priority.**

6) **Enabling environment**

30. **Standardization**: The development of the Information Society must be based on platforms of internationally interoperable technical standards, accessible for all, and technological innovation of ICTs, as well as systems to promote the exchange of knowledge at global,

regional and sub-regional levels, through any media. **Establishing regional (e.g. rural vs urban) tariffs.**

## 7) Promotion of development-oriented ICT applications for all

**37. E-Business:** Enterprises, particularly SMEs, **and women and men** can use ICTs to foster innovation, realize gains in productivity, fight against poverty, reduce transaction costs and benefit from network externalities:

- Through the adoption of an enabling environment and based on a widely-available broadband infrastructure, Governments should seek to stimulate private investment, new applications and content development and foster public - private partnerships.
- Governments should adopt a twofold approach: setting the rules and using e-Business in their interaction with the business community.
- ICTs can be used to bring consumer benefits and satisfaction by widening the choice of potential suppliers, beyond the constraints of location. The private sector should help to raise awareness and to ensure training on the specific issues related to e-Business.
- Use of digital technologies (**especially in rural areas though Multipurpose Community Telecentres, MCT**) can enhance the role of enterprises in promoting entrepreneurship, liberalizing trade, the accumulation of knowledge, the upgrading of skills, thereby increasing productivity, incomes and jobs and promoting qualitative improvement of working life.

**38. E-learning:** Access to education and knowledge is essential for economic, social and cultural development, **for gender equality** and as means of personal empowerment, community development and business efficiency. Without neglecting traditional literacy, ICT networks have the potential to offer new educational opportunities to all groups in all areas, and a wider delivery of education:

- E-Learning should contribute to achieving universal primary education worldwide through better delivery of education and better training of teachers, and to offer improved conditions for lifelong learning, encompassing people that are outside the “normal” education process, and for improving professional skills.
- Implementation of affordable and universal educational programmes, content, broadband networks and hardware should be promoted.
- The introduction and development of ICTs in various schools and other learning institutions shall be supported through the establishment and maintenance of a human resources network that institutionalizes the ongoing training of teachers and instructors, who are the backbone of innovation.
- Advantage shall be taken of best practices to create high-quality, readily accessible teaching material from all over the world to facilitate knowledge transfer to the national level.
- Special attention shall be devoted to multilingual training and to the use and development of translation software.

**39. E-health: Access to healthcare information and services is a basic right. Many countries lack adequate healthcare facilities and personnel, particularly in rural and remote areas. ICTs should be incorporated on a mass scale in the field of health care with a view to improving resource use, patient satisfaction, personalized care, and the coordination of public health-care systems, private institutions and the academic sector:**

- ICTs should be used to promote social inclusion of all members of society by enabling equitable access to healthcare services, as well as empowering citizens to better manage their own health and to participate more effectively in the healthcare process.
- Innovative solutions and options must be devised for providing health services to under-served areas and **under-served communities**.
- Another e-health priority shall be the prevention, treatment and monitor and control of the spread of dangerous and contagious diseases—specifically HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria—in particular, through the creation of a common information system.

- ICTs can be used to provide e-health supports to specific groups **for both men and women and to specific sub-groups through the life-cycle (such as the mothers, elderly, the chronically ill and children and adolescent boys and girls).**
- An ICT-based e-health network should be established to provide medical assistance following humanitarian disaster and emergencies.
- A system should be established to provide e-health services to the populations in remote regions of the globe.

**41. E-environment:** Systems should be established to prevent man-made disasters, using ICTs to monitor the operators of production and transport systems that pose the gravest potential threats to the environment. **ICTs also play a key role in managing natural resource-driven disaster management. FAO has an important role in promoting gender-responsive natural resource disaster management.**

## 8) Cultural identity and linguistic diversity, local content and media development

**42. Cultural and linguistic diversity.** Linguistic and cultural diversity enriches the development of society by giving expression to a range of different values and ideas. For this purpose:

- Information should be presented in the language and cultural context most familiar to the user, thereby further encouraging the use of ICTs.
- To foster mutual understanding, diversity of cultural expression should be preserved and promoted, through the creation of varied information content and the digitization of the educational, scientific and cultural heritage.
- ICTs should be used to help preserve diversity and indigenous knowledge and traditions. **(The ICTs could be used to disseminate local resource management approaches for developing new technologies)**
- Means should be developed for enabling access to information resources in different languages, in particular online translation tools.
- Means should be developed for processing information in local languages: for instance, standard character sets and language codes, dictionaries, general and application software.
- Non-written languages should be preserved by using audio support.

**43. Content:** Creation of local content should be supported:

- Public policy should foster the creation of varied information content, which helps to preserve and disseminate local and national culture, language and heritage, and to safeguard family and community cohesion.
- Production and exchange of appropriate local content available in a user's mother tongue is of vital importance.
- Developing countries must have the capacity for developing hardware and software, as well as content that is relevant to different segments of population. **It should be recognized that in every society, particularly in rural areas, women form a distinct segment of the population due to gender-based roles and rights.**
- Content referencing, based on public-private partnership to make web content more accessible, should be encouraged.
- Local authorities have an important role to play, because for citizens they represent the first level of contact with the administrations and they could also foster the development of local communities: local content development, digital archives, diverse forms of digital media, content translation and adaptation should be supported.
- Literacy software should be produced in local languages.
- Archives should be preserved as the memory of humankind, and systems should be developed to ensure continued access to archived digital information and multimedia content.
- Libraries and archives should be supported as content providers.

**44. Media:** ICT and media as a whole should stimulate linguistic and cultural diversity, including through the facilitation of exchange of local content:

- Investment should be made in regional media content as well as new technologies.
- Independent production and pluralistic media should be supported.
- Appropriate multilateral television networks should be promoted.

## 9) Identifying and overcoming barriers to the achievement of the Information Society with a human perspective

- **Cultural barriers to women's access to ICT. There is a need to develop gender-aware universal access policies stressing public access points (e.g.MCT) as an alternative to more capital-intensive choices and ensuring that locations of public access points are gender-sensitive (.e.g. not in bars or auto shops).**

### *B. Objectives*

45. Examples of possible concrete and comprehensive actions could include:

a) **Benchmarks:** The following could serve as benchmarks for actions to be taken:

- all villages to be connected by 2010, with a community access point by 2015;
- all universities to be connected by 2005, all secondary schools by 2010 and all primary schools by 2015;
- all hospitals to be connected by 2005 and health centres by 2010;
- 90 per cent of the world's population to be within wireless coverage by 2010 and 100 per cent by 2015;
- all central governments departments to have a website and email address by 2005 and all local governments departments by 2010.

b) **E-Strategies:** Developing national e-strategies for all countries within three years, including the necessary human capacity building.

c) **Global Digital Compact:** Launching of a "Global Digital Compact" as a new pattern for partnership and interaction between governments and non-governmental actors, based on division of labour and specialized responsibilities, as well as on identified specific and common interests, to work together to achieve ICT development goals (e.g. governments create stimulating regulatory environment and fiscal incentives, business bring in technology and made available simple applications, non-governmental organizations undertake awareness campaigns and work at community level etc.) *(a model that could start from the institutional relationships already existing in ITU, with ITU as coordinator).*

d) **Digital development index:** Launching and gradually developing an aggregate ICT Development (Digital Opportunity) **sex-disaggregated** Index and publish it annually or every two years in an ICT Development Report, where ranking of countries will be accompanied by analytical work on policies and their implementation. *(ITU is to catalyze and combine in a coherent structure the existing experiences in various organizations, universities, think-tanks etc.)*

e) **Handbook on good practices and success stories:** Elaborating and launching a "Handbook on good practices and success stories", as a compilation of contributions from all stakeholders, in a concise and convincing format, which is to be re-issued periodically and turned into a permanent experience-sharing exercise.

f) **Training content workers:** Equipping and training content workers in the LDCs, such as archivists, librarians, scientists, teachers and journalists in making use of the expertise and operational capacity of the relevant international professional organizations.

g) **Curriculum revision:** Revising the curricula of the primary and secondary schools in all countries, within three years, in order to meet the challenges of the Information Society.

h) **World languages on the Internet:** Create the necessary technical (software and hardware) conditions, which would permit all languages in the world to be present and used on the Internet.

### *C. Strategies programmes, methods for implementation*

46. Governments, the private sector, civil society, the media and multilateral organizations all have a role in the evolution towards an Information Society.

47. **Governments** in particular have a role in setting and implementing comprehensive, forward-looking and sustainable e-Strategies, adapted to the specific requirements of

different communities and reflecting the stage of development and the structural characteristics of the national economy. This should include:

- Establishing regulatory frameworks **to achieve universal access and affordable services**
- Renewing models for public action and actively shaping the transformation towards an Information Society.
- Preparing the future generation for the Information Society, and creating an environment of continuous learning.
- Ensuring the full ownership by all stakeholders of the e-Strategies that are elaborated.
- **Allocation of telecommunication licenses to women-owned businesses or businesses with women in management positions.**

**53. Specific initiatives:** The development of a strategy entails understanding what to promote, where to promote it, and how to tailor and implement activities to achieve maximum impact. This should capitalize on existing national, regional and global efforts. Specific initiatives could include:

- Promoting long-term government spending on **R&D** and higher education, with the aim of mastering and adapting specific ICT solutions.
- Providing incentives and regulatory schemes that would enhance private sector capabilities in terms of human resource development, infrastructure and institution building.
- Providing tax incentives for start up ICT companies, **MCTs, telecenters, mobile telephony,...**
- Fostering the scale-up of locally successful ICT-related projects dealing with priority applications like health and education programmes.
- Focusing part of the R&D programmes on low purchasing power markets, including research on appropriate technologies and innovative marketing and distribution mechanisms, including the taking advantage of the diasporas.
- Creating a network of IT consultants.
- Developing a platform for showcasing applications.

#### ***D. International cooperation and financing***

**56. Technology transfer:** It is important to facilitate access, and to transfer knowledge and technology on concessional, preferential and favourable terms to developing countries **from developing as well as developed countries**, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights, with the objective of enhancing the technological capacities and capabilities of developing countries, and improving their productivity and competitiveness in the world market.

#### ***E. Follow up***

**57. Indicators:** A realistic international monitoring and benchmarking (both qualitative and quantitative) exercise, through comparable statistical **sex-disaggregated** indicators, should be developed to follow up the implementation of the action plan and to evaluate progress towards well identified goals, in particular progress toward the Information Society. Indicators and periodic reports may also provide a basis for benchmarking, peer reviews and contribute to the dissemination of best practices.

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## Section II

### Observers' contribution to the draft Action Plan\*

[1] The Information Society is an evolving concept which encompasses the traditional media of press, radio and television as well as the new media brought into being through advances in ICTs.

#### A. List of issues

3) **The role of governments, the business sector and civil society in the promotion of ICTs for development**

[17] **Cooperation among Stakeholders:** Promote corporate or employee volunteering initiatives on ICTs for development to facilitate for the private sector to share skills, expertise and resources, in order to harness them in a constructive way in ICTs for development initiatives.

The civil society must:

- Develop projects to disseminate digital culture among all social categories, with a priority focus on the handicapped.
- Be fully involved in the formulation and implementation of ICTs and sustainable development strategies.
- Develop projects that promote dialogue within and between civilizations via electronic networks.
- Establish associative networks and linkages between NGOs.
- **Help to develop distance-learning programmes.**
- Promote the value of partnership with representatives of the trade union movement at all levels (international, regional, national, local, and enterprise level) in working to bridge the digital divide. Trade unions are both an important sector of civil society, and a core element of global industry. Labour, together with civil society, business and governments have to create a common movement to overcome the social and the digital divide.

National government and local authorities must:

- Promote and facilitate infrastructure building, provide training, and create an enabling environment for ICT to be accessible for all, but they should not play the role of regulators of information flow and content.
- Prioritize and promote local ICT initiatives to service local, national and regional communities.
- Reaffirm the role of a more transparent, participatory, and effective democratic UN system as a truly legitimate forum for global governance.
- Recommit to principles of open, transparent, decentralised and accountable governance mechanisms at all levels, from the local to global, and in all spheres of society, including those related to the governance of information and communication systems.
- Promote further research programmes on issues related to the goals approved by the United Nations Millennium Assembly especially in the developing countries.
- Engage indigenous people as active in the Information Society through multiple stakeholder intergenerational partnerships.

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\* Paragraph numbers correspond to those of Section 1 of this document. Where new issues are raised by observers' comments these are added with a number associated to a letter (e.g. 12 A, B, etc.)

#### 4) **Capacity building: human resources development, education, and training**

##### **[21] ICTs in education: Need to:**

- Develop and improve the capacities of local teacher and researchers organisations by providing ICT training facilities in teacher training and research institutions, with particular emphasis on developing countries.
- Develop affordable solutions in terms of hardware and software tailored to the needs of all educational levels and to local conditions while promoting the combination of various media, both traditional and new.
- Increase the resource allocation of governments to programmes targeting the elimination of illiteracy, innumeracy and other learning challenges that impede the ability of marginalized sectors of society from fully accessing information necessary for their well-being.
- **Use ICT to increase women's economic literacy and their economic empowerment and participation.**

**[21]** Like the press, radio and television, and in partnership with those media, ICTs can contribute to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, and the sharing of knowledge and information.

##### **[22] Capacity building for ICT use: People must have enhanced levels of ICT literacy and ICT skills to make the best use of the Information Society:**

- Education systems and skills development programs for all segments of society should be created with the objective being that populations have the skills necessary to reap the benefits of the Information Society, including the use of ICT for education.
- Youth can provide skills and commitment through volunteer and community initiatives to use ICTs towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals.
- Computer literacy and education for all are vital elements of the Information Society. Access to information can only be meaningful if illiteracy is eradicated. At the same time the Information Society must enhance the provision of quality education through lifelong learning (primary, secondary, tertiary education, in-service education and other forms of education), which provides for the ability to critically assess and evaluate information.
- **Ensure that women are not disproportionately disadvantaged by the working conditions and organizational climate common within the global ICT industry, such as "flexible" employment practices.**
- **Support training initiatives in information management and production skills for grass roots organisations in developing countries.**
- **Implementation of measures to ensure women's equal access to ICT education, training and literacy by: Integrating ICT education in school curricula based on gender equality; Realizing girls' full participation in science and technology education; Developing relevant distance ICT education and training programmes, especially for rural women and girls.**

#### 6) **Enabling environment**

**[28]** **Develop gender-sensitive technical and regulatory instruments when addressing ICT policy issues such as universal access, regulatory frameworks, licensing, setting tariffs, spectrum allocation, infrastructure, ICT industry development and labour policies.**

##### **[39] E-health: Need to:**

- Create healthcare systems that utilize ICTs to increase productivity and efficiency within the provision of healthcare globally.

- Promote the use of ICT as an effective tool in distributing information about, and advocating against, gender-based violence.
- Prepare and disseminate accessible information that strengthens prevention programmes that promote women's health such as education and information on sexual and reproductive health issues and on sexually-transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.

**[40 A] Workers' rights:**

- Workers' privacy in the workplace where ICTs are being abused for the purpose of surveillance and monitoring such as CCTV, IC Card, and network-monitoring systems, should be protected. In the case of introducing new technology or policies that might infringe the worker's privacy, agreement with workers or labour unions should be made in advance in an open and transparent manner.
- Extending the rights of workers and their trade-unions to the use of the Internet and intranet of companies for the purpose of communication and solidarity.
- Safe and healthy, secure and fair working conditions, built on principles of social justice and gender equality, to be enjoyed by all workers in the Information Society.
- Recognition and application of fundamental rights and core labour standards of all workers in the Information Society, the right to privacy and to free access to the intranet of enterprises for workers, workers' representatives and trade unions.
- The reinforcement of dialogue between trade unions, employers and government to facilitate change in response to economic developments associated with the spread of the Information Society. The forging of social partnership is also vital in effectively mobilizing ICTs as development tools.

**8) Cultural identity and linguistic diversity, local content and media development**

**[43] Content:**

- Need for public investment in capacity building focused on the creation of locally produced, audience sensitive content that responds to local needs, and marginalized communities.
- There should be support for local creativity in any country, especially through promotion of local content to respond to local particularity and needs.
- The creation and preservation of traditional and indigenous knowledge should be promoted.
- Develop programmes in close consultation with indigenous peoples such that they are enabled in the Information Society and can utilize new tools, if desired, in their cultural production and community development.
- Include content about women and gender issues in all official Government web sites in addition to those web sites that specifically cover gender equality issues.
- Develop ICT-based information systems with relevant content for women to increase their economic opportunities and entrepreneurship skills, including information about national economic and trade policies and programmes.
- Strengthen relevant and diverse programmes focused on gender-sensitive curricula in formal and non-formal education for all and enhancing communication and media literacy for women.
- Community projects that can contribute to the democratic process, such as self-publication web sites on matters of local interest and affairs, should benefit from public support.
- Build capacity for the creation of locally produced audience sensitive content that responds to local needs.
- Publishers and libraries should play a crucial role in promoting knowledge, creativity and science and should be fully involved in the Information Society.
- Civil society should be active in the promotion of public awareness on the quality of content of information circulated.

- Content industries must have facilitated access to ICTs and training, in order to be acquainted with new models of content creation, production and dissemination.

**[44] Media:** Public participation in the Information Society shall be enabled through affordable and appropriate ICT applications allowing for local content creation, such as community media, non-profit media, and interactive Web applications.

- These media should serve as essential factors of empowering marginalised communities, particularly youth, women, indigenous peoples, children and minority groups.
- Recognition and support will be given to media based in local communities, thus contributing to creating local content and preserving and developing cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Develop, consistent with freedom of expression, regulatory mechanisms that promote balanced and diverse portrayals of women by the media and international communication systems and that promote increased participation by women and men in production and decision making.