

## **IPID ICT4D PG symposium 2008**

### **Communication Proposal:**

# ***Unpeeling the layers of the digital divide: category thresholds and relationships within composite indices***

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#### **Framework**

The communication that we want to present will be an almost finished PhD dissertation (i.e. final draft of the dissertation, defense due by end 2008).

Doctoral student belongs to the [PhD on the Information and Knowledge Society Programme, Open University of Catalonia](#).

This work was already presented in its earliest stage at the First ICT4D PG symposium 2006 and in an advanced stage at the Second ICT4D PG symposium 2007.

#### **Abstract**

The work analyzes the effectiveness of the existing e-readiness indices and other ICT indicators as a tool for policy makers to design their policies and strategies to bridge the digital divide.

The first part of the work provides a review of the literature on the impact of ICTs in development and what are the main barriers of access to ICTs. The approach to this review is drawing a comprehensive definition of what a development of the Information Society is, stating that there are two main approaches: the Telecommunications/Infrastructures model, and the e-Readiness model

Different parts of such scheme are used arbitrary – depending on the interests and background of the involved institutions – to define corresponding indicators and measure the failures and successes of an Information Society state of development.

Second part describes and analyzes 47 digital divide and e-readiness models, assessments, indices and indicators. We analyze from a conceptual scheme according to five categories – Infrastructures, the ICT Sector, Digital Literacy, the Legal Framework, and Content and Services (Uses) – and a demand/supply approach. This part states that these models perform and suit differently for policy making depending on the purposes of such policies, also finding that there are “voids” in their design that should be taken into account for an improvement of digital divide measuring. A final comprehensive model is presented, proposing new concepts and their respective indicators that should be added for a proper measurement of the digital divide.

Based on that model, third part performs some statistical work to describe different stages of development of the digital economy and find their main characteristics and strengths both at the intra-digital and cross-analogue indicators. On one hand, a cluster analysis describes some digital economy behaviours according to some indicators (broadband, digital literacy, etc.). On the other hand, digital economy indicators are crossed with general development ones: GDP, Gini, HDI, Education, etc.).

The presentation will make an overview of the first part about the main concepts dealt with and the literature review. Second part will be explained in depth showing both methodology and the final results and conclusions. Third part – yet to be finished – will have its methodology presented as far as some preliminary results.

## About the author

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Bachelor in Economics. Master en ecoaudit and environmental planning. Specialist postdegree in Knowledge Management. M.Phil. in Political Science.

His main field of interest is twofold. On one hand — and due to a personal philosophy of life — the aspects related with Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D): e-Readiness, the Digital Divide, ICTs in cooperation for development, nonprofit technology, online volunteering, e-Inclusion. On the other hand — and due to a professional engagement in the field — the aspects related with e-Learning and empowerment: digital capacity building and literacy, e-Portfolios, Open Access, Open Science, Access to Knowledge. When both ends meet, the conjunction is perfect.

Founder and director for five years of UOC's cooperation for development programme, mainly about e-learning for development. He is editor of [ICTlogy](#).