



## Young Women Leaders in ICT Workshop

### **Statement of the *Young Women Leaders in ICT Forum to the Pan-Arab Regional Conference on WSIS, Cairo June 14-15, 2003***

We the participants of the *Young Women Leaders in ICT Forum in the Pan-Arab States* held at the Cairo Marriott Hotel on June 14 and 15, 2003, noting that:

1. The Pan Arab region is in the lead in terms of established ICT policies and that there is potential for the integration of gender dimensions, in particular the empowerment of women and girls in these policies;
2. There are numerous initiatives on gender and ICT in the Pan Arab region spearheaded by organizations like the Division of Women in the Arab League and the Arab Women Council;
3. The WSIS has established **Gender and Youth Caucuses** dedicated to promoting issues affecting women and youth;
4. Gender as a cross cutting issue that has to be integrated in all aspects of the WSIS and government processes.

### **Recommend that the Pan Arab Regional Conference consider the following:**

1. Research
  - a. Establish dedicated research programs on the gendered experiences of ICT use in the Pan Arab region; and
  - b. Develop projects that will collect and analyze appropriate gender specific data and reporting mechanisms to evaluate and monitor the impact of ICT and development programs for women and girls in the Arab region.
2. Infrastructure and Access
  - a. Reduce the urban-rural divide by promoting digital inclusion in the rural areas through appropriate, affordable ICT access models targeted specifically at girls and women.
3. Capacity Building and Training
  - a. Promote a dedicated capacity building and technical skills training program targeted specifically at girls and women; and
  - b. Expand and implement the existing Pan Arab e-learning program currently under way by consciously integrating a women and girls empowerment program.

#### 4. Building Knowledge Base

- a. Promote women to play a major role in a collaborative effort on content development at a regional level for e-learning, e-business and e-networking; and
- b. Transform the top down approach into a bottom up approach from schools, faculty levels, university, business, government at regional levels; and
- c. Replicate successful partnership models whether nationally or internationally in order to maximize on benefits and penetration. A great example would be that of Global Knowledge partnership, where multi-stakeholders partner collaborate. Encourage different sectors of societies to join Global Knowledge Partnership and share with their experiences and efforts and also benefit from the partnership in order to maximize impact.
- d. Establish a repository of information on all the national and regional experiences for young women empowerment through ICT and highlight success cases such as the Girls Education Initiative in Egypt or IT is Hot for Girls by SchoolNet Africa.

#### 5. Professional Network Development

- a. Create a Pan Arab network of key active institutions of young women and youth addressing the issue of the digital divide through capacity building and professional development of youth and women.

#### 6. Policy

- a. Develop a framework for engendering ICT policy to create an enabling environment in the Pan Arab region.

And with reference to the WSIS process, call for:

- a. The inclusion of representatives of women and youth in national delegations; and
- b. Encourage support for the Gender and Youth Caucuses of the WSIS