

Mainstreaming ICT into development agencies

Volunteers as ICT enablers of development

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UN
Volunteers

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- ✚ Human development is about expanding choices
 - ⦿ Choices depend on opportunities
 - ⦿ Opportunities: a function of capacity, and empowerment

- ✚ Information and knowledge are key for the generation of opportunities

- ✚ ICT are (powerful) information tools
 - ⦿ ... and can be applied to obtain opportunities

- ✚ **ICT are enablers of human development**



Example: ICT in Education

- ✚ Promote new learning abilities, “student-centered learning”, based on team-work, communication and research
- ✚ Generate a virtual educational community allowing exchanges among students, teachers and organizations
- ✚ Fostering an open information culture
- ✚ Creating new educational content
- ✚ Enabling continuing (or life-long education), through cooperative work and virtual training
- ✚ Increasing productivity and quality in the administration of educational institutions
- ✚ Introducing new monitoring tools to measure quality of education

“Computers are the new finger-paint” – Mitch Resnick, MIT Media Lab

The Network Society

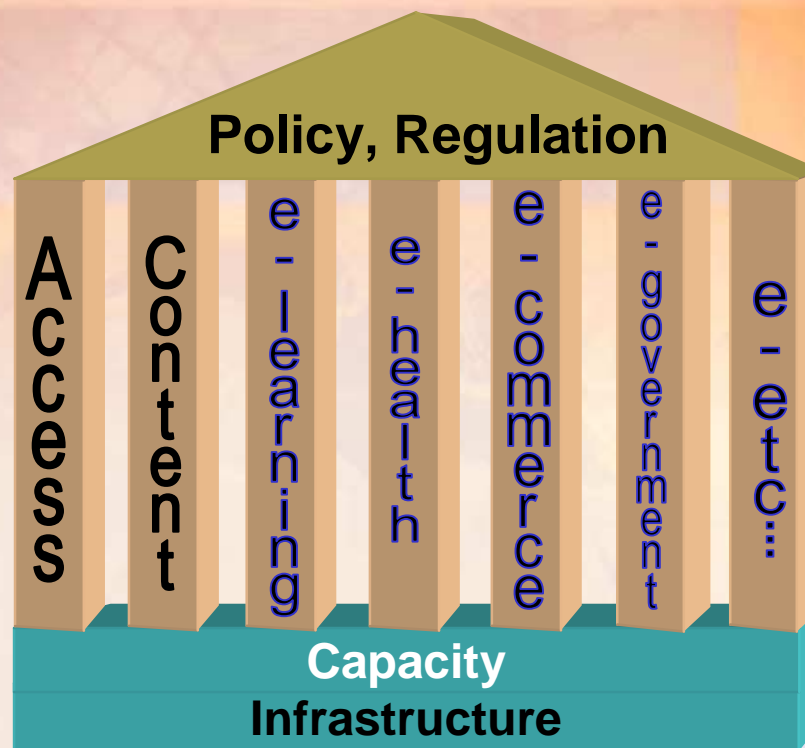


- ⊞ The Network Society is the new social structure of the Information Age
 - ⊙ made up of networks of production, power and experience
 - ⊙ new space of flows (cyberspace)
 - ⊙ communities bound by interest

- ⊞ Social exclusion from the Network Society means total exclusion

- ⊞ The “C” in ICT,
 - ⊙ Is mostly responsible for the emergence of the Network Society
 - ⊙ puts information at the service of human development

A simplified model for e-enabled societies



Capacity is at the basis of the structure and supports every element of it: that is UNV's niche!

Capacity building and the digital divide

- ⊞ Capacity building goes beyond training
 - ⊙ deep knowledge (Stiglitz)
 - ⊙ human and institutional capacity building

- ⊞ 1. **Capacity building on ICT for Development**
 - ⊙ awareness raising of ICT possibilities
 - ⊙ applications of ICT4D
 - ⊙ networking

- ⊞ 2. **ICT for human resource development (including education)**
 - ⊙ basic e-literacy
 - ⊙ e-learning
 - ⊙ online training



Mainstreaming ICT into Development Agencies

- # Powerful catalyzer for wider absorption of ICT in developmental processes
- # Lead by exemplifying action
- # Mainstreaming ICT is within each agency's reach
- # Better results in all aspects of an agency's work
- # What does it take? Two complementary approaches:
 - o **Internal**: integration of ICT into administrative and operational processes
 - o **External**: widespread application of ICT in field projects and initiatives supported by an agency
- # The principal challenge? To achieve the proper levels of internal capacity in an agency



1. Internal ICT integration

- ⌘ Key goals:
 - (1) simplified transactions, reduced mechanical tasks
 - (2) 24/7 access from anywhere by any staff member to all the information contained in corporate systems
 - (3) properly managed organizational knowledge assets
- ⌘ Complex, but underway in many agencies
- ⌘ Implies re-engineering of work processes
- ⌘ Biggest challenge: effecting necessary cultural change in the organization
- ⌘ Impacts field activities, particularly relations between HQ and field personnel

1. Internal ICT integration: elements

✚ From the administrative side:

Integrated financial, personnel, resource and project management applications (eg. ERP)

✚ From the content side:

Re-assessed information architecture
Knowledge management procedures and modules
· CMS
New roles for the “librarian”

✚ From the process side:

Online collaboration tools
Self-managing unit intranets
Web-based systems
Enhanced use of video/web conferencing
Participation in external e-discussions

✚ **General capacity needs:**

Awareness raising seminars for everyone (starting with Sr. mgmt)
Training for staff on new systems and methods
Individualized training on knowledge management

2. External (portfolio) ICT integration

Key goals:

- ◉ (1) ICT tools are consistently applied in projects to better reach their objectives and outcomes
- ◉ (2) projects are able to involve more people through networking
- ◉ (3) local stakeholders improve their possibilities to apply ICT to their human development processes
- ◉ (4) information and (explicit) knowledge are routinely captured and shared with interested people (inside and outside the organization)

Rarely undertaken in any agency (at an wide organizational level)

May require (/propel?) a re-structuring of development cooperation models (eg. UNDP's Cap Dev pubs)

Need a person in most every project with the responsibility of applying/building capacity of ICT

- ◉ ... and it shouldn't be the project manager!
- ◉ special ICT-oriented civil society orgs or volunteering initiatives (like UNITeS) can provide the necessary support

2. External (portfolio) ICT integration: elements

✦ From the content side:

Every project with its website, agency can facilitate :

- web site architecture & page templates
- web hosting services

Access to existing relevant content

Production of project-related content

Electronic marketing and outreach

✦ **General capacity needs:**

Both for project staff / local stakeholders

- basic technological literacy
- application of ICT tools to development needs

Digital content production

Online collaboration tools and methods

✦ From the process/applications side:

ICT-enabling the project at formulation

Assessment of stakeholders information needs

Networking the project

Application of proper ICT tools (for health, education, agriculture, etc.)

Online monitoring/reporting for project managers and target communities

Involvement of online volunteers

What is ICT Volunteering?

- ✦ Range of volunteer action whose common characteristic is the targeted use of ICTs (particularly digital technologies)
 - ◉ Actions by volunteers resulting in the practical use by development actors of relevant ICTs (UNITeS)
 - ◉ Use of ICT (particularly the Internet) to enable and facilitate volunteer collaboration (OV)

- ✦ Volunteering's niche in ICT4D: capacity development on the uses (ie. applications) and opportunities (ie. awareness) of ICT in any area of development.

Volunteers and capacity building in ICT4D

- # Massive needs around the world
- # Many people willing to contribute
- # Mechanisms already exist:
 - o UNITeS, NetCorps, VITA...

- # Volunteer added-value:
 - o they “accompany” a specific development process
 - o “powered by solidarity”
 - o youth as a under-utilized development asset
 - o Internet’s culture is (still) a culture of solidarity and volunteering



Volunteering may be essential to respond to the needs in capacity building in the Network Society

Ideas for UNITeS assignments

ICT Volunteers:

- ✚ provide basic technological literacy
 - ⦿ help people with their first contacts with ICT
- ✚ broker/provide information/knowledge
 - ⦿ e.g., through telecenters
- ✚ promote the creation of local content
 - ⦿ economic, services, cultural, etc.
- ✚ develop capacity for local professionals
 - ⦿ health workers, public officials, farmers, journalists, social workers, etc.
- ✚ build awareness raising of decision-makers
 - ⦿ explore possibilities opened by ICT

More **ideas** for UNITeS assignments

ICT Volunteers:

- ✚ help integrate ICT in schools/learning
 - ⦿ targeting teachers
- ✚ support e-Government services
 - ⦿ helping citizens to use/demand them
- ✚ support Small and Medium Enterprises
 - ⦿ better access to clients, providers, prices, laws, etc.
- ✚ create and manage project-based networks (“powered by volunteers”)
 - ⦿ adjust (propel?) new trends in technical cooperation
 - ⦿ eg. involving Online Volunteers

Volunteering in the Information Age

✚ Our basic message to WSIS

✚ How does Volunteering shape the Information Age?

- ⦿ It helped to create it! (UNIX, Internet, the Web, etc.)
- ⦿ Helping to bridge the digital divide (eg. UNITEs)
- ⦿ Establishing of a “networked” civil society (global, regional, national, local)

✚ How does the Information Age shape Volunteering?

- ⦿ Using the Internet as cooperation channel (eg. Online Volunteering)
- ⦿ Networking volunteer action
- ⦿ Extending ICT use within volunteer-based orgs

Networking Development Cooperation

- # Network Society requires new development cooperation structures and processes
- # Global citizen involvement
- # Connected development nodes
 - o individuals, projects, organizations
- # Knowledge gardening (Denning)
 - o connection rather than collection
- # New project architecture
 - o establishing/managing networks to maximize generation and application of knowledge for development
- # Change of organizational cultures
 - o Adapted staff profiles



Types of development networks

- ⌘ Institutional networks
 - ⦿ among development agencies
 - ⦿ among staff of an agency
- ⌘ Thematic networks
- ⌘ Project networks
- ⌘ Human metadata networks
 - ⦿ knowledge objects
 - ⦿ eg.: experience in applying microcredit schemes for artisans

Types of Volunteer-based Networks

- ✦ Action networks, connecting individual volunteers to development organizations (eg. OV)
- ✦ (Endogenous) Knowledge network created by a VIO (eg. UNV or the Red Cross)
- ✦ Institutional networks across VIOs
- ✦ The “Open-Source” approach to development (eg. Linux); this is a type of action network
- ✦ Human Metadata Networks
- ✦ Volunteers can also participate in other networks, to:
 - Collaborate
 - Access information and knowledge
 - Broker partnerships

Variable network geometries in development cooperation



Conclusions

- # Proper use of ICT contributes to human development
 - o it expands opportunities and choices
- # Development agencies need to show the way by mainstreaming ICT, for credibility and for better results:
 - o into its operations (internally) as well as into its portfolios (externally)
- # Capacity building is the single most important requirement for mainstreaming ICT into the agencies; cultural change the biggest challenge
- # Special ICT volunteer programmes can provide invaluable services to help permeate ICT into agency portfolios
- # Network logic offers a different way to structure development cooperation in the future
- # Volunteers can play a key role in development networks
- # *" Working as a network, working in the Network"*

¡Many Thanks!