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

**ICTforHD Index: Ranking of Nine Asian Countries**

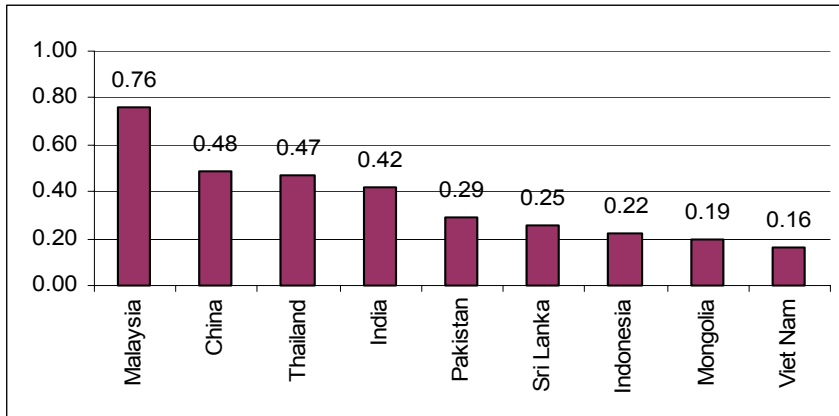
A complementary quantitative study was undertaken to explore the empirical linkages between ICTs and MDGs for human development towards the preparation of UNDP's Regional Human Development Report on *Promoting ICT for Human Development in Asia 2004: Realising the Millennium Development Goals*. The nine Asian countries covered by the study were China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. The broad objectives of the study were to:

- Examine interdependency between indicators of ICT and human development
- Identify ICT indicators reflecting human development concerns in achieving the eight MDGs
- Construct composite ICT for HD indices for capturing the ICT-linked progress in nine countries, in the context of attainment of the MDGs

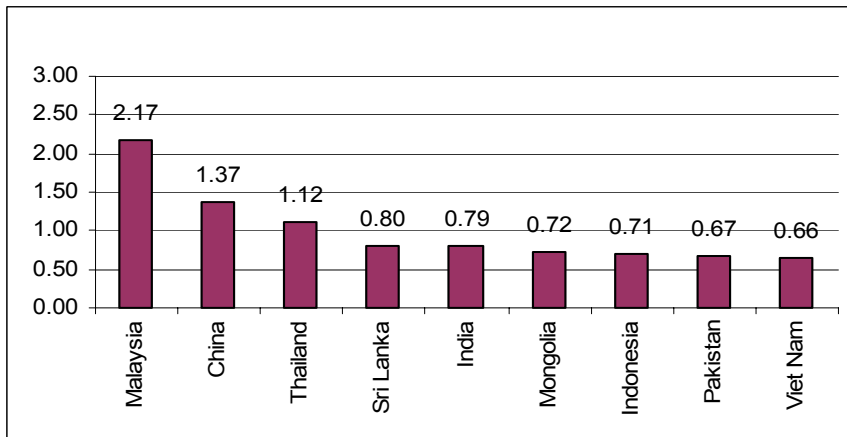
Selected indicators were used to construct a set of **thematic component indices** covering five distinct dimensions of ICT availability and use -- i) skill-independent ICTs ii) skill dependent ICTs iii) efficiency and speed iv) social sector targeting and v) vulnerable group targeting. The component indices were then **aggregated** into a **composite aggregate ICTforHD index**, capturing ICT-MDG relationships. Two different statistical methods were used: i) Range Equalisation (RE) method and ii) Division by Mean (DM) method.

The nine countries have been ranked based on the two sets of aggregate indices. The ranking by both the methods show that the top three positions are occupied by Malaysia, China, and Thailand in both indices (*See Figures 1 and 2*). Malaysia not only holds the highest position but also is clearly way ahead of the rest as shown by the wide gap between Malaysia and China which holds second position. There are a few changes in the ranking of the middle order countries. For example, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are ranked 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively by RE method, while in DM method they not only change orders but also have a wide gap between them, Pakistan being at a much lower 8<sup>th</sup> position and Sri Lanka attaining a high 4<sup>th</sup> rank. At the bottom of the ranking is Vietnam in both indices.

**Figure 1: Aggregate Index by RE method for nine Asian countries**



**Figure 2: Aggregate Index by DM method for nine Asian countries**



The broad similarity in the rankings by both methods at the top and bottom ends demonstrates the robustness of the conclusions, with some interesting reversals in between. The composite aggregate indices, given data limitations, are not perfect. Yet they are a first attempt designed for developing countries that can help in tracking progress in ICT applications for human development and ranking them, contributing to the debate on the subject.