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**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on their  
efforts in 2010 to implement the outcome of the WSIS**

Submission by

**ECLAC**

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

**DISCLAIMER:** The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

## **Implementation of the Action Lines of WSIS in Latin America and the Caribbean January 2011**

### **Executive Summary**

The implementation of WSIS activities in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region continued at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. The LAC countries have continued to implement the Regional Action Plan eLAC2010, according to the agreements emanated during the Ministerial Meeting in San Salvador, in 2008, as short-term milestones evolving towards the long-term 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the goals of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with the financial support of the European Commission through the @LIS 2 Programme “Alliance for the Information Society” and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) from Canada, has carried out different activities in order to foster and monitor ICT policies and projects in the region. UN ECLAC has also acted as eLAC technical Secretariat and supported the activities from the Observatory for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILAC).

High-level decision-makers in the region support this effort, as evidenced during the two eLAC2010 meetings - in September and November 2010 - resulting in the new Regional Plan of Action eLAC2015. Also, the “V Ministerial Forum on Information Society between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean”, - in March 14-15, 2010 in Segovia, Spain - resulted in a consensus on common objectives for the cooperation between the two regions on the topic of the information society, as an important contribution in promoting the Millennium Development Goals.

The statistical information and analysis developed under OSILAC framework allowed the identification of significant progress in ICT policy formulation and implementation in the region; however economic and social gaps persist, such as little use of ICTs by SMEs, insufficient investment in ICT infrastructure, limited ICT innovation and production, persistent digital divide across income levels and regional areas. The document “eLAC2010 Monitoring Plan: Progress and Challenges in the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean”<sup>1</sup> revealed the urgent need for Latin American and Caribbean countries to increase their efforts to reduce the digital divide in terms of access and quality of access, to facilitate the use of more sophisticated ICT in order to continue their advance toward the construction of inclusive information societies. The potential impact that ICT can have on economic performance and social integration will be possible when other complementarities are present. It is urgent to create public development policies, including a regulatory framework appropriate to the technical convergence, as well as policies that promote not only the ICT diffusion in the productive sector, but also the development of local enterprises that provide digital services and goods.

In addition to eLAC2010, ECLAC contributed to achieving the MDG and WSIS goals by (1) acting as Technical Secretariat of eLAC2010, (2) monitoring the Information Society progress in the region; (3) generating knowledge about current Information Society dynamics in the region,

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1 Available at <http://www.cepal.org/ddpe/publicaciones/xml/2/41802/LCR2165.pdf>

especially in those issues relevant for policies; (4) providing technical assistance and capacity-building on selected issues for the development of the Information Society in the Region, in cooperation with other regions; (5) nurturing the regional discussion and providing visibility of progress and (6) future actions.

## 1. Technical Secretariat for eLAC

As the Technical Secretariat for eLAC, UN ECLAC efforts focused on finishing the implementation and monitoring of the Regional Plan of Action eLAC2010, and on renewing a new plan eLAC2015.

- Preparatory Meeting (Montevideo, September 2010): The Preparatory Meeting for the Third Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Montevideo, on September 23-24th, 2010. ECLAC presented the proposed eLAC2015 Plan of Action, which was based on the preliminary monitoring of eLAC2010 goals and the results of a Public consultation that took place between December 2009 - July 2010 and included the participation of almost 900 experts and leaders in information technology. The result of this preparatory meeting was a consensus on the proposed eLAC2015 Regional Action Plan.
- Third Ministerial Conference eLAC (Lima, November 2010): The Third Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, was held Lima, Peru, on November 21-23th, 2010, bringing 300 representatives from 18 countries. During the conference, several panel discussions were organized, all involving senior government officials (including ministers and deputy ministers), as well as private sector experts, civil society and international organizations. The topics covered in the panel were: the Universalization of broadband; ICT for Inclusive Education; Innovation, ICT and productive sector; e-Government; e-Health; and Trends and Future Scenarios of the Information Society<sup>2</sup>.

Taking into account the work accomplished between 2005-2010, the Ministerial Conference renewed the mandate for ECLAC to continue to play its role as Technical Secretariat of the eLAC process.

- New Regional Plan of Action ELAC 2015: The Lima Declaration, the eLAC2015 Action Plan and the eLAC2015 organizational structure were adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean. The new plan<sup>3</sup> presents the priorities for fostering the development of information societies in

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<sup>2</sup> More info at <http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getprod.asp?xml=/elac2015/noticias/paginas/7/40927/P40927.xml&xsl=/elac2015/tpl-i/p18f.xsl&base=/elac2015/tpl-i/top-bottom.xsl>

<sup>3</sup> Available at [http://www.cepal.org/socinfo/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/5/41775/2010-820-eLAC-Plan\\_of\\_Action.pdf](http://www.cepal.org/socinfo/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/5/41775/2010-820-eLAC-Plan_of_Action.pdf)

the region, establishing 10 strategic guidelines and 26 goals, highlighting the importance of the universal access to broadband.

## **2. Monitoring the Information Society progress in the region**

The Observatory for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILAC) has continued to support the ICT measurement in the region by the development of regional capacities for data collection, indicators' harmonization and methodologies' dissemination. The data on ICT access and use gathered and analyzed in the project's context, represent an important input for formulating, monitoring and evaluating public policies which guarantee a more inclusive access and usage of ICT in the region. The inputs offered by OSILAC are being incorporated to the monitoring of regional and international agreements and in the statements regarding the information society, including the monitoring of the Regional Action Plan eLAC2010, the MDGs and the WSIS.

Likewise, OSILAC settled as a key source of statistical information and knowledge generation on access and use of ICT in Latin America and the Caribbean, achieving increasing recognition by international and regional forums, and also from related organizations, as a statistical source and reference for the follow up of the Information Society progress. In this perspective, one of the most important results of OSILAC was the implementation of the online Statistical Information System on ICT (<http://www.cepal.cl/tic/flash>), which gathers available databases of household surveys from the countries of the region, allowing the calculation and analysis of ICT indicators over time, among the countries, within the countries of the region, and in relation to other countries and regions of the world. Currently, the System allows public access to 96 databases<sup>4</sup> of household surveys of countries from all over Latin America, except Argentina and Cuba.

The VI Workshop on Information Society Measurement in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Montevideo in September 21-23, 2010, counted 84 participants from 26 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including representatives from 19 national statistical offices (NSOs), representatives of ministries from 13 countries, national digital agencies, regional and international organizations, as well as representatives of academia and NGOs. The meeting was crucial to discuss the regional progress and challenges in the development and implementation of ICT indicators, to elaborate regional proposals for indicators on access and use of ICT, to share experiences aimed at improving the statistical processes that support the design and monitoring of ICT public policies, among others.

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<sup>4</sup> In 2007, there were 11 databases incorporated to the system; in 2008 another 40 were added, counting 51; in 2009, another 34 were added, achieving a total of 85; and in 2010 another 11 bases were harmonized, which amounts to the current 96 bases.

### 3. Knowledge generation

Some of the important studies undertaken by ECLAC during 2010 are listed below:

- "eLAC2010 Monitoring Plan: Progress and Challenges in the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean": <http://www.cepal.org/ddpe/publicaciones/xml/2/41802/LCR2165.pdf>
- "ICT for Growth and Equality: Renewing the Strategies of the Information Society": [http://www.cepal.org/ddpe/publicaciones/xml/8/41728/eLAC\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.cepal.org/ddpe/publicaciones/xml/8/41728/eLAC_Summary.pdf)
- "Accelerating the Digital Revolution: Broadband for Latin America and the Caribbean" (along with regional network of researchers and IDRC): <http://www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/7/41727/LCR.2167.pdf>

### 4. Technical assistance and capacity building

During 2010 ECLAC organized several workshops for experience exchange in different ICT sectors, and promoted regional cooperation in order to expand broadband access. ECLAC also provided direct technical assistance to Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay and Colombia, and Central American countries.

Below are listed the principal activities:

- Access and Infrastructure: in conjunction with the Chilean government, in June 2010 ECLAC proposed the creation of a regional forum for exchange of experiences in the development of policies to spread the broadband. On August 18 took place the first meeting of this new space of analysis and debate, called "Broadband Regional Dialogue." The participating countries requested ECLAC to become the Technical Secretariat of the Dialogue.

On November 19-20 2010 took place the second meeting of the collaborative space, in which was organized the round table discussion on international connections," which was attended by 15 representatives from global and regional IT and telecom companies. In the debate also participated experts from international organizations such as LACNIC, AHCET and CLARA. This second meeting was attended by 18 representatives from the responsible entities for formulating and implementing policies in nine countries: Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Bolivia. ECLAC, in its role as Technical Secretariat, received a request from the participating countries to establish a Broadband Regional Research Center<sup>5</sup>.

Also, support is being given to the project "Mesoamerican Information Highway" (AMI), which benefits the following countries: Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. This project is about the design of a management model for the use of reserved capacity of fiber optic network.

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<sup>5</sup> See press release (in spanish) <http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/prensa/noticias/comunicados/9/41709/P41709.xml&xsl=/prensa/tpl/p6f.xsl&base=/eLAC2015/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>

- e-education and e-health: organization of the International Seminar "Social policies and the information society: gaps, opportunities and rights", on October 2010, and a Workshop of the eLAC e-Health Working Group " e-health challenges for a new regional agenda", October 21 and 22, Santiago, Chile.

- e-government: Organization of the Workshop: "Advances in electronic government to improve transparency. Some experiences and challenges in Europe and Latin America." Organized with the National Office of Electronic Government and Informatics of Peru (ONGEI) and the Eurosocial Program (Taxation Sector). Lima, June 21, 2010. The main studies were:

- e-production: On October 6 and 7, 2010, in Buenos Aires, was organized an international seminar on "Policies to promote the incorporation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Latin American companies."

During June and November 2010 took place the 2nd and 3rd LA-KLEMS Workshop, attended by representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico. From the perspective of sectoral measurements of the ICT impact on the economy, the LA-KLEMS project is creating a new platform for information through the national accounts, associated with economic growth, productivity, creating employment, capital formation and technological change. The platform is being developed worldwide, including the EU-25, Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea and the United States.

Eight studies have been conducted on the development of policies to stimulate the uptake of ICT by enterprises in Latin America, in the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay.

Finally, promoting the EU- LAC Cooperation for the development of the Information Society, ECLAC, through the @LIS2 Project, has actively participated in the organization of the "V Ministerial Forum on Information Society between the European Union (EU) Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)", convened by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union March 14-15, 2010 in Segovia. The result was a consensus on common objectives for the cooperation between the two regions on the topic of the information society. The Declaration of La Granja requested that ECLAC monitor the agreements reached.

## **5. Visibility**

Through various interviews, publications and press releases, ECLAC widely promoted in 2010 the slogan of universal broadband as a civil right and a priority for the development of the region. The main axe of visibility of the Information Society Area is its website [www.cepal.org/socinfo](http://www.cepal.org/socinfo), which spreads news and publications on the progress in the Information Society in the region. Social networks accounts were created, such as Flickr, Slideshare, YouTube and Twitter. Twitter account, which was established in March 2010, currently has 2,270 followers. Another communication strategy that was adopted is to send a newsletter via email. At December 31, 2010 96 clippings were sent to subscribers bi-weekly and 48 to those who receive it once a week. In addition, the news reported in the clipping are socialized through Twitter.

The public consultation for developing the new eLAC2015 Plan was announced through the website, where also was linked the web streaming platform that transmitted the eLAC Ministerial Conference of Lima.

## **6. Future Actions**

- ECLAC will continue to act as Technical Secretariat of eLAC promoting its Work Groups and the Indicators Committee established for monitoring eLAC2015 Plan.
- The functions of the Observatory for the Information Society, OSILAC, will expand, incorporating the systematic monitoring of policies of innovation and ICT in the region.
- The Broadband Regional Dialogue will be promoted and the Broadband Regional Research Center will be established.
- South-South Cooperation and EU-LAC: continuation of technical assistance activities and workshops to disseminate best practices and sharing experiences, seeking to capitalize the lessons of Europe's most advanced experiences. In this sense, the dialogue between LAC and Europe on models of regulation and competition in the ICT sector and the strategies to move towards universal broadband will be actively promoted.
- Generating knowledge: cooperation with European academic networks for further studies in areas such as ICT and energy, ICT and environment and ICT, Innovation and SMEs.