



International Workshop on

Women Entrepreneurs and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

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

3-20 December, 2012

**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, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is responsible for the design, coordination and implementation of the State of Israel's worldwide development cooperation programmes. Since its inception in 1957, MASHAV has strived to share with the rest of the developing world the know-how and technologies which provided the basis for Israel's own rapid development. MASHAV started as a modest program, focused on grassroots-level human capacity building, at a time when Israel itself was still very much a developing country. It has since blossomed into an extensive program of cooperation throughout the developing world, with the aim of promoting poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

About MCTC

The Mount Carmel International Training Center was founded by Golda Meir in Haifa in 1961. MCTC was the first training center of its kind in the domain of women's empowerment and since its inception has had a profound influence on both individuals and the policy arena. MCTC endeavours to provide professional women and men from developing countries and transitional societies with the necessary tools for women's empowerment. It aims to enable women to contribute to the socio-economic development processes of their communities and consequently advance their status. To this end, MCTC conducts training activities both in Israel and overseas, to advance women's participation in public life.

To date, over the half century that MCTC has been working, more than 18,000 women and men from over 150 countries have benefited from hundreds of training activities. Today, many of them hold key positions at the local or national level, or within United Nations development agencies.

MCTC focuses on three areas of study: Community Development, Early Childhood Education and Organization and Management of Microenterprises, all with gender as a cross-cutting issue. 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 November 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 advocated 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 ways 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 and social media 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

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, 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
- 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 Small Business Development Centers; Technological Incubators; Industrial Parks.

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 may be downloaded from MASHAV's website (<http://mashav.mfa.gov.il/mfm/Data/204248.doc>), or obtained from Israeli Diplomatic and/or Consular Representatives serving the applicant's country . All forms must be returned to Israeli Diplomatic and/or Consular Representatives who will forward them to us.

The completed applications for admission to the Workshop must be received at MCTC in Haifa, not later than **15 October, 2012**.

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, 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. **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 **3 December, 2012**. 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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