

# USAID Strategy ICT for Development

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# Reference

- “Information and Communication Technology for Development: USAID’s Worldwide Program”, May2004  
[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) Keyword: Infotech

# U.S. Agency for International Development

- Operates in over 100 developing countries to promote economic growth, education, health, environmental protection, democracy & government, humanitarian relief
- One-third in AFR, ANE, LAC/E&E
- ICT always a part of USAID's activities but in the mid 1990's began to be a special focus.

# Early ICT4D Programs

- USAID's first programs specifically on ICT4D were:
  - the Leland Initiative to extend Internet access in appropriate policy environment in 21 African countries (from 1996);
  - Southern African regional telecom program: TRASA (from 1995)
  - Telecom Leadership Program led by State Department (from 1995)

# USAID ICT4D Activities Today

- One of five cross-cutting themes in USAID's Strategy
- Decentralized: Primarily driven by USAID's country and regional Missions,
- 95 % of Missions have ICT4D activities
- Over 350 activities worldwide
- About \$100 m/yr in funds appropriated to USAID and \$120m/yr in contributed resources mostly from private sector.

# USAID ICT4D Strategy

- 1- Partnerships
- 2- Policy
- 3- Access
- 4- Capacity-building
- 5- Developmental applications

# 1- Seek Partnerships in ICT for Digital Opportunity

- USAID collaborates with business, NGOs, universities, technical agencies, other donor countries, and international organizations to provide the needed financial and technical resources,
- Examples of partners
  - Cisco Academies, HP, Motorola, etc
  - Dot-COM Alliance, --FCC and Naruc
  - ITU

# 2-Policy and Regulatory Reform

- USAID supports policy and regulatory reform in telecommunications and electronic commerce to foster private investment, competition, interconnection, and universal access
- Private sector leadership
- Growing consensus evident at this conference
- Examples: --building regulatory capacity
  - regional regulatory associations
  - open and secure Internet
  - legislative assistance
  - rural access policy and regulatory support

# 3-ICT Access for Under-Served

- USAID fosters ICT access for populations under-served because of cost (rural), income, ethnicity and gender
  - Expanding Internet access
  - community ICT centers.  
(Note: USAID leaves large infrastructure support to the MDBs.)
- Examples;
  - Leland Initiative
  - Learnlink (telecenters)

# 4- Capacity Building

- USAID develops the capacity of institutions and individuals to achieve policy reform, conform to international trade norms, and use ICT for development
  - U.S. Telecommunications Training Institute
  - NetTelAfrica
  - Regulatory workshops

# 5- Developmental Applications

- USAID demonstrates innovative ICT applications across all developmental objectives, including education, education, telemedicine, environment, and geo-spatial mapping
- Examples: --E-education in Macedonia,  
--Mayan language cultural preservation  
--Nepal Radiosat

# Looking Ahead: Opportunity

- Benefits/cost ratio of ICT very favorable for new users in developing countries, provided prices can be lowered to reflect cost decreases.
  - competition and private investment
  - "flexible" regulation in public interest
- Hence the estimate of a latent worldwide market of a billion new ICT users under market conditions.
- The largest source of new and additional resources for ICT4D is the private sector – following enlightened self-interest.

# Current Priorities

- Rural Access: Administrator's \$10 million Last Mile Initiative
- e-Business: Digital Freedom Initiative and the Information Technology Mentors Alliance
- E-Government
- Cyber-security