



Information and Communications for Development 2009: Extending Reach and Increasing Impact

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Information and communication technology (ICT) is a critical part of the ever more integrated global economy, where knowledge-based activities have become increasingly important and pervasive. ICT enables people, governments, and businesses around the world to acquire and share ideas, expertise, and services, helping to create and sustain opportunities for economic development on an unprecedented scale.

Accelerated knowledge transfer and technological diffusion amplify the competitive advantages of fast-learning economies. As the information requirements for innovation in economic and social activities increase, the importance of ICT for the development agenda will only continue to expand.

'Information and Communications for Development 2009: Extending Reach and Increasing Impact' first examines the economic impact of mobile, broadband connectivity, and e-government applications. It highlights country experiences with different institutional arrangements for e-government and discusses policy options for advancing access to ICT infrastructure and services. It also reviews policy options that encourage the development of information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services industries in the developing world. The report then analyzes the trends in ICT sector development, drawing on the most recent national data on key indicators that are also presented in the at-a-glance tables for 150 economies. ICT performance measures, on a scale from 1 to 10, are introduced for ready comparisons of countries' ICT capacities, as well as for benchmarking their progress along three key dimensions of ICT development over time: (1) access to ICT services, (2) affordability of ICT services, and (3) adoption of ICT applications in government and business.

Highlighting elements of good practice that are emerging for policy, regulatory, and investment frameworks, this report addresses some of the most challenging issues faced by developing countries on the agenda of ICT for development.

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