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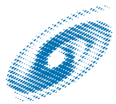
SI657/757: Information Technology and Global Development (WI 10)

Wk 7: Programs and Projects



General Notes:

- Updated syllabus
- April 12th class
- Examples and lit review for group projects
- Policy assessment paper: March 15th
- Today's lecture:
  prehistory of ICT4D;
  Women in Development;
  The Millennium Development Goals

Women in Development
(Gender and Development)

- The differential impact of development programs on men and women
- The distinctive challenges facing women (and children) in many developing country settings (poverty, inequality, violence, dependency)
  Gender-related Development Index: http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2009_EN_Table_K.pdf
  Global gender & development stats: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/wid_stats.html
- The contributions of gender-targeted programming to achieving broader developmental targets (cf. Grameen Bank microfinance and village phone initiatives)

ICT adoption and impact is mediated through, and mediating of, local social structure…

Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

ICT4D: Roots & Precursors…

- 1950s-1970s: mass communication and national development (e.g. Lerner's *Modernizing the Middle East*; Schramm, *Mass Media and National Development*) psychology of development – empathy, aspiration, national unity, etc.)
- 1970s: dependency, unequal flow, and cultural imperialism (the NWICO debates) vs. 'free flow of information' (esp. news and journalism)
- 1980s: telecommunications for development (e.g. ITU's 1985 'Missing Link' Report)
- Projects and campaigns: literacy, development education and extension (print, radio and TV-based)

ICT4D

Iconic examples

- telecenters, cyber-cafes;
- village phone projects;
- low-cost devices (OLPC, GHI);
- wireless and mesh networks;
- community radio
- content and local language initiatives
- sectoral apps (health, education, agriculture, finance, administration, etc.)

Forms: government, donor, community, and market-driven (BOP, social entrepreneurship) (cf. Heeks pro-, para-, and per-poor approaches)

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Limits and problems:

- Historical learning (the “X4D” literature)
- Evaluation & comparative learning
- Tech-centric (to neglect of fit, uptake, appropriation, local social structure)
- (Northern) donor-driven
- Unrealistic expectations of states and/or markets
- Isolated from key dev. sectors / programs / knowledge institutions

- ***Limited impact & weak sustainability***.

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SI657 – Wk 7 small group work: telecenters

- Distribute and discuss your reading notes on each of the Ghanaian, Indian, and Jamaican cases assigned as additional readings for this week (in that order). Each of you should lead a 5-6 min discussion of your assigned reading (other group members should ask questions of clarification etc.)
- Group question:
  1. What are 3-4 principal successes or accomplishments of telecenters, as reflected in this week's readings?
  2. What are 3-4 limits or common problems of telecenters, as reflected in this week's readings?
  3. What general principles or practical lessons can we draw from this experience for future ICT4D efforts?

The ICT4D Debate: proponents and skeptics

- *What are the 4-5 most powerful arguments or examples in favor of (proponents) or against (skeptics) the hypothesis that "**ICTs can be a major contributor to combating poverty, fostering broad-based economic growth, and achieving the Millennium Development Goals**"?*

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