



2011 아시아태평양 매스미디어와 국제이해교육 포럼

2011 Asia-Pacific Forum on Mass Media
and Education for International Understanding

Communicating for Social Impacts: Lessons from Rural ICT Projects in China and India

Jinxiu Zhao

Associate Professor,
Institute of Communication Studies, Communication University of China, China

The presentation discusses the key success factors and issues regarding sustainability that have been gleaned from rural ICT projects executed in Asia. The China project emphasizes rural telecenters and e-literacy training as the main strategies to alleviate poverty amongst rural households. The Indian project involves GPS navigation devices for fishing communities, and computers in schools to rehabilitate local communities after the devastation of the 2004 tsunami.

The cross-country experiences indicate that the deployment of ICTs in promoting rural development depends much on the perceived interests of project administrators, telecommunication operators, as well as the relevance to rural individuals. The presentation calls for the development of ICT projects flexible enough to accommodate the information needs of local rural-focused activities so as to bring desired social impact. Localized needs, conditioned by modes of production, influence villagers' information seeking behaviors, which in turn affect adoption inclination and intensive usage of ICTs.

The presentation has important implications for narrowing the digital divide between the urban and rural areas in China and India. The identification of the possible ways of keeping sustainable rural internet services not only helps to make policy recommendations for governments and development planners at national and local levels but also provides valuable lessons for other developing countries with similar development concerns.

Source materials: 2010 by *China Internet (Fifth Issue) (Magazine)*