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**A PIONEERING REGIONAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT ON  
PROMOTING ICT FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA 2004: REALISING THE MILLENNIUM  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**SUMMARY RESEARCH FINDINGS: CONTENTS**

There has been much hype surrounding the potential and promise of ICT for developing countries. For the first time, a multi-country Regional Human Development Report across nine countries in Asia attempts to go beyond the mere promise of these technologies by mapping concrete Asian initiatives to harness ICT for human development. The nine countries are – China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

According to the UNDP definition, “ICTs are basically information-handling tools – a varied set of goods, applications and services that are used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information. They include the ‘old’ ICTs of radio, television and telephone, and the ‘new’ ICTs of computers, satellite and wireless technology and the internet.”<sup>1</sup> The older technologies make fewer demands on user skills and are considered to be ‘**skill independent**’, while the newer technologies are far more ‘**skill dependent**’ since users need more education or training for their applications.

The research towards the Regional HDR has placed emphasis on ‘new technologies’ which tend to be more ‘skill dependent’ since users need more education or training for their applications. The reason for this emphasis was because diffusion of newer technology among the disadvantaged sections is difficult, needing a coherent policy environment complemented by effective public-private-civil society partnerships.

The Summary of Research Findings contains:

1. Introduction
2. Human Development in Asia: Milestones and Challenges

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<sup>1</sup> Essentials, UNDP Evaluation Office 2001.

3. Asia's March Towards the Millennium Development Goals
4. Information and Communication Technologies for Enhancing Human Development: Potential and Promise
5. Status of ICT Diffusion and Use in Asia
6. Digital Divides: Challenges for Human Development in Asia
7. Relationship between ICTs and the MDGs: A Quest for Empirical Regularities and Indexing
8. Harnessing ICT for Realising the MDGs: Asian Experiences
9. Conclusion

Annexures