MOU to Narrow the Digital Gap Among the Different Segments of Abu Dhabi Community

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Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Centre (ADSIC) and ICDL GCC Foundation recently, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the "e-Citizen" initiative, which enables targeted segments of society with the required skills to use the Internet effectively for communicating, accessing information, and transacting online.

This agreement is in line with ADSIC's efforts in implementing its national e-Competence program which aims at enhancing Abu Dhabi's position on the e-Readiness index and promoting

the use of computers and the Internet among all segments of society, which in turn contributes to building a knowledge based society.

H.E. Rashed Lahej Al Mansoori, Director General of ADSIC said: "We have adopted "e-Citizen" as one of the strategic initiatives that will support the promotion of digital competence among various segments of society. We will make the programme is implemented on a large scale in the emirate and for various segments of society including government employees, women, retirees and job seekers. We expect this program to play a pivotal role in promoting the success of e-government initiatives in the emirate and improve its e-readiness to the highest international standards as well as strengthening Abu Dhabi's position as a regional leader in the field of information technology, particularly as the emirate pioneers in the launch of such an international certificate, at the regional level".

H.E. Al Mansoori added: "e-Citizen" programme targets the community groups in the Emirate that do not have the necessary skills to use computers and benefit from the Internet. This kind of literacy offers them many ways to benefit from the governmental and private internet services to perform daily tasks online, such as shopping, payment of different bills, e-Banking and having access to information. Moreover, the programme provides several levels of training on the basis of theoretical and practical competency. Level 1 trains the candidate on the basic skills and necessary knowledge to use the computer and the Internet, while Level 2 focuses on how to search for information. As for Level 3, it deals with e-Participation. The programme targets 10,000 people during the first year, and through it, the e-Citizen International Certificate shall be implemented as a benchmark for basic computer and Internet skills for different segments that have the priority in the Abu Dhabi community, such as women and governmental employees, while increasing the number in the next years and including other groups, in collaboration with ICDL GCC Foundation".

From his side, Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation, said, "We view this new partnership with the Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Center (ADSIC) to be of strategic significance and an invaluable endorsement to our efforts in furthering digital awareness in the Gulf region, as we share a common vision to making ICT attainable and usable by everyone. Our joint initiative with ADSIC to promulgate digital literacy will not only involve the support of the government of Abu Dhabi, but also stakeholders in the private sector that will benefit from the

massive market being created by the increase of online consumers through ICDL's e-Citizen programme."

The "e-Citizen" programme was launched as a global response to the urgent need for elevating the level of digital skills in the community in general. e-Citizen has been designed to help candidates get the most out of the Internet by explaining how it works and showing that it can be used for a range of purposes. These include dealing with government departments, finding information, buying products and communicating online with family and friends. The program follows a special unified approach that is regularly adjusted in line with the needs and requirements for each country separately taking into account the services available through the Internet by government agencies and local businesses.

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