

Who we work with

APDIP works in partnership with national governments, regional, international and multi-lateral development organizations, UN agencies, educational and research organizations, civil society groups, and the private sector in integrating ICTs in the development process.

An international advisory panel of experts in various development- and ICT-related fields, and the network of 25 UNDP Country Offices throughout Asia-Pacific assist APDIP in identifying and addressing new and emerging needs and priorities in the region.

Where we work

APDIP's work covers countries in the Asia-Pacific region from Iran in the west to the Cook Islands in the east.

What is ICT

ICTs are information-handling tools - a varied set of goods, applications and services that are used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information. They include 'old' tools such as radio, television and telephone, as well as 'new' tools such as computers, satellite, wireless technology and the Internet. ICTs can connect vast networks of individuals and organizations across great geographic distances at low cost. As such, ICTs foster development and facilitate the flows of information, capital, ideas, people and products.

APDIP Resources

APDIP has a range of ICT4D publications, videos, interactive CDs and portals. They are focused on various ICT-related issues including e-commerce, e-government, e-policies and -strategies, education, free/open source software, Internet governance, localization, the Millennium Development Goals and poverty alleviation.

For more information on these resources, please visit www.apdip.net

Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme

UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok
3rd Floor, United Nations Service Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
Bangkok 10200
G.P.O Box 618
Bangkok 10501, Thailand
Tel: +662 288 1234
Fax: +662 280 0556

UNDP Regional Centre in Colombo
23, Independence Avenue
Colombo 7, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 11 452 6400
Fax: +94 11 452 6410

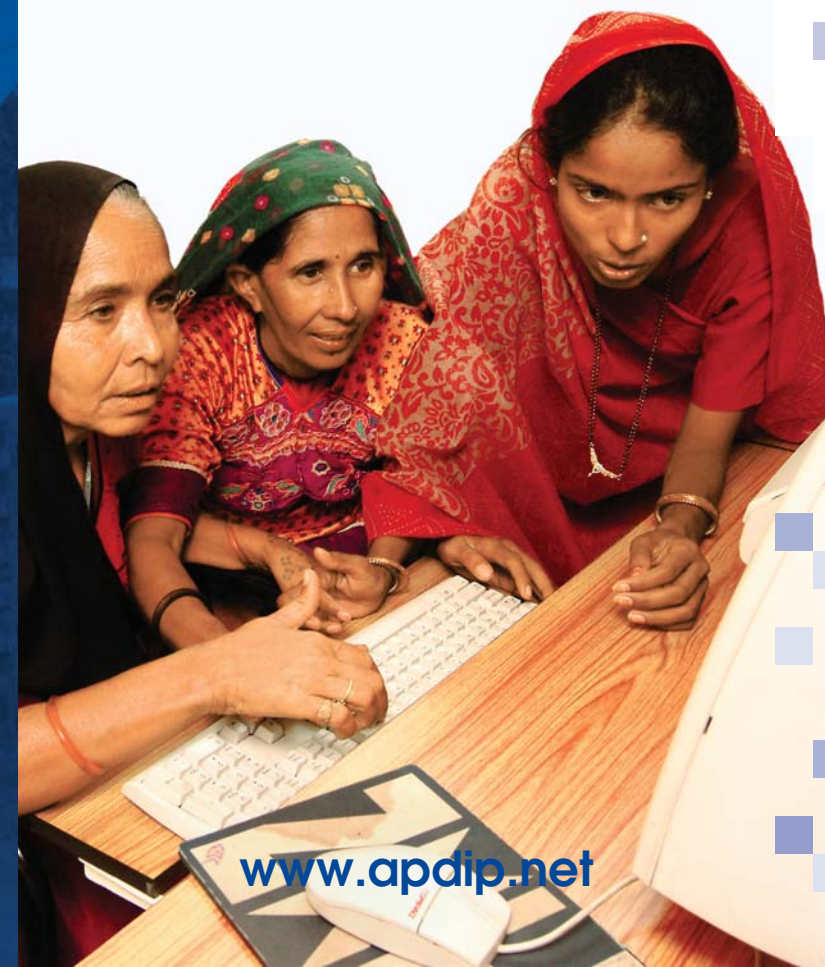
UNDP Pacific Sub-Regional Centre
2nd Floor YWCA Building (JJ's on the Park)
Ratu Sukuna Park
Suva, Fiji
Tel: +679 330 0399
Fax: +679 330 1976

info@apdip.net
www.apdip.net



Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme

strategic ICT initiatives for poverty alleviation



www.apdip.net

What are the challenges and opportunities

Unprecedented advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) are revolutionizing all aspects of our lives. When UNDP established the Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP) in 1997, the uses and benefits of ICTs in development were barely understood by Asia-Pacific countries. Today, ICTs are widely accepted as critical tools for alleviating poverty, enhancing human development, and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In fact, many success stories on the effective use of ICTs for development (ICT4D) have come from the Asia-Pacific region.

The Digital Challenge

The Asia-Pacific region – home to 60 percent of the world's population, including 75 percent of the world's poor – faces a significant digital divide where the "have-nots" risk being excluded in this ICT revolution. Between and within countries, and among different areas, communities and socio-economic groups, there remains noticeable disparity in the access to ICTs and people's capacities to use them.

The Digital Opportunity

The region is diverse and fast-growing with vast potential for innovations, effective political leadership, and sound investments in ICT4D. There are growing numbers of examples where government bodies, aid agencies and local organizations are discovering that the benefits of the ICT revolution can be extended to reach the poorest people living in the most remote corners of the world.

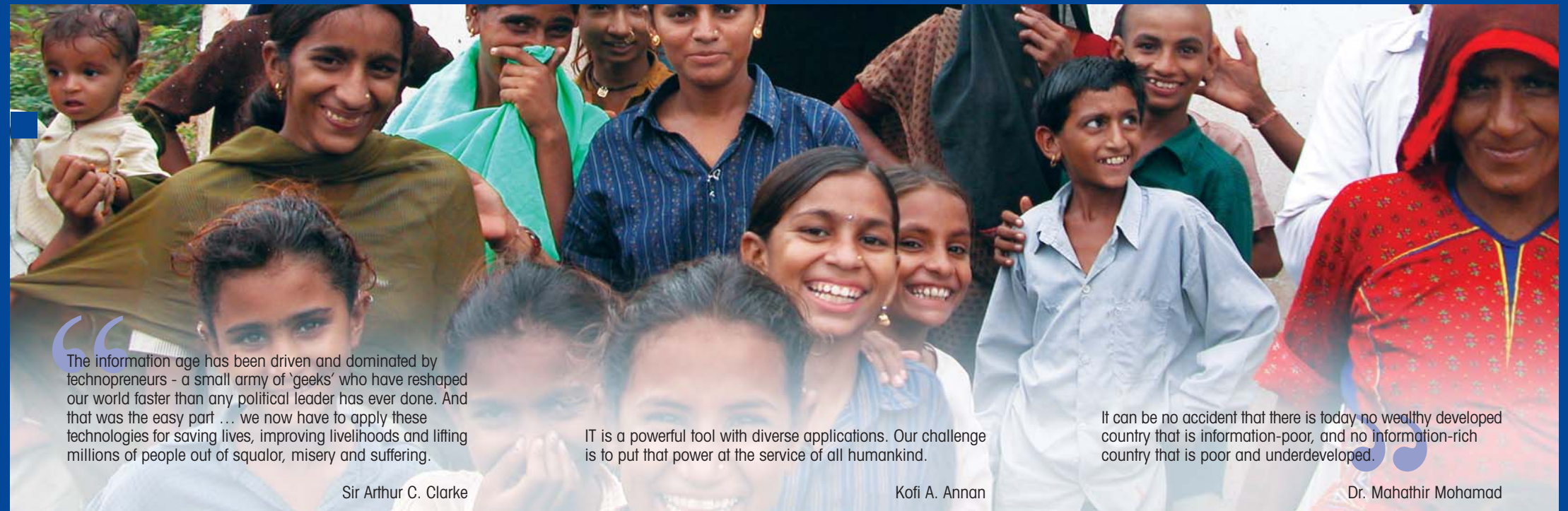
What we do

APDIP aims to promote the development and application of ICTs for sustainable human development in the Asia-Pacific region. It seeks to build a people-centred and inclusive information society, and enhance digital opportunities for all people in order to help bridge the digital divide and put the potential of ICTs at the service of development.

As a programme of UNDP, APDIP contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including the overarching goal of reducing poverty in half by 2015.

APDIP aims to meet these goals by focusing on three inter-related core areas:

- **Policy development and dialogue**
- **Access**
- **Content development and knowledge management**



“The information age has been driven and dominated by technopreneurs - a small army of ‘geeks’ who have reshaped our world faster than any political leader has ever done. And that was the easy part ... we now have to apply these technologies for saving lives, improving livelihoods and lifting millions of people out of squalor, misery and suffering.

Sir Arthur C. Clarke

IT is a powerful tool with diverse applications. Our challenge is to put that power at the service of all humankind.

Kofi A. Annan

It can be no accident that there is today no wealthy developed country that is information-poor, and no information-rich country that is poor and underdeveloped.

Dr. Mahathir Mohamad

Policy Development and Dialogue

Under favourable conditions, ICTs can be powerful tools for increasing productivity, empowering marginalized groups, promoting dialogue among different stakeholders, improving the environment, and contributing to better education and healthcare for all. Despite consensus on the merit of ICTs for development and poverty alleviation, few national and regional development policies and plans have integrated the use of ICTs as tools for development.

The debate on ICTs has permanently shifted from ‘why’ use ICTs for development to ‘how’ comprehensive and holistic ICT policies can unleash human potential and enhance people’s capacities to improve their lives. National governments play an important role in shaping policies that enable the development and propagation of technologies that benefit citizens in the long run.

In this context, APDIP provides technical advice and support in formulating and implementing effective policies to harness the potential of ICTs for social, economic, political, and cultural development at the national level. At the same time, APDIP helps build capacities at the national and regional levels for greater public participation in global forums and decision-making processes.

Access

The uneven global distribution of access to ICTs has resulted in a digital divide - a divide that is a manifestation of deeper social and economic inequalities, both between and within countries. This divide will continue to grow unless marginalized and under-served communities are empowered to utilize ICTs to foster development.

Bringing technologies to the people goes beyond the provision of infrastructure and hardware. The greatest need is for initiatives that encourage learning in different local contexts and facilitate exchanges of experiences and knowledge.

APDIP faces this challenge of promoting access to ICTs for all by employing a dynamic mix of strategies - raising awareness, building capacity, technical assistance and advice, research and development, sharing knowledge and building partnerships - to empower people to use appropriate tools and technologies and develop solutions that best meet their needs.

Content Development and Knowledge Management

The catalyst for change and empowerment is information and knowledge. Access to relevant information helps people identify and seize opportunities to develop and better their lives. Access to information facilitates participation in society, in the economy, in government and in the development process. The ability to share information on a level playing field helps overcome barriers to communication and encourages exchange and collaboration.

The Asia-Pacific region is home to half the world’s 6,800 languages. However, only about 20 percent of the region communicates in English, and the Internet and other carriers of information and knowledge predominantly feature English. ICTs can only be effectively used to achieve development goals if content is relevant to and understood by users.

APDIP aims to promote the creation, sharing and application of good practices, lessons learned, tools and techniques on different aspects of ICT4D, and supports local content development in different media that is relevant to the cultures and languages of targeted communities.