
ASEM Workshop on Empowering Local Community in the Use of ICT

Summary

1. The ASEM Workshop on Empowering Local Community in the Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 7 – 9 October 2009. The Workshop was chaired by Indonesia and was attended by information and communication technology experts/ officials from 14 ASEM Partners: Austria, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Finland, France, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Myanmar, Pakistan, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The Workshop was co-sponsored by China, Finland, France, Japan, Singapore, and Thailand.
2. At the Opening Session, the Keynote Speech of Minister of Communication and Information Technology (MICT) of Indonesia delivered by the Head of HR & ICT Research and Development Agency, Mr. Cahyana Ahmadjayadi, described Indonesia's determination to have 50% of its population connected to the Internet by the year 2015 as part of the global World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) commitment. In order to do so, efforts have been taken to develop Community Access Point (CAP), which is regarded as a suitable model for Indonesia. CAP provides several benefits such as opportunities for business promotion; social networking; and creation of community of practice (CoP).
3. The ASEM Contact Point, Mr. Dian Wirengjurit, emphasized that cooperation on the elimination of ICT illiteracy is crucial in the overall promotion of ASEM Partnership in the future. ICT provides new sets of solutions for empowering the poor, enhancing the delivery services to remote and under-served regions and for responding to a range of development and communication needs for the people at large. Through the workshop, it is hoped that ASEM Partners will be able to

exchange experiences and best practices and at the same time reach concrete steps for future cooperation in the field of ICT.

4. The remarks of the Governor of Yogyakarta Special Region delivered by the Secretary of the Province Government, Mr. Tri Harjun Ismadji, stated that ICT enriches and extends the impact of information and communication at the local level. In this regard, Yogyakarta has built ICT infrastructures in many centres of local developments to promote local products; to open up its markets, for educational purposes and to provide access to information for people living in the rural villages.
5. The First Roundtable Discussion chaired by Dr. Ir. Son Kuswandi, took the theme “The Development of ICT Infrastructure in Accelerating the Empowerment of Local Community”. The Speakers for this session are Dr. Titon Dutono, Director of Telecommunication and Information Technology, Directorate General of Post and Telecommunications, MCIT Indonesia; Mr. Micheal Smith, ICT and Energy Policy in Asia-Pacific, Embassy of Ireland in Singapore; and Mr. Widi Nugroho, Head of Content Cycle of PT Telkom Indonesia.
6. In his presentation, Dr. Titon Dutono described that practical application of ICT in Indonesia is becoming a trend, thus the development of ICT is taking positive turn. Major obstacles faced now days include digital gap between regions. To overcome this condition, Indonesia is developing several projects including Palapa Ring Project, Universal Service Organization and Broadband Wireless Access.
7. Mr. Michael Smith explained that in Ireland, ICT has become one of the essential infrastructures in the country. ICT technology has the ability to improve the economy of people around the world. Connectivity provides many of the arteries for economic development. Ireland as well as the EU recognizes the importance of liberalized ICT market because accessibility to sources of information supports creativity and innovation.
8. Mr. Widi Nugroho described the infrastructure challenges faced by telecommunications provider in Indonesia, such as archipelagic constraints, technology convergence, the dynamic changes within the carrier market, and the rise of the empowered consumer. The Internet mobility itself is growing very fast in Indonesia now days. In order to empower the community, Telkom is now striving to go beyond infrastructure, collaborating with customer to explore the creativity of the digital industry.

9. The Second Roundtable Discussion chaired by Prof. Dr. Suhono H. Supangkat, M. Eng., was carried out under the theme “Utilization of ICT Application and Content in Enhancing the Welfare of Local Community”. The Speakers for this session are Dr. Ashwin Sasongko, Director General for ICT Application, MCIT Indonesia; Mr. Dedi Suherman, GM Strategic technology Planning Telkomsel Indonesia; Dr. Yuji Inoue, President & CEO of The Telecommunication Technology Committee of Japan; and Prof. Dr. Woo Kien Young, Deputy Director, Next Generation Wireless and Platform Infocomm Development of Singapore State Administration.
10. In his presentation, Dr. Ashwin Sasongko gave a brief outline of the Indonesian Governments strategies in empowering the local community in the field of ICT stipulated in the MICT vision 2015. One of the strategies was the setting up of CAP that consists of community members, technology network, content and information services.
11. Mr. Dedi Suherman described the emerging trends in ICT in Indonesia, which includes the rise of usage of internet particularly for social networking and blogging, the availability of low cost ICT devices and the increase of interest in local content. Such trends provide an opportunity for ICT industries to invest and expand its reach to remote areas at lower cost.
12. Dr. Yuji Inoue stated that to respond to the urgent issues in local communities such as education, poverty, environment and healthcare, essential application of ICT, in the form of telecentres for example, could be used to connect experts of the necessary fields in the city with the communities in the rural areas.
13. Prof. Dr. Woo Kien Young described how infocomm aims to stimulate the demand and supply of wireless broadband service development in Singapore, leading to the creation of a wireless broadband market. Infocomm plans to make wireless broadband accessible all across Singapore by 2015 and attributing certain attention to the needy, the disabled and the elderly. This scheme is design to enhance economic competitiveness and innovation.
14. The Third Roundtable Discussion chaired by Dr. Gati Gayatri, MA, was done under the theme “The Effect of ICT Development on Socio-economic and Cultural Changes”. The Speakers for this session are Ms. Kamolrat Intaratat, Director of Sukhothaimathirat Open University, Thailand; Mr. Fredric Alliod, Audio Visual Attache, Embassy of France, Jakarta; and Prof. Dr. A Min Tjoa, Director of Institute of Software Technology and Interactive Systems, Austria.
15. In her presentation, Ms. Kamolrat Intaratat conveyed that a big gap still exist

between the rural areas and the city in regards to ICT usage. In order to address this issue, the government of Thailand since 2007 has developed Thai Telecentres in many sectors and locations. The Telecentres provides an opportunity for the local people to increase their ability to earn a living, increase their welfare and their human dignity.

16. Prof. Dr. A Min Tjoa argued that although the development of ICT produced many benefits such as the ability to communicate instantaneously across frontiers through the Internet and the use of Internet as an excellent tool for knowledge dissemination, it also produced setbacks, such as the decrease of cultural diversity caused by the dominant use of English language in most Internet website and censorship has obstructed the free flow of information through the Internet. In this regard, several aspects needs to be maintained in the development of the ICT, including cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content, ethical dimensions of the information society.
17. Mr. Frederic Alliod explained that in France, the Internet is mainly used by the executive class, whereas the working class, middle income class and seniors regard the internet as being complicated and expensive. In a bid to increase use of Internet by all sectors of its society France has launched a national action plan that includes providing their citizens with computers, broadband access and digital contents. To achieve the goal of its action plan, France views that inserting ICT in education is essential to trigger a more widespread use of ICT in present time as well as in the future.
18. The Fourth Roundtable Discussion chaired by Yappi Willem Manafe, SH and Mr. Herry Subiyakto, took the theme “Best Practices of Community Access Point (CAP) Implementation”. The Speakers for this session are Mr. Lauri Kuukasjarvi, Chief Technical Adviser, Finland Mr. Toni Seno Hartono, Technology Director Microsoft Indonesia; Mr. Hertadi Imam Santoso, PT Pos Indonesia; Mr. Rakhmat Jumaidi, Director Corporate Services Bakrie Telecom; Mr. Yongtao Shen, Director, Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China; Mrs. Kusmairihadi, Representative of Indonesia Telecommunication Society (MASTEL); Mr. Teddy Sukardi, Head of Indonesian Information technology Federation (FTII) CAP: The Indonesian Experience.
19. Mr. Lauri Kuukasjarvi underlined that in developing ICT within the rural areas, technology choices are an important aspect, because rural areas act as a screening mechanism for potential technologies. Principles that should applied in choosing such technologies include cost-effectiveness and simplicity. It is important to promote ICT in the rural areas, as it is an effective stimulant for economic

development. Furthermore, he underscored the need for a new approach in developing ICT in rural areas, where decisions concerning developments should be made not only by those living in urban areas but those who live within the rural areas itself.

20. In his presentation, Mr. Toni Seno Hartono stated that most of the Indonesian population live within rural areas and although the population living within those areas possess insufficient knowledge of ICT, it has been proven that the setting up and development of ICT in those areas has transformed education, fostered innovation and enabled jobs and opportunities.
21. Mr. Hertadi Santoso elaborated on how the setting up of telecentres in post offices around Indonesia, known as Warmasif can help to overcome the digital divide in Indonesia. Some advantages include; post offices are located in 3551 different locations spanning the Indonesian archipelagic, the location of the post offices are accessible to the population, the post office are located near public schools therefore can be used for educational purposes.
22. Mr. Rakhmat Jumaidi described the efforts of the private sector in Indonesia to develop ICT in rural areas through its corporate social responsibility programmes. An example is the development of micro business through partnership with the local communities in the rural areas that encourage people to improve their economic conditions through the usage of ICT.
23. Mr. Yongtao Shen presented an outline of the Chinese Government's plans to further promote the development of rural information services and narrow the digital divide. Several projects has been implemented, such as the Villages Access Project, which has proved successful in providing the Chinese people with Internet access. He. The Chinese Government also encourages mass production of ICT appliances to lower the cost of the appliances and therefore affordable for its people.
24. Mrs. Kusmairihadi pointed out that ownership is one of the main challenges of sustainability of telecentres. Therefore the establishment of telecentres should involve all stakeholders and should take a partnership/networking approach.

25. Mr. Teddy Sukardi in his presentation also raised the issue of ownership and sustainability of telecentres, and underlined the importance of local government/community involvement in the development of telecentres. Several other aspects that need to be addressed include the development of concise national strategy, local capacity building mechanism, usage of open technologies, clear criteria for selection of location and partners, continuous reassessment and adjustment of strategies.
26. The Workshop exchanged views and experience of the development of Information and Communication Technology facilities in each other's ASEM Partner countries and the role of the government, private sector, and Information Technology (IT) experts in promoting technological research and development in the field of information and communication. Based on the two day discussions, a number of initial conclusions can be drawn:
 - a. The Workshop recognized that there are different degrees of ICT developments between developing and developed countries among ASEM Partners;
 - b. The Workshop noted the need to eliminate ICT illiteracy, particularly in the rural areas. ICT provides new sets of solutions for empowering the poor and for enhancing delivery services to remote/rural areas, thus improving the welfare of the people in general;
 - c. There is a need to involve all stakeholders in developing ICT as well as the infrastructure as a vehicle to support the development of ICT.
 - d. The participants acknowledged that the use of local-based ICT such as the Community Access Points (CAP) in Indonesia and telecenters in Thailand have played an important role in empowering local communities and provided benefits for the local community.
 - e. In order to effectively empower local community in the use of ICT, there is a growing demand to foster international cooperation, by maximizing international forum, such as ASEM framework.
27. The Workshop also endorsed the following general recommendations to be submitted to future ASEM meetings in the field of ICT:
 - a. Concrete steps need to be taken for future cooperation in order to narrow the digital divide and foster partnerships in the field of ICT among ASEM partners in accordance with the goals set at the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS);
 - b. The acceleration to empower local communities in the field of ICT should be accompanied by coordinated efforts to develop

- infrastructure. All stakeholders should be aware of the strategies and development programmes in the country level. In this regard, best practices that are being undertaken by the local communities in various ASEM partners should be taken seriously into consideration;
- c. Utilizing ICT application is of significant importance in the development of local communities, especially in the rural areas;
 - d. Socialization through education towards the local community should be undertaken by taking into account the local conditions in each specific areas;
 - e. The implementation of affordable ICT technologies for the benefits of the peoples and communities at all levels of the society should continuously be promoted and enhanced;
 - f. More extensive and integrated measures need to be taken by ASEM partners and stakeholders in further developing cooperation in ICT.
28. At the Closing Session, the participants expressed their appreciation to the host for the excellent hospitality rendered by the people and authorities of Yogyakarta.
29. The Chair expressed his appreciation to the delegates for their active participation and valuable contributions to the discussion, and to further develop ASEM cooperation in information and communication technology.