Examples (Models) of Research Projects

Presentation by Esther Williams
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What is the next step?
You will wish to investigate something that will add to our knowledge; make a difference to our lives
Action research or applied research is important
Action research builds projects on the ground and tangible best practices
We need research that emphasises the importance of both theory and application
There is no single model of action research. There are a number of approaches.

7 principles for ICT4D
- Offer concrete solutions
- Move at the pace of the community
- Learn from mistakes
- Localise global communication
- Work with gender perspective
- Speak with one voice
- Generate new knowledge

Putting people first - benefits?
- Innovation and creative applied research/development offering concrete solutions
- Strengthen and Build Capacities within the region
- Investigate Patterns and Trends - overview the changing ICT needs in the region
- Replication and Multiplier Effects: identifying where ICT can be used to solve real regional development problems, replicating these solutions, and creating multiplier effects learning from mistakes
- Collaborate more effectively

What type of research can I undertake?
What must you, as a researcher, bear in mind when deciding on a research topic - Scope:
- Research and development into innovative ICT and networking solutions and applications
- Focus on practical and replicable approaches and techniques
- Research on the outcomes and social and economic impacts of specific ICT policies and interventions and application of Internet technologies
- Research on policy matters affecting Internet networking in the Pacific region, especially gender equity, social equity, sustainable communities, and technology diffusion/transfer, and benefits to rural areas
- Research on ICT for use in industry, businesses esp SMEs
Before you start, you need a vision, for instance:
Providing accelerated access to ICT for all Pacific Islanders
Create ICT-enabled environments
Create e-opportunities that will improve the lives of the rural and urban poor
Ultimately, ICTs permeates all levels of society

Some Project Areas which you could consider
Bridging the digital divide and providing equitable access - focus on rural poor, rural access, overcoming gender divide, connectivity, socio-economic cultural issues
Developing capacity to deploy ICTs - DE, SMEs, e-business, e-government
Engaging regional technical engineers - leapfrogging technical adoptions
Networking innovations - opportunities for south-south ICT4D exchanges
ICT policy and development

Some of our research themes
- Poverty reduction and ICT (including the MDG)
- Education technologies and DE
- Rural connectivity and telecommunication community centres
- ICTs and gender issues
- Networking
- E-government
- E-commerce
- ICT and SMEs

WSIS Theme for 2003 (World Summit for the Information Society)
- "Ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies ... are available to all"

ICTs as a Tool for Economic and Social Development – Meeting the Millennium Development Goals
- "The urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology for promoting the goals of the United Nations (UN) Millennium Declaration and to find effective and innovative ways to put this potential at the service of development for all"

What are some examples?
I would like to share with you some information on examples as member of the IDRC R&D Grants Committee for Asia and the Pacific.

- A total of 26 grants were awarded during this period
  - www.panasia.org.sg/grants/awards/
- The new IDRC/APDIP/APNIC/AMIC partnership - 2002 - 2003
  - IDRC, APDIP, APNIC are the principle contributors
  - AMIC manages and administers the Programme
This Committee commits funds ranging from US$5,000.00 for small projects to US$30,000.00 for large ones

1st Competition Round (January 2002)
- 97 proposals received from 26 countries
2nd Competition Round (September 2002)
- 103 proposals received from 17 countries
13th (13) Grants were awarded for 2002
3rd Competition Round (February 15, 2003)
- 49 proposals received from 20 countries
Six (6) Grants were awarded in March 2003
Examples

- Development of ICT Based Telemedicine System for Primary Community Healthcare in Indonesia Biomedical Engineering Laboratory, Institute Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia
- Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) Assisted Learning Tool for the Deaf in Pakistan, Sustainable Development Networking Programme
- Wireless Internet Post Office, IBM India Research
- Jhai Remote IT Village, Jhai Foundation, Lao PDR
- Nepal Internet Exchange, Computer Association of Nepal
- ICT Serving for Agriculture and Rural Development in a Prototype County, China Agriculture University

Other Examples

- Distance Learning Application of the Solomon Islands People First Network (PFNet), Rural Development Volunteers Association (RDVA), Solomon Islands
- Evaluating the Impact of Universal Access Models, Strategies and Policies in ICTs on Poor Communities in the Philippines, National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG), Quezon City, Philippines
- Diffusion of Information and Communication Technologies in India: Labour Market Implications for Developing Countries, Indian Institute of Information Technology, Bangalore, India
- Leveraging Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Through Weekly Market Centres for Tribal (indigenous) Communities, Satpura Integrated Rural Development Institution (SIRDI), Maharashtra, India

Evaluation of Computer Studies Curriculum in Fiji Schools by Esther Williams, Maki Kato and Natasha Khan

Methodology:
- Literature search for possible benchmarking
- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Face to face interviews
- Focus groups interviews
- Meetings with the Ministry of Education staff

Scope
- 80 schools of the 84 offering CS/IT courses were visited and interviews conducted.
- Three questionnaires were prepared: for students, teachers and stakeholders. Schools were asked to complete the questionnaires as well
- 52% of teachers questionnaires were returned; 72% students and 68% stakeholders

Outputs
- Clear recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Fiji for a way forward for developing a model curriculum for CS/IT
- Establish a network, a webpage, for teachers
- Produce a final Report that will be shared and available
E-Commerce in the tourism sector in Fiji by Biman Prasad, Shiu Raj, Paresh Narayan
- Collaborative research
- Investigate the expanded use of ICT in and impact on Fiji’s tourism industry
- Methodology will include structured questionnaire interviews, data collection.

Maximising the benefits of ICT/Multimedia in the South Pacific: Cultural Pedagogy and Usability Factors by Christopher Robbins, Maraia Lesuma
Attempts to determine how educational ICT/Multimedia can be developed so as to be responsive to the particular needs of the region, and to apply these findings to the production of a model educational multimedia project such an interactive CD-ROM and website.

Promoting Open Telecommunication Legislation and Non-Regulatory Environment in Fiji for Improved Economic Growth and Social Development
- Comprehensive study and in-depth analysis showing that regulatory, monopolistic situation in the industry and associated limited bandwidth, expensive and restricted access, unused capacity in the Southern Cross Cable constitute an unacceptable drag on the Fiji economy

What is the impact of telecommunication policies on economic and social development? Will compare Fiji to Tonga and Samoa

How do I access assistance from USP’s ICT Capacity Building Project?
The ICT R&D Grant is for research project funding only, and may not be accessed to cover core or recurrent funding needs such as staff. Grants can be applied for, as follows:
- Grants, up to a maximum budget of FJD$40,000.00 available over a term not exceeding 12 months.

The second round of applications closes 2nd June 2003
The form is on the website. You must complete the proposal as per the form
If you need further information, contact Kato_m@usp.ac.fj

Expectations?
Your Questions?