

The Journal of Information Technology for Development

Call for papers

Special Issue on

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Human Development

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Aims and Scope

We believe that development is about having the ability to make informed choices about decisions that are influencing your own life as well as the world in which we live. Development has often been correlated with economic growth, but more recent studies suggest social and welfare criteria to be more important. These are education, literacy, malnutrition, infant mortality, gender empowerment which are included in United Nations development measure and most researchers prefer the notion of Human development. Against this backdrop there is clearly a gap to fill in Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) research as there is yet very little research building upon the notion of human development. Special Issues in the Information Technology for Development Journal by Madon and Bada (see ITD 12-3) and Lesier Silva and Chris Westrup (15-2) have illustrated the importance of this concept. This special issue develops on these findings and seeks research that investigates various ways in which information technologies and information systems are used to further human development.

A social view of development can be constructively framed by Amartya Sen's (1999) five constitutive and instrumental freedoms. Whereas economic and political research has extensively engaged in the work of Sen, there is scarce use of it within the research field of ICT4D. Many references are made to Sen, but engagement with his theories is still rare – with a few, but very interesting exceptions. Since Sen's notion of development as freedom has had a tremendous impact on how main ICT4D practitioners such as UNDP and NGOs view development, this special issue calls for an increased use of his, and similar, work.

The Indian economist and Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen was one of the first to criticize the use of GDP as a measure for development, and he instead introduced the notion of freedom as a

The Journal of Information Technology for Development

measure of development. Freedom is about having an influence over the decision making regarding your own life, and development is seen as the process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy. Sen sees freedom as both the means and ends for development and the main 'freedoms' in question are: political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security. An important point that Sen makes is also how these instrumental freedoms are interrelated and enhance each other.

Whereas much research has demonstrated that ICTs e.g. can provide people in developing countries with more information, this special issue seeks to understand what kind of freedoms this can yield (if any), and how this can be evidenced. Emerging issues in relation to Sen's constructs can relate to (but are not limited to):

- 1) How can information technology and information systems contribute to political freedoms such as free speech, participation in elections and an uncensored press?
- 2) How can information technology and information systems increase or stimulate equal opportunities to participate in trade or get credit?
- 3) How can information technology and information systems improve social opportunities such as education and health care?
- 4) How can information technology and information systems support transparency guarantees such as the prevention of corruption and violation of society's rules of conduct?
- 5) How can information technology and information systems strengthen protective security rights related to social safety nets such as unemployment benefits and famine relief?

In relation to which ICTs that are discussed there are no limitations. It should however be noted that we find mobile technologies of particular interest because they are available and distributed enough to make a difference. It should also be noted that we do not look for technology stories, but how *information systems* – including technology, people, and procedures – are set up to achieve some desired change. This often means that not just one technology but several are used in a concerted manner. Further, we do not look only for success stories. Failed projects may be just as interesting as successes as guidance for future efforts.

The aim of this special issue is to provide a forum for research and practice specifically directed at the human development impact of information technology and information systems. Papers must explain how the work is related to the notion of human development and contribute to a better understanding of how the field of ICT4D can better engage with development theories in the spirit of Sen. Research may be theoretical, conceptual, analytical, or empirical in nature. We welcome papers in several categories, such as:

- Research showing instances where information technology and information systems have an impact on people
- Empirically based research addressing the relation between human freedoms and ICT4D
- Conceptual and theoretical research

The Journal of Information Technology for Development

- Methods: How do we measure, evidence, and evaluate human development, freedom and empowerment?
- Critique of or critical engagement with Sen's capability approach and its constructs

Deadlines

Deadline for submissions of papers: February 1, 2011

Notification of initial acceptance: March 31, 2011

Deadline for revised papers: May 15, 2011

Notification of final acceptances: July 15, 2011

Deadline for final versions: September 1, 2011

Tentative Publication Date: December 2011

Paper Submission Instructions

Authors are invited to submit original papers using the journal submission and reviewing web site <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/itd>. In order to submit your paper, please register through this website to create an account. When uploading your paper please indicate that it is being submitted for the ICT for Human Developments special issue. Authors must simultaneously email an electronic copy of the submitted paper to the guest editors (email addresses below).

This journal follows a double blind review process. All papers will undergo a process of one or more rounds of double blind review. After initial screening, full research papers will be reviewed by selected members of the editorial board and peers from an international pool of researchers for quality, consistency and research contribution. Particular attention is paid to the use of research method. Please refer to papers published in the Journal when developing your manuscript. These may be found through the following website: <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g919638702>

Please remember to remove all your personal identifiable information from the main manuscript before submitting it for review. Submissions to ITD may be either full research papers (maximum 9000 words) published in the main part of the Journal, or commentaries published in the section "Views from Practice" (maximum 2000 words).

Papers must contain original results and must not be submitted elsewhere while being evaluated for ITD. Detailed submission guidelines can be found at http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g919638702~tab=submit~mode=paper_submission_instructions.

Your paper must contain original results and must not be submitted elsewhere while it is being evaluated for the Journal of Information Technology for Development. If you have submitted a version of this paper to another outlet, please let us know and ensure that it is cited in your submission.

The Journal of Information Technology for Development

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