Title: IMAGINING DEVELOPMENT 3.0: CAN TECHNOLOGY FOSTER SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD?

Information and communication networks are often touted for ensuring stakeholder participation and offer an important opportunity to assess socio-economic sustainability and prospects for development. However, despite significant investments in information communication technology for development (ICT4D), there is no systematic evidence of when, where, and under what conditions participation and deliberation in development interventions have the biggest impact on outcomes. Two research questions inform this paper: (1) what are the various forms and scope of participation and deliberations in ICT4D projects? (2) How effective are participation and deliberation in delivering on the stated project goals and outcomes?

The paper presents evidence from an original data set coded for forms of participation and effectiveness of development outcomes for 207 information technology projects implemented from the World Bank during the 1990-2010 period. The model, an ordinal logit data analysis predicting development outcomes from forms of participation, yields two specific conclusions: (1) as stakeholder participation increases across the development implementation phase likelihood of development effectiveness increases; (2) projects that contain commercial incentives for stakeholders are more effective than those with social and political objectives (at least for the World Bank projects). More broadly, the conclusion offered in the paper is that 'habits of authority' among various development actors thwart effective participation, but minimal participation is ensured either through societal pressures or imagining development differently among development actors. Based on its empirical findings, the paper offers a few recommendations for inclusive participation and project sustainability.

A word on mixed methods in the paper: The ordinal logit model rests upon deeper process-tracing and a grounded theory approach especially suitable for studying questions of participatory development. The coding categories resulted from field research among information technology driven projects in Kenya and India. The codings, executed with three independent coders, employed project completion reports and related documents on the World bank portal.