

8 equitable

RECOMMENDATIONS (Ideas - Options) (Group 3)

Introduction

- Universal access is far from a reality – not equitable
- Support for all initiatives developed - ITU, World Bank, IADB, private sector.
- Definition of universal access involves not just infrastructure, but also its creative use.
- Universal access will not just happen – it didn't in Canada – it needs to be a national and global policy objective.
- Culture: access can only be truly universal if information and communication are useful to users/communities. This means they are in their language and relate in some way to their reality, interests, etc.

In order to ensure universal access, it must be recognized that universal access needs to be fostered; it won't happen by itself. There is a particular need to use the infrastructure creatively & to have culturally relevant information & means of communication.

I- Infrastructure – Defining universal access

- That the Canadian government reiterate its support for the principle of equitable and universal access to new ICTs for individuals, communities and countries by actively promoting alternative models such as community telecentres and the use of ICTs by independent and community media.
- That the Canadian government take the initiative by promoting and implementing similar alternative models within its own borders, with a view to ensuring that this universal access includes remote communities and marginalized populations. Canada should promote the exchange of experiences between its Community Access: Connecting Canada's Communities to the Information Highway program and similar initiatives in other countries in order to contribute to the evaluation and improvement of these models.
- Canada possesses expertise in the development of policies for universal access. It should make this expertise available to both civil society and government in developing countries to assist in the development of national policies and regulations designed to make universal access a reality.
- That the Canadian government recognize the importance of ensuring progress with respect to the implementation of policies designed to ensure universal access to ICTs; this could be done by supporting programs facilitating the monitoring of this implementation by civil society players, with a special emphasis on individuals and the not-for-profit sector.

Canada should make use of its own expertise re policies for universal access & promote the continued use of alternative models such as community telecentres & the use of ICTs by indep & commun media. Monitoring of progress towards univ access should be accomplished by considering impl.

alternative models

