



UNITED NATIONS

International Workshop on

Women Entrepreneurs and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

in cooperation with the
**United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
(UNECE)**

7-20 December, 2011

**The Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center
(MCTC) Haifa, ISRAEL**

**MASHAV – Israel's Agency for International Development
Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem**

About MASHAV

Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, known as MASHAV, was founded in 1958 as part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is responsible for initiating and implementing Israel's development cooperation program worldwide. MASHAV aims at transferring the expertise and technologies which have assisted Israel on its own path to development to other countries.

Today, MASHAV cooperates with over 140 countries, providing training and capacity building programs in Israel, as well as operating on-site demonstration projects and building medical infrastructure in partner countries. MASHAV is active in fields ranging from agriculture to medicine and from community development to entrepreneurship.

About MCTC

The Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center (MCTC) was founded by MASHAV in 1961 to assist in the training of women engaged in community work in the newly emerging states in Africa and Asia.

Since the establishment of MCTC, more than 16,000 participants from 148 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Oceania and the Caribbean have attended over 500 capacity building programs and workshops, and 27 International Conferences for Women Leaders, conducted in Israel. In addition, MCTC conducts between 20 - 30 institutional capacity building programs in partner countries throughout each year, for hundreds more trainees throughout the developing world.

MCTC focuses on three areas of study: Micro-enterprise Development: Organization and Management, Micro-credit, Support Systems and Rural Tourism, all with an emphasis on women entrepreneurs; Entrepreneurship for Youth, a Tool for Poverty Alleviation; Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Community Development: NGO and Community Service Management; Crisis Intervention; Human Trafficking; Child Abuse; Care of the Elderly; Media Strategies for Social Change; Rehabilitation within the Community; Special Needs of Women and Youth at Risk; Local Government and Socio-economic Development: Early Childhood Education: Children with Special Needs, Parental Involvement, Emergent Literacy, Science and Technology, Music and Art, Bilingualism, Holistic Infant Development for Doctors, Psychologists and Community Workers; Psycho-Social Care for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS.

In each training program there are up to 30 women and men from 10 to 27 countries. Usually two workshops are conducted concurrently in different languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian or Arabic).

The Center is located on Mount Carmel in Haifa. The building consists of living accommodation, classrooms, recreation and dining facilities. A library specializing in education, social sciences and humanities, and a computer laboratory with internet access serve the participants.

MCTC enjoys the active cooperation of a number of international organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations and development authorities.

ABOUT UNECE

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations. Its major aim is to promote economic integration across its 56 member countries, located in the European Union, non-EU Western and Eastern Europe, South-East Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and North America. UNECE provides policy-oriented analysis, advice and capacity-building to member States and cooperates with partner agencies, civil society and key actors from the private sector.

UNECE works to facilitate international cooperation within and beyond the UNECE region through norms, standards and conventions, as well as monitoring international commitments in a wide array of areas. These range from economic cooperation and integration, energy, environment, housing and land management, to gender, population, statistics, timber, trade and transport.

UNECE has a long-standing commitment to the promotion of women's entrepreneurship in South-East Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. In addition to the capacity-building workshops for women entrepreneurs on information and communication technologies and support systems, organized in cooperation with MASHAV and MCTC, UNECE activities also include research assessing the business environment for women entrepreneurs and sub-regional forums for women entrepreneurs to address issues of particular concern such as the lack of networking opportunities, difficult access to credit and lack of specific knowledge and skills.

UNECE co-organized the First Forum for South East European Women Entrepreneurs in cooperation with the Regional Cooperation Council and the Government of Turkey in Istanbul in September 2010. A region-wide forum for Women Entrepreneurs is planned for the early part of 2012. The promotion of women's entrepreneurship is supported by the Working Group on Gender and Economy within the United Nations Special Program for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA).

INTRODUCTION

Poverty eradication and gender equality are central development goals for the twenty-first century. Women's economic empowerment, which includes the promotion of women's entrepreneurship, supports both goals. In the Beijing Platform for Action which was agreed by member countries at the Fourth World Conference for Women in 1995, the United Nations advocates the improvement of the situation of women in the economy. The fifteen year review of its implementation, which took place in March 2010, highlighted "that support to women entrepreneurs wishing to expand their businesses should be increased, including through greater access to formal financial instruments, training and advisory services, access to markets and facilitation of networking and exchanges"¹

Addressing the "gender divide" in women's access to ICT is part of this challenge. In the new technology-driven economy, women entrepreneurs risk becoming marginalized without equal access to ICT. On the other hand, ICT can transform existing gender-based inequalities into opportunities and resources and significantly contribute to the economic, political, and social empowerment of women.

The importance of mainstreaming a gender equality perspective into the process of building an Information Society was underlined in the **Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)** adopted by more than 175 countries in 2003: *"We affirm that Development of ICTs provides enormous opportunities for women, who should be an integral part of, and key actors, in the Information Society. We are committed to ensuring that the Information Society enables women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. We should mainstream a gender equality perspective using ICTs as a tool to that end."*

The current workshop on "**Women Entrepreneurs and ICTs**" contributes to capacity building and provides support, giving guidance and managerial tools to women entrepreneurs on the use of ICTs in business. The workshop discusses way in which the new technologies can influence small business management and how women entrepreneurs can both benefit from and cope with the challenges of ICTs.

The workshop is organized by MCTC/MASHAV in cooperation with UNECE.

¹ E/2010/4 – E/Cn.6/2010/2

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the proposed workshop, the participants will have:

- analyzed the role of ICTs in small business management
- widened their knowledge of support systems for small-scale entrepreneurs as a tool for regional and local development
- become acquainted with the support systems for micro and small entrepreneurship in Israel, including technological incubators
- discussed the position of women entrepreneurs at times of rapid global change
- revised the role of rural tourism as an income generator

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The workshop is designed for 26–30 professional women in the field of management, marketing, promotion, training and supervision, working in NGOs, women's organizations, government institutes and agencies for business support and development, involved in supporting women in micro-business and in rural tourism, as well as women running small businesses.

Candidates are expected to have an academic degree or equivalent diploma in social science, economics, business administration, industrial management or related subjects and at least five years of relevant professional experience in the field.

WORKSHOP PROCEDURE

Participants will reside at MCTC and the studies will be intensive. Five days a week are normally devoted to classroom study and observation visits. Saturdays will be spent on assignments or on excursions to places of historical, religious or general interest. The themes will be presented in the form of lectures and workshops, both by lecturers from the academic world and by those with experience in the private and institutional sectors.

The Workshop will be held in Russian; translation will be used when necessary.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

- Information and communication technologies (ICTs) and new opportunities for employment
- The internet as a source of information and advice
- Social media as a tool for business promotion and networking
- Women and the “gender divide”; enhancing women’s capacities
- Small businesses and the global market
- Women in business networks
- Support strategies for the small enterprise - exploring the Israeli experience in SME development
- The application of ICTs in rural tourism
- Preparation of a proposal to support women entrepreneurs

Study Visits

Participants will have the opportunity to meet Israeli women entrepreneurs in different settings, both rural and urban, and to visit institutions involved in supporting microenterprise development.

Among them:

- The Export and International Cooperation Institute
- Small Business Development Centers
- Technological Incubators
- The Tefen Industrial Park
- Tourism Associations

Exchange of Professional Experiences

An important aspect of the Workshop is the interaction and exchange of experiences amongst its participants and several sessions will be devoted to this purpose. The rich knowledge brought by participants from different countries is a very valuable contribution both to the proceedings and to their peers’ future development.

Final Assignment

At the end of the Workshop, participants will present a practical project proposal or innovative idea related to the subject matter, that could be implemented in their own settings.

CERTIFICATE

Upon completion of the Workshop the graduates will receive a certificate confirming their attendance and active participation.

APPLICATION

Application forms should be obtained from Israeli Diplomatic and/or Consular Representatives serving the applicant's country.

The completed applications for admission to the Workshop must be received at MCTC in Haifa, not later than **1 November, 2011**.

ITEMS COVERED BY THE SCHOLARSHIP

Studies:

Lectures, group and individual tutoring, field visits, written study material, use of reference library, computers with Internet access, WI-FI availability.

Accommodation:

- two students to a room
- linen, hot water, heating

Full Board

Cultural and Social Activities

- excursions to historical and religious sites.

Health Services

Medical insurance covers medical services and hospitalization in case of emergency and accident. **IT DOES NOT COVER the treatment of chronic or serious diseases, specific medications taken by the participant on a regular basis, dental care, eyeglasses, or the period of pregnancy. Participants using specific medications on a regular basis must bring sufficient quantities for the duration of their stay.**

Health forms must be completed and signed by a physician. If the trainee's health deteriorates due to a chronic ailment or serious disease not described on the form, s/he will be held responsible for all medical and other expenses incurred in treatment in Israel. Furthermore, the Center will not be obliged to retain the trainee until the end of the workshop.

The Health Authorities recommend that visitors to Israel make sure they have been inoculated against tetanus in the last ten years.

Miscellaneous

- Newspapers and periodicals.
- Laundry facilities on the premises.

Participants are responsible for all other expenses.

N.B. The scholarship does not cover flight tickets to and from Israel.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Weather

The workshop will take place in winter, when temperatures may range from 10° C to 18° C, with the possibility of rain.

Clothing

Participants are advised to bring warm clothing, an umbrella and comfortable low-heeled shoes for excursions and study visits.

Passport and Visa

Passports must be valid for the period of the workshop and include an entry visa into Israel. Your visa will be issued by the Israeli representative serving your country. (If there is no possibility of contact with an Israeli representative, MASHAV will arrange for you to receive the visa on your arrival at Ben-Gurion- Tel Aviv-Airport). **Two additional passport-size photographs are also required for various documents.**

Booking

The date and flight number of the booking to Israel must be confirmed to assure arrival **before** the opening of the Workshop on **7 December, 2011**. Rerouting is entirely at the participants' expense.

Luggage

Many airline companies allow only 20Kg. (44 lb.) of luggage. There is an extra charge for overweight.

Personal Insurance

Participants are advised to insure any valuable personal belongings, since MCTC takes no responsibility for them.

Foreign Exchange

All the major currencies are exchangeable in Israel.



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