Bridging the Last Quintile

Community Informatics, Telecentres, and Serving the ICT Unserved in Hong Kong, SAR

Hong Kong Internet Governance Forum
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ICT’s: Information & Communications Technologies

- What are ICT’s and Why do they matter?
- ICT’s as enablers
  - Economic enablers
  - Social enablers
  - Cultural enablers
  - Organizational enablers
  - Personal enablers
- ICT’s as instruments of transformation
  - Economic transformation
  - Organizational transformation
  - Social transformation
  - Cultural transformation
  - Personal transformation

The CHALLENGE IS TO MAKE ALL OF THESE AVAILABLE TO ALL
What is Community Informatics?

- Community Informatics (CI) concerned with enabling (empowering) “communities” with information and communications technologies (ICT’s)
- Community-focused planning, designing, & implementing ICTs in an Information Society
- Enabling/empowering (bottom up) communities with ICTs
- Moving beyond the “Digital Divide” to “effective use” for
  - Social cohesion,
  - Civic involvement,
  - Socio-economic development
  - Community focussed services and service delivery
- “Social appropriation”/community ownership of ICTs
- Designing for effective use
Telecentres

Telecentres provide the necessary infrastructure for Community Informatics at the local level

- Technical infrastructure
  - Internet/ICT access

- Social infrastructure
  - Technical literacy, training, support structures

- Organizational/management infrastructure
  - Networked
  - Locally based/driven

- Applications/use infrastructure
  - Community need—social inclusion, education/training, community empowerment
CI Lessons Learned for Telecentres

E-inclusion/ICT4D/enabling the local with ICTs (telecentres):

1. Bottom up community based strategies work best
2. Policy plays a key role
3. Research plays a significant role
4. Partnerships are essential--with governments, private sector, existing institutions,
5. Significance of networking for scaling up
6. Technology does matter (but not that much)
Stakeholders in Telecentres

Practitioners

Policy Makers

Researchers
Next Generation Telecentres

First generation Telecentres
* Concerned with access
* Familiarization, training, ad hoc applications
* General purpose

Next generation Telecentres
* Application focused
* Application designed
* Program linked
* Peer to peer learning
* ....
Bridging The Last Quintile (20%)

- Recognizing need to define and develop “quintile” specific applications/uses
- Public commitment/priority
- Delivery of program as close as possible to end user
- Technical/physical infrastructure to support Q. applications
  - Sites, accessibility, specific software
- Social infrastructure to support Q. applications
  - Technical literacy, training, support
- Organizational/management infrastructure to support Q. applications
  - Local, user/application based
  - Networked
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