

Brief Concept paper on ICTs for ALL Pakistan Vision-2015

Introduction

The last decade has seen information and communication technologies (ICT) dramatically transforming the world, enabling innovation and productivity increases, connecting people and communities, and improving standards of living and opportunities across the globe. While changing the way individuals live, interact, and work, ICT has also proven to be a key precondition for enhanced competitiveness and economic and societal modernization, as well as an important instrument for bridging economic and social divides and reducing poverty.

The extraordinary achievements of ICT has made it possible to look forward and imagine the next transformations enabled by ICT—transformations 2.0. The pace of technological advance is accelerating and ICT is increasingly becoming a ubiquitous and intrinsic part of people's behaviors and social networks as well as of business practices and government activities and services.

In Pakistan although we have achieved some tangible progress in the areas of teledensity, Internet growth, computer usage and use of mobile phones etc but still we have remained far behind the International standards in understanding and implementing ICTs for development specially in health, education, agriculture, governance and national integration. While world have moved from E-Government to Mobile Government and from ICT for development to ICT-enabled transformations like Internet banking, Building communities around digital highways, ICT's growing impact on poverty reduction, ICT for an effective social strategy, Localization 2.0 etc, we are still confused in applying ICT in development projects spending huge public money. As a state Pakistan is answerable to a number of international initiatives in 2015 like MDGs, WSIS etc. Are we still planning to be in the bottom of ranking or at least want to be at a face saving stage.

ICTs also have built-in capacities to enable the developing societies to bridge the development gap on a fast track and during recent years number of developing countries have shown remarkable pace of progress using the vehicle of ICT4D. Pakistan has lot of potentials and we can still BOUNCE BACK if we make a road map of development based on use of ICTs for all in areas of education, health, agriculture and good governance. This is ICT4ALL Pakistan vision-2015.

The concept

Today we are standing at a crossroad. While few having their own vested interests at the back of their minds have some serious apprehensions about future of Pakistan, there are very strong

indicators that we would not only emerge as a very fast developing country in near future but would also regain our lost grounds very soon.

On many occasions in the past we as a nation has shown remarkable performance in many fields of common life. Agreeing the fact that there have been some serious lapses in overall management of our vital institutions but at the same time although in a hard way but we have learnt some lessons during the process. Today our millions of Pakistanis are contributing very effectively in making success stories abroad only because they are working in the environment which is totally based on use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

During past when entire developing world was keeping the foundations of essential and vital services like health, education, good governance and creation of employment opportunities on use of ICTs, we ignored the most effective and powerful vehicle of development i.e use of ICTs as enabler in development sector.

We can still cover the damage done and catch up with developing world because as a nation we are adoptive to technology based change towards improvement. Highest level of teledensity and presence of Internet cafes even in remote areas is sufficient proof of this adoptive capabilities.

If some best international practices to use ICTs for Development (ICT4D) are applied under a joint action campaign by all stake holders, **we can still BOUNCE BACK and emerge as a fast developing country by the year 2015. This is ICT4ALL Pakistan Vision-2015.**

What Does ICT4ALL Means ?

- * Education for ALL
- * Health for ALL
- * Good Governance for ALL
- * Economic Opportunities for ALL
- * Jobs for ALL
- * Knowledge & Many More... for ALL

Challenges.

- * Fast growth of population.
- * Poor infrastructure for development specially in rural areas.

- * Exploitation by middle men (especially in rural areas).
- * No institutional arrangements for responding the STANDARDS OF DEVELOPMENTS of international initiatives, donor organizations ,think tanks and watch guard organizations.
- * Poor awareness about **MDGs, WSIS**, INTERNET GOVERNANCE, ICANN, Network Readiness Index.
- * Lack of reliable Statistics regarding vital information needs specially by foreign development partners.
- * Serious Governance issues specially in rural areas.
- * Senior level management specially those who approve and supervise spending of huge public funds in health, education, economic empowerment needs to be educated in the area of ICTs for development (already wasted huge public money).
- * Most of the Govt organizations are competing with each other in development projects. (duplication of efforts and multiple redundancies).
- * Internet is available in rural areas but NO content and Web applications are available specially in Urdu.
- * No training programs to professionally manage and make the telecentres sustainable.
- * Result is that Today we are lacking the understanding of overall development with a country level vision and following the world best practices for rapid development. There are number of isolated success stories but since these are not linked with a grand vision of development, so their overall impact at national level is also not visible.

How ICTs (Telecentres) can help the people in rural areas to have innovative ideas.

- * Number of Ways to earn money using ICTs for low tech jobs in villages.
- * Free training programs in multiple skills/trades.
- * E-education/telemedicine/E-government etc (through cell phone/ Internet based applications.)
- * E-Agriculture.
- * E-sohalat.

- * E-shariat/e-forms/e-vet/e-jobs
- * Knowledge about Clean Drinking Water.
 - a) Stone/Mud Water reservoir on a near y hill to store rain water.
 - b) Play pump.
 - c) Plastic sheets on roof tops to store rain water.
 - d) More innovative ideas.....
- * Alternative energies. (How to do is available)
- * Organic Farming.
- * Public health care.
- * National Integration (web based Networking).
- * Learning from Global best practices.
- * Free access to huge information resources.
- * Information about exam results, licenses, jobs, train timings etc at village level.
- * And many more.....

Our Strong points.

- a) Highest number of available Young Boys and Girls (Age 15-30) in comparison to population ratio at global level.
- b) Highly skilled manpower working abroad and want to contribute for progress of Pakistan.
- c) Availability of cell phones/Internet in almost all parts of Pakistan.
- d) Still Pakistan at number 88 in the ranking of Networked Readiness Index in 2010-2011 report of World Economic Forum.
- e) Huge energy resources (Already indicated and are in pipe line).
- f) World is facing food crisis and we are traditionally a agriculture base country. We only have to quickly revert to e-agriculture and learn from world best practices to produce more.

g) our strategic location near deep sea.

h) Many more.....

Road Map of the ICT4ALL Vision-2015 project.

A) Already Done. Project E-Village by Pakistan Social Association.

(www.evillage.net.pk)

- * Awareness and establishment of links with relevant persons/universities/organizations in Pakistan.
- * First E-village of Pakistan.... Merabagwal District Islamabad.
- * Second telecentre in Boys High school Merabagwal District Islamabad.
- * Third telecentre in Alfrabi girls school & College Chara Islamabad
- * Moving towards Margala Vally concept. (Establishing Data entry & low tech software support centers in villages).
- * Established links with few International organizations promoting ICT4D.

B) Way Forward (ICTs for ALL (ICT4ALL Vision-2015))

- * Create awareness for the formation of **ICT Commission of Pakistan**.
- * Identify ICTs ambassadors and subject specialists for e-Health ,E-education, E -governance, e-Agriculture and economic empowerment etc
- * Identify and liaison with all Govt, NGOs, private sector organizations and donor agencies projects for development specially in rural areas for coordination and their capacity building to apply the latest concepts of ICTs for development.
- * Identify and map all web enabled material in URDU.
- * Identify and map all free web enabled sources of knowledge/training programs especially in hands in skills.
- * Establishment of **PAKISTAN TELECENTRE ACADEMY**. (Knowledge centre for Content & application Development and training of telecentre Managers).
- * Establish links/liaison with all international initiatives on ICTs for development (Build the capacity of Govt officers to understand ICT for development and timely respond to

International Performance Measuring Standards. Learn from success stories of other countries.

C) Planned Road Map.

- * Meetings, Planning and Coordination with relevant stake holders up to **November 2011.**
- * Celebrate December-2011 as " **Month of ICTs** ". (Workshops/seminars and awareness about ICT4ALL project through media).
- * Celebrate 2012 as " **Year of ICTs** ", start rolling out services gradually and build the capacities of all to chip-in and contribute as planned.
- * Establish 1000 Telecenters in different parts of Pakistan during 2012 with the help of network/support achieved by that time.
- * Provide training/content/applications support to all other Telecenters in Pakistan established by other organizations (Public & private sectors).
- * Organizations and departments may be brought on board to **adopt villages for more telecentres.**
- * Catch up and follow the world best practices during 2013-2015 based on experiences gained and re-align rapidly based on ground realities and experiences gained during the process.
- * Establish country-wide network of all telecentres for reaping the benefits of ITU Project " **Linking all villages of the world by 2015** ".
- * This would complete the first phase of ICT4ALL Vision-2015 and thena skilled and motivated force of young " Agents of Change " would take over and we would bounce back to regain our lost grounds (Inshallaha).

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