

**Annual Meeting and the Global Forum
of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development**
5-6 December 2010, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Concept Note

The Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) is the principal global multi-stakeholder platform, led by the United Nations and supported by UNDESA, for policy dialogue and collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders on the strategic use of ICT for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Annual Meeting and the Global Forum are a major annual event of GAID that brings together participants from the global ICT for Development community to engage in multi-stakeholder dialogues and debates around key and emerging issues in this field and foster partnerships and collaboration. This year's event will be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates on 5-6 December 2010 and will be organized by GAID and hosted by the Abu-Dhabi Systems and Information Center.

The theme of this year's Global Forum will be "***Information and Communication Technologies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals – Moving from Advocacy to Action***". Participants will include ministers, senior policy makers, business leaders, representatives of international organizations, civil society and academia active in the field of Information and Communication Technologies for Development.

The Annual Meeting of the Alliance will comprise a meeting of the Board of Directors and a meeting of the Strategy Council of GAID on 6 December. Among the principal items on the agenda of both meetings will be discussion and adoption of the Plan of Action for 2011 and beyond, as well as Terms of Reference and composition of the governing bodies of the Alliance.

The Global Forum will bring together the ICT and development communities under the umbrella of the Global Alliance for an action-oriented dialogue on emerging issues and challenges in the field of ICT for Development. The meeting will be an opportunity to perform a collective "reality check" on the progress made thus far in using ICT to achieve the MDGs and what still needs to be done to ensure that ICT fulfill their vast potential for accelerating achievement of the MDGs. The main goal of the Forum is to identify what needs to be done to move decisively and productively from advocacy to action.

The Global Alliance will also present, for discussion and feedback, its major new initiative - the MDG eNabler, a free web-based set of ICT-based tools and resources designed to assist governments and all development practitioners in their work towards achieving the MDGs.

The Forum will have two plenary discussions in which speakers will present ICT-based programmes/initiatives demonstrating the use of ICT for the advancement of the MDGs. The meeting will be an opportunity to engage in dynamic multi-stakeholder discussions on ICT for Development related issues, identify new and emerging trends in the technology and development arenas and help define the strategic vision for the advancement of the MDGs.

The first plenary session will focus on “Reality Check: what’s holding us back?” In this session panelists will address the role of ICT in advancing development, particularly in the areas of eradication of poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, health and sustainable development. Furthermore, the session will identify what actions are needed to fully tap the potential of ICT to enable practitioners around the world to overcome the challenges that are currently holding us back.

The second plenary session will focus on the MDG eNabler. The panelists, together with all participants, will analyze the implementation process of the MDG eNabler and identify strategies and actions for its further development.

Following the plenary discussions, the meeting will split into thematic “solution salons” designed to facilitate productive interaction among participants through in-depth discussions. The outcomes and recommendations will be presented to a strategy plenary session on the second day. The solution salons, held in parallel and led by the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other stakeholders, will focus on the use of ICT for addressing such goals and challenges as Poverty Alleviation and Hunger, Education, Health, Gender Equality, Sustainable Development/Climate Change, Disaster Relief/Post-Conflict Zones, Development and Youth and Persons with Disabilities. Each session will identify the key issues/problems, showcase existing ICT-based projects, tools and solutions that facilitate the achievement of the MDGs, and then present proposed solutions to these issues/problems.

Between sessions, the Forum will also allow participants to network, share experiences and build action-oriented partnerships.