



## Economic and Social Council

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**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

### **Statement submitted by Sucardif Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* E/2012/100.



## Statement

A school in Ghana has 900 students and a library with no books on the shelves and without access to a computer. Many students neither know how to use a computer nor have seen one. In Ghana, information and communications technology (ICT) is part of the curriculum, but there are no ICT teachers in rural communities to teach. Many children drop out of school because they do not have books to read or enjoy schooling.

Over the decades, Africa was left out of the digital age and today only 1 in 130 people have access to a computer in Africa. In making sure that we are not left out again and to ensure the productive capacity of young people, there is a need to effectively train teachers to make ICT more exciting to students and to get books on the shelves in communities. Let us empower young people so that they can get decent jobs.

A sure way to create decent jobs is to sustain ICT development programmes through the constant formulation and implementation by Governments of policies to improve the availability of e-skills at the national level. ICT and e-skills should be integrated into practical and professional development in fields such as tailoring, hairdressing, building, farming and agro-processing and teaching through sustainable skills and resource development centres. Polytechnic and graduate institutes should be promoted to enhance economic growth. Governments should support initiatives to establish community libraries with skills development centres so as to strengthen local educational structures.

A nationwide project on saving Ghana's libraries is currently being implemented on a pilot basis with a view to providing and promoting learning empowerment, reducing poverty and providing decent jobs.

## Recommendations

Sucardif Association proposes to the Economic and Social Council the establishment of ICT-based community libraries:

- To develop capacity in terms of e-skills to create job opportunities for better health delivery and environmental sanitation, improved agricultural practices and reduced corruption as means of addressing issues surrounding decent and sustainable jobs to eradicate poverty.
- To train people in agro-processing to process food products that abound in the community in order to reduce waste and to help end hunger.
- To train entrepreneurs and professionals in the use of e-skills to enhance their work and thus address issues of decent and sustainable jobs.
- To give access to research centres to students, artisans and computer-literate persons in order to carry out research at minimal cost.
- To transform Ghanaian tertiary institutions' distance learning programmes through distance learning centres that will also generate revenue to sustain the project.

- To develop reading habits in basic and second-cycle students to build their self-confidence and self-esteem in society and to achieve higher educational standards, so as to guarantee decent and sustainable jobs.
- To enhance project sustainability through commercial centres, including those dealing with offshore business processing, in order to provide decent jobs and generate sustainable economic growth.

We trust that this initiative would accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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