



ICMCI Comment on Principles for a Global Alliance for ICT Policy and Development

Summary

The International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI) applauds the initiatives to investigate and elucidate best practice in the use of ICT to assist developing countries increase their economic capabilities and capacities.

Our members' experience leads us to remind all involved of some basic ideas that are, too often, ignored. One is that ICT investment alone is often wasted but considering the process, people (in all aspects) and technology together is usually required to obtain the anticipated benefits. Two is the need to consider the technology in the context of the organisation and its local context, and choose appropriately. Three is that the successful use of the technology requires proper management skills both on implementation and ongoing use. ICMCI would encourage the inclusion in the Alliance of those who espouse the three principles.

ICMCI would be delighted to be involved in the ongoing process, either as support to the Alliance or as a party to be involved in the review of the outcomes of the Alliance.

Comment

As Management Consultants, rather than the technical experts, our members have often been involved in defining the strategic impact of ICT on an organisation, determining the methods of exploitation of the technology, as well as selection, implementation, and managing best use of the technology. ICMCI could like many other organisations and NGOs comment on the detail and the appropriateness of various technologies in various sectors and contexts. Rather, ICMCI feels that there are three fundamental issues that need to be kept in focus at all times when considering the use of ICT for economic gain. These three principles are, in our experience, too often forgotten in the detail of the programme or project.

People Process and Technology: ICT of itself rarely brings economic gain (be it in increased efficacy, effectiveness or efficiency) but needs to be integrated into a designed environment covering the processes to be employed, the people aspects (e.g. skills, competence, training, culture, organisation) as well as the choice of technology. In general, it requires all three to be designed together as a whole for the exploitation of the ICT to be effective. A simple example concerning culture: using technology that enables cooperative working will be less effective in a culture which emphasises the aspects of an individual owning and being responsible for an outcome and expects individuals to compete with one other. Even getting two of the three right

