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An Analysis on Endeavours in ICT for Non-Urban Development: An Indian Viewpoint

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Abstract – Various initiatives in the recent past portrayed the significant role that the I.C.T plays in the realm of rural development. Several projects have reduced the costs, and it also has increased transparency. A large number of rural e-Governance applications, developed as pilot projects were aimed at offering easy access to citizen services and improved processing of government to citizen transactions. This paper presents a brief review of the innovative projects in Information and communication technologies for rural development and how far it has contributed. The other aim is to ponder over the achievements and the failures of ICT in the sustainable development march. The analysis also indicates communication related initiatives and projects for development before media liberalization and post media liberalization.

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INTRODUCTION

ICTs are those technologies that might be used to interlink information technology devices, for example, personal computers with communication technologies, for example, telephones and their telecommunication networks. The PC and laptop with e-mail and Internet provides the best example. Michiels and Van Crowder (2001) have defined ICTs 'as a range of electronic technologies which when converged in new designs are flexible, adaptable, enabling and capable of changing organizations and redefining social relations'. The range of technologies is increasing constantly and 'there is a convergence between the new technologies and conventional media' (Michaels and Van Crowder, 2001:8). This quick and progressing convergence

means that devices, for example, digital cameras, digital video cameras and players, personal digital partners, slide projectors and mobile telephones are additionally compatible with more conventional media, for example, radio (digital, satellite), television (cable, digital, satellite). In this manner most devices can now be linked to others to share and exchange information and permit it to be used in such a route, to the point that they can additionally be categorized as ICTs. Even books are being incorporated into ICTs either through the potential for casual web publishing or more formal digital book publishing with designated readers or 'e-books'. ICTs, therefore, are an expanding assembly of technologies that could be used to collect, store and share information between people utilizing multiple devices and multiple media.

There is no proper definition for country development. Be that as it may consistently, it means development

for country areas, to empower the voiceless, reduce exploitation. One of the significant main thrusts for country development is communication.

In recent times, ICT is assuming a role of impetus in provincial development. It is used in every aspect of information, management and governance of development.

ICT means provision of innovative approach to facilitate information and communication technologies in the rustic realm. The advancement in ICT could be utilized for furnishing relevant information and service to the farmers, thereby encouraging an environment for more rewarding agriculture. Farmers of rustic areas could be educated with modern means of growth through ICT.

ICT EMPOWERED PROGRAMMERS

Post-Independence, the Government took upon itself the significant responsibility of development in rustic realm. Numerous projects were implemented. As the access to radio was supreme throughout that period, the use of radio for rustic development was conceived first. It came to be reputed to be Radio country forums. The expedition was carried out from February to April 1956 in five districts of Maharashtra state by All India Radio (AIR). The researchers indicated a positive knowledge pick up around the listener. All genres of country segments were some piece of the radio programmed. However the radio country discussion for rustic development completed not continued for long.

SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment)- is considered to be one of the biggest technological experiments in education and provincial development. The one year experiment (august 1975-july 1976) aimed to provide direct TV of instructional and educational television in 2400 villages in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan. Over 500 conventional television sets spread over 335 villages in knead district, Gujarat was likewise a piece of SITE. The expedition completed not discriminate between country poor and urban rich for information and communication.

In Post media liberalization phase, Government of India, announced the strategy for Community Radio Broadcasting. Neighborhood radio is expected to concentrate on issues relating to health, education, environment, agriculture, provincial and group development.

Nation's first neighborhood radio station became operational on February 1, 114 on Anna University, Chennai. Another cable neighborhood radio station, named as Name Dwain or our voices was set up earlier in Body kola, Karnataka. The villagers believe that "this radio station is our own because it speaks about us and in our dialect". It addresses their most development needs.

On 16 November 2006, the Government of India notified new Community radio guidelines which permit Ngos and other civil society associations to claim and operate neighborhood radio stations. In the ballpark of 4,000 neighborhood radio licenses are on offer crosswise over India, According to Government sources. By 30 November 2008, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, had received 297 provisions for group radio licenses, incorporating 141 from Ngos and other civil society associations, 105 from educational foundations and 51 for 'ranch radio' stations to be controlled by agricultural universities and agricultural extension centers ('Krishi Vigyan Kendras'). Of these, 107 group radio stations have been cleared for licensing through the issue of Letters of Intent. 13 Grant of Permission Agreements (GOPA) has been signed with license candidates under the new scheme.

By 30 November 2008, there were 38 operational group radio stations in the nation. Of these, two are controlled by Ngos and the rest by educational foundations. The main group based radio station, licensed to a NGO (as notable from yard based radio) was launched on 15 October 2008, when 'Sangham Radio' in Pastapur village, Medak district, Andhra Pradesh state, was switched on at 11.00am. Sangham Radio, which telecasts on 90.4 Mhz, is licensed to Deccan Development Society (DDS), a NGO that works with women's assemblies in something like 75 villages of Andhra Pradesh. The group radio station is managed by "General" Narsamma and Algoile Narsamma. The second NGO-led neighborhood radio

station in India was launched on 23 October 2008 at "Taragram" in Orchha, Madhya Pradesh state. Named 'Radio Bundelkhand' after the Bundelkhand region of central India where it is located, the radio station is licensed to the Society for Development Alternatives (DA), a Delhi-based NGO. Radio Bundelkhand likewise telecasts on 90.4 Mhz for a day, incorporating two hours of repeat show.

As per the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 47 neighborhood radio stations were operational in India by 1 November 2009, incorporating 45 facilities based stations and two CRS run by Ngos. By December 2009, the number of CR stations run by common society aggregations had presumably gone up to seven, incorporating Sangham Radio (Pastapur, Medak District, Andhra Pradesh), Radio Bundelkhand (Orchha, Madhya Pradesh), Mann Deshi Tarang (Satara, Maharashtra), Namma Dhwani (Budikote, Karnataka), Radio Mattoli (Wayanad, Kerala), Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli (Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu) and Barefoot (Tilonia, Rajasthan). "kunya panje kutchi" additionally focused on limit building for elected women in Panchayats on development problems.

For the last few years back the State Government, NGOs and some innovative companies have tried to overcome technologically barrier by developing pilot projects in a Rural Setting. Kiosk based approaches to deliver e-governance have received considerable attention and finance. Bhoomi is a kiosk based project of Karnataka and holds millions of records of land ownership. The system called E-Seva in the Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh, including twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, is also very successful with thousands of citizens using the system for paying bills, getting permits and licenses. Another innovative project such as CARD (Computer aided administration of registration department) achieved success in Andhra Pradesh. The information kiosk installed by different entrepreneurs with help from the state governments helped citizens make payment of electricity bills, get birth certificates and contact police stations by e-mail. Another important rural information project is Gyandoot in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, where every village has an information kiosk that facilitate information related to seeds, crops, resources etc. many e-governance projects have been implemented in various states, like the U.N.D.P supported Jana Mitra Scheme in Rajasthan, Choice in Chattisgarh, Lokmitra in Himachal Pradesh, Lokvani in Uttar Pradesh., Jai Kishan in Uttranchal. The Government of West Bengal has taken up a project of setting up about 1500 community library and information centre in the villages for providing normal library services relating to career and vocational opportunities.

MOTIVATION PROGRAMMES FOR ECOFRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT

Sristi, the society for research and initiatives for sustainable technologies and establishments, is

encouraging the use of ICT for strengthening the limit of grassroots inventors, advancements and entrepreneurs engaged in conserving bio-diversity and developing eco- friendly answers for nearby problems. Honey Bee , Gian etc are inspiring the soul of developments, encouraging experimentation at grass foundations of knowledge rich economically poor people by converting the innovators into items.

Samuha is setting up a pilot project to use Icts and GIS technology for a networked Hiv/aids intervention and awareness program in devadurga Taluka of Koppal district in North Karnataka. Money (neighborhood access to sustainable health) is a media lab Asia project for investigating how I.t could be used to improve rustic healthcare in an economically sustainable manner.

The Infodev sponsored project trained low income women with several impairments like constraining language and communication abilities for ICT enabled sector. Under this project small batches of selected trainees were given intensive involved computer preparing based on real life experiences utilizing MS Office 2000. Telnet , a telenetworking project by Suvidya and Anchorage based in Bangalore, plans to empower rustic and semirural women in the age bunch 18-35 years of Ramanagram Taluk, Bangalore district.

The Grassco project is aimed at carrying threefold connectivity - Phones, Internet and transport. Under the Grassco scheme over 5,000 adolescent men on bicycles will convey mobiles phone equipped with CDMA wireless neighborhood circle into 5000 West Bengal villages.

The Indian Railways is additionally employing innovative facilities by the use of technology. The Railways use an office called Online Transaction Processing (OLTP) whereby the seats in different trains could be easily reserved by the customer in real time. This reduced to considerable level the allocated portion and defilement that prevailed in the Railways at one time. Line passenger whether rich or poor, connected or non-connected can easily get a berth for his journey. The Karnataka Government is wanting to situated up computerized Raita Mitra Kendras (Farmers Outreach Center) at all 35 hobli-s, or mandala-s, of Belgaum district in North Karnataka. The Raita Mitra Kendra will to go about as an interface between open and private sector technologies. It will additionally provide information on product preparation, on market prices of agri-items, and on soil conditions. It will facilitate procurement of fertilizers and pesticides to the famers at subsidized rates.

In India the farmers in the state of Punjab are selling their produce through online selling at farmerbazaar.com. Here the farmer is informed of the best price all around the nation before securing a deal, in this way the middlemen who used to make a great

deal of money has given approach to farmers getting the benefits. The Warna Wired Village Project in Maharashtra, India is another such project. This project serves the information needs of the farmers for different product growth practices of significant yields, sugarcane development practices, pest and disease control, marketing information, dairy and sugarcane processing information upto the village level. Amul in Anand District of Gujarat is another success story. Dhan Foundation is experimenting with Icts for use in its Microcredit activities. Another micro finance organization, SKS is utilizing 'savvy cards' as a component of its work. They are currently expanding their micro-finance and micro-enterprise system to reduce poverty by reaching out to 25,000 poor families in 1,000 villages of provincial Medak District of AP, where they have 4 branches. Online Marketing and CAD of Artisanal Goods by Ascent, a Bangalore-based NGO, is working with several state agencies to implement Computer Aided Design (CAD) systems in sections of northern Karnataka, to enhance the artisanal preparation of "Kolhapuri" style of chappals. The India Agriline Project, by the EID Parry enterprise of the Murugappa assembly, is aimed at enhancing e-Commerce in the agricultural sector. As a component of this project, it has assembled an agriportal, www.indiagriline.com. Karshaka Pragati is a project launched by Cooptions Technologies in rustic Andhra Pradesh. It is aimed at giving convenient managing an account, trade and agricultural services to farmers, incorporating village saving money and trade, procurement of handling and investment credit, information on fertilizers, pesticides, and other agri-items market prices. TAFE Ltd. has launched its entryway www.jfarmindia.com in order to make J-Farm's agri-information available to farmers over several states in their regional languages. The gateway will additionally provide information on research and field tests of products conducted on the J-Farm premises by different universities. The website has bilingual scanning facilities in English and in Tamil. Karnataka Microfinance Project The project helps a NGO to track farmer credits over 124 centres spread over 110 villages. Tribal Monsoon is a project aimed at preserving the creative social heritage by connecting artisan communities from the Indian Subcontinent with arts/crafts enthusiasts worldwide. The website tribalmonsoon.com connects worldwide demand for eastern decorative abstractions to the supply of cottage industries of South Asia and beyond. e-Choupal, the unique web based initiative of ITC's International Business Division, offers the Farmers of India all the information, items and services they need to enhance ranch gainfulness, improve homestead gate price realization and cut transaction costs.

CONCLUSION

Today Urban and semi urban areas are blessed with different modes of media which has virtually changed

their lifestyle. In the rural arena, various successful e-governance initiatives, the improvement of its infrastructure and many ICT projects for development are giving hope to abolish the digital divide in India. We can only say that it is just the beginning; we have to walk miles to reach our goal. But, we have to continuously monitor the requirements to sustain various initiatives and projects. To eradicate the digital divide between the rich and poor, we require adequate financial support, support of the government, industry, community participation, encouraging private partnerships, massive campaign on e-governance involving rural people. Many technologies are developed for the literate class but we need to build technologies for the masses.

Rural information systems have traditionally focused on supplying information to the Rural poor and supplying information about rural areas to policy makers, but it is now recognized that past systems have been largely ineffective in addressing the needs of the rural poor. The extension of agricultural information in particular is evolving beyond merely transmitting messages (although this is still important). It is becoming more open, more participatory and more demand driven, involving interactivity, negotiation and two-way information exchanges. There is a new emphasis on the acquisition of information and enabling the rural poor to request information specific to their particular livelihood needs. Communication specialists increasingly recognize the enormous potential of ICTs to support and enhance these changes.

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