

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF ICT'S FOR EDUCATION

Keynote Address

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Information & Communications Technology

- 1. ICT is indispensable**
- 2. ICTs help achieve development goals**
- 3. Today, the debate is no longer on the role and relevance of ICTs but on how to capitalize on these new technologies**
- 4. But, what is ICT?**

Asia and the Global ICT Market

1. **\$1 trillion in '93, \$3 trillion in '05, \$4 trillion in 2010**
2. **Asia - a major source of ICT products and services**

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Manpower Requirements in Asia Demand & Supply

1. **Recent growth in ICT has transformed the types of skills needed**
2. **Shortage of professionals worldwide, including in PRC and India**
3. **NASSCOM estimates a shortfall of 500,000 ICT professionals by 2010**
4. **Demand for professionals in the ICT supply industry is expected to rise sharply and reach a level of about 17 million in 2010**

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MDGs and the digital divide

1. **Can we continue to perceive the digital divide merely as an infrastructure issue as commonly discussed?**
2. **Will we be able to fully utilize ICTs to achieve the MDGs if a personal computer and Internet was made available to everyone?**
3. **The key to ICTs being an aide to MDGs is the development of relevant and adequate capacities of the citizens to fully leverage and capitalize on the new opportunities that ICT provides to nations.**

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The challenge today !

1. **How to move from the decade old debates on the role and relevance of ICTs towards the human dimension and capacities required to actually capitalize on these new, digital technologies**
2. **Software and technology of even 10 years ago is sufficient to meet present day needs**
3. **The fundamental issue is 'content' and 'users' and not functions and applications; this is where the focus needs to be**
4. **The primary challenge today - how to fill the capacity gap**

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ICT within the education sector

1. **ICT in education programs has mushroomed**
2. **Shortages are leading to rolling out of specially designed courses**
3. **We need to seriously look at ICT at the primary and secondary school level to ensure long-term relevance of the country in a demanding knowledge economy**

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Reaching out to the masses and marginalized communities: localizing education

1. **Strong project design is an absolute must**
2. **Substituting conventional classroom instruction - two examples:**
 - **SEAMEO's regional open and distance learning centre, and**
 - **Reaching out by television in India**

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Forecasting future needs

- 1. Ensure that a macro perspective is developed**
- 2. Put in place a monitoring mechanism**
- 3. Establish national ICT skills certification centers**

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The vision and the agenda

looking at day-to-day realities

- 1. Developing a national ICT vision**
- 2. Setting the national agenda**

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Final thoughts of realism

day-to-day realities

1. **Role of technology is to support primary education**
2. **Access to ICTs ensures enhancement of traditional or formal education systems**
3. **ICTs can increase the effectiveness of the process of education**
4. **The fundamental issue is ‘content’ and ‘users’ and not functions and applications**
5. **The primary challenge today - how to fill the capacity gap**
6. **Take a multi-pronged approach that works at all levels of education**
7. **Put in place a national ICT strategic vision**

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To end - in the words of
Alvin Toffler

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

Thank you!
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