



## APEC+LAC Digital Economy Forum for Women 2008

### Issues and Recommendations

#### Arequipa, Peru 9-10 May 2008

The following are the issues and recommendations that come from the participants of the APEC+LAC Digital Economy Forum for Women held in Arequipa, Peru on May 9-10, 2008. Participants were divided into two groups according to which language, English or Spanish that they felt most comfortable in. They were then further grouped into two sub-areas: research and capacity building. The report below is the result of those discussions. The Spanish results have been translated into English and incorporated into the whole.

#### 1. RESEARCH

The **issues** here are:

- non-comparability of statistics across economies
- lack of sex-disaggregated data
- lack of data on women in the informal sector
- lack of data on women's needs regarding ICT

The **recommendations** to policy makers are:

- Create common data bases and statistics to facilitate comparisons among economies
- Prepare the way for this with comparative studies of the current data structure in each economy
- Develop new indicators that can be used in all economies, equivalencies
- Focus research on:
  - women in the informal sector
  - the working conditions of women in the field of ICT
  - the opportunities, risks and benefits of the ICT for women
  - needs and demands of women for the training program
- Develop policies and strategic framework to encourage the wide dissemination of research on best practices and training for women and the digital economy, and retention of women in the field of ICT
- Encourage research institutes to produce statistical data disaggregated by gender



## **2. CAPACITY BUILDING**

The **issues** here are:

- Inadequate infrastructure
- constraints women face in using ICT
- different levels and aspects of the digital divide within economies and across economies

The **recommendations** to policy makers are:

- Examine the existing ICT infrastructure across economies, with a particular focus on rural areas, to ascertain where and how improvements need to be made
- Address the constraints of language and hardware that hinder women's access to ICT through training and financing programs
- Develop appropriate ICT training programs for areas with different levels of digital divide and for different groups, including girl students, women entrepreneurs, housewives, home workers, and those in condition of high vulnerability and marginalization.
- Develop incentive programs to encourage the private sector, including local companies and multi-national companies, to establish ICT infrastructure and programs for women and to incorporate this into the concept of corporate social responsibility
- Facilitate the creation of incubators to encourage and foster women's entrepreneurship and business growth with an ICT-enabling environment that can also facilitate access to domestic and global supply and value chains
- Create public-private partnerships and strengthen existing networks in order to facilitate information exchange, research, best practices, and strategies to impact on policies.
- Encourage the use of ICT in key sectors for development in which women play an important role: e.g., agriculture, health, education, climate change, among others.

**The recommendations for APWINC and the Digital Economy for Women Forum** are:

- Coordinate and develop closer working relationships and joint programs with other APEC sub-groups, particularly with the SME Working Group, HRD Working Group, Committee on Trade and Investment
- Make multi-year programs and policy targets, for example, four-year APEC programs

Groups, like WLN, which work across sectors can function to link and leverage best practices. WE CAN **BE THE BRIDGE** ACROSS THE DIVIDE.