Information and Communication Technologies for Development: Contributing to Human Development and Social Justice Minitrack (Introduction)

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This minitrack explores opportunities to use Information and communication technologies to promote human development and social justice. In the early days this field began with radio and television as tools to help improve the lives of marginalized communities, but this has now become a global movement of people using computers, the internet, and mobile devices to help human development. Information technologies have become more accessible, more used, and more relevant than ever in the lives of people around the world. A growing body of scholars and researchers work to understand, design, evaluate and critique ICTD interventions, which can bring numerous benefits as well as unanticipated negative consequences to those affected.

The field of ICTD is essentially interdisciplinary. It has been going through a process of consolidation and maturation. We are proud to present this sample of excellent work as part of the EGOV track at HICSS, with three papers that exhibit different approaches, methods and theories to understand the potential contribution of information technologies to human development and its contribution to social justice.

In the paper: ICTD Project implementation process and its sustainability: A Comprehensive Literature Review, Abel da Silva focuses on the important issue of sustainability within the ICTD literature. Silva introduces five core aspects of sustainability: political/institutional, economical, technological, social/cultural and environmental, and further argues that sustainability within the ICTD area is influenced by various social factors that emerged from heterogenic actors involved in the projects.

The second paper: Significance of 'contexts' in ICTD projects: Alignment and misalignment of stakeholders' interests, Abel da Silva and Walter Fernandez argue for the importance (and often neglected) role of context to understand and evaluate implementation of ICT in developing countries. Based on an explorative study of the implementation of an ICT projects in Timor-Leste, the paper focuses on the contextual tensions embedded in the actions and interaction of heterogeneous stakeholders while aligning mismatched interests, expectations and objectives.

Finally, in the last paper entitled: The Current State of Social Media Research for eParticipation in Developing Countries: A Literature Review, Alfatiка Aunuriella Dini and Øystein Sæbø argue for the need to put more emphasis on social media use within developing countries, within the eParticipation area. Based on a literature revies, the authors discuss trends, contributions and challenges within this area. A model of social media for eParticipation from a process view perspective is proposed, as well as an agenda to guide future research.

This collection of papers offers avenues to explore ICTD research and practice through new lenses, new approaches, and new areas of intervention.