Communication contents, media and communities: between the local and the global

VI CRICS
Puebla, Mexico
Mayo 2003

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Health and the knowledge society

- Impact on general health determinants: changes in economic, social, cultural and political relations (globalization)

- Redefinition of the concept of community: creation of virtual communities (social capital)

- Strengthening participation of poor in decision making process (“empowerment”)

Knowledge makes the difference between sickness and health

Infant mortality declines with knowledge
The changing digital divide...

- The world produces two exabytes of information a year, i.e.
  - A Billion Billion bytes or
  - the equivalent of 20 billion copies of a magazine
- 1 of every 8 persons in Latin America will have regular access to the Internet by 2003, compared to 1 in six in the OECD countries
- There are more internet hosts in Finland than in all of Latin America
Communicating Knowledge

Costs have plummeted, yet millions of people still don’t have a phone
Essential Elements of the Knowledge Society

- Human capital - literacy, technologically skilled workforce, R&D capacity
- Information infrastructure - connectivity, hardware, software
- Policy/regulatory frameworks, institutions, incentives for national innovation and open business environment
- Financing - for improvement of public services, connecting the poor, growing private enterprises
Towards an Ethical Framework for an Information based Global Society

“Just as poor countries are removing the shackles of a colonialism which thrived on the exploitation of their agriculture and raw materials, so they are threatened by a new colonialism, based on control of technology deployment and global communications.”

(Glastonbury, LaMendola, The Integrity of Intelligence: a Bill of Rights for the Information Age, 1992)
The Millenium Assembly of 2000 established the universal access to information and communication services as a basic human right.

Global initiative to provide access to the Internet through community access points for all the world population by 2004.

Chile, Costa Rica, Argentina, Brazil e-government initiatives.
Strategy for Ethical IT Development

- Change IT concept from set of products and services to paradigm of social development
- Assess potential contribution to social goals and historical/cultural and ethical factors
- Potential impact on democratic principles and individual freedom
- Scrutiny regarding impact on inequities and forms of discrimination
“Today’s discussions of knowledge societies emphasize the need to harness ICTs for development by enabling their use for empowering the poor and for scientific and technical capacity building that is consistent with development goals. The new technologies can be implemented to support democratic decision-making, more effective governance and lifelong learning”

Knowledge Societies: Information Technology for Sustainable Development

UNCSTD, 1998
Descentralized network of health TSI sources operated by community of producers, intermediaries and consumers of TSI in the Americas
Roles of Individuals in the Knowledge Society

- As citizens: eGovernment; eHealth,….

- As part of our organizations, both professional and leisure
  - work context, communities of practice, centerless organisation
  - cybercommunities, hobbies, other interest groups

- The professionals and citizens relationships
- ….controlled by the individual!