

Impact Study of ICT4D Projects in Rural Bangladesh

Results from a Preliminary Field Study

A B S T R A C T

Although ICT4D research has progressed in recent years, there are still calls from academia and aid agencies for more knowledge about the relationship between ICT and development

In this study, we have adopted the framework developed by Amartya Sen (1999), in which development is defined as freedom

The nature of this study is exploratory and interpretive, which are the most suitable approaches where there is a dearth of previous research, as is the case with respect to ICT4D projects in rural Bangladesh

Our field results uncovered that users have enthusiastically embraced services offered by the two ICT centres and considered that these have contributed to improving their well-being, as defined by the five freedoms advocated by Sen (1999)

Research Question

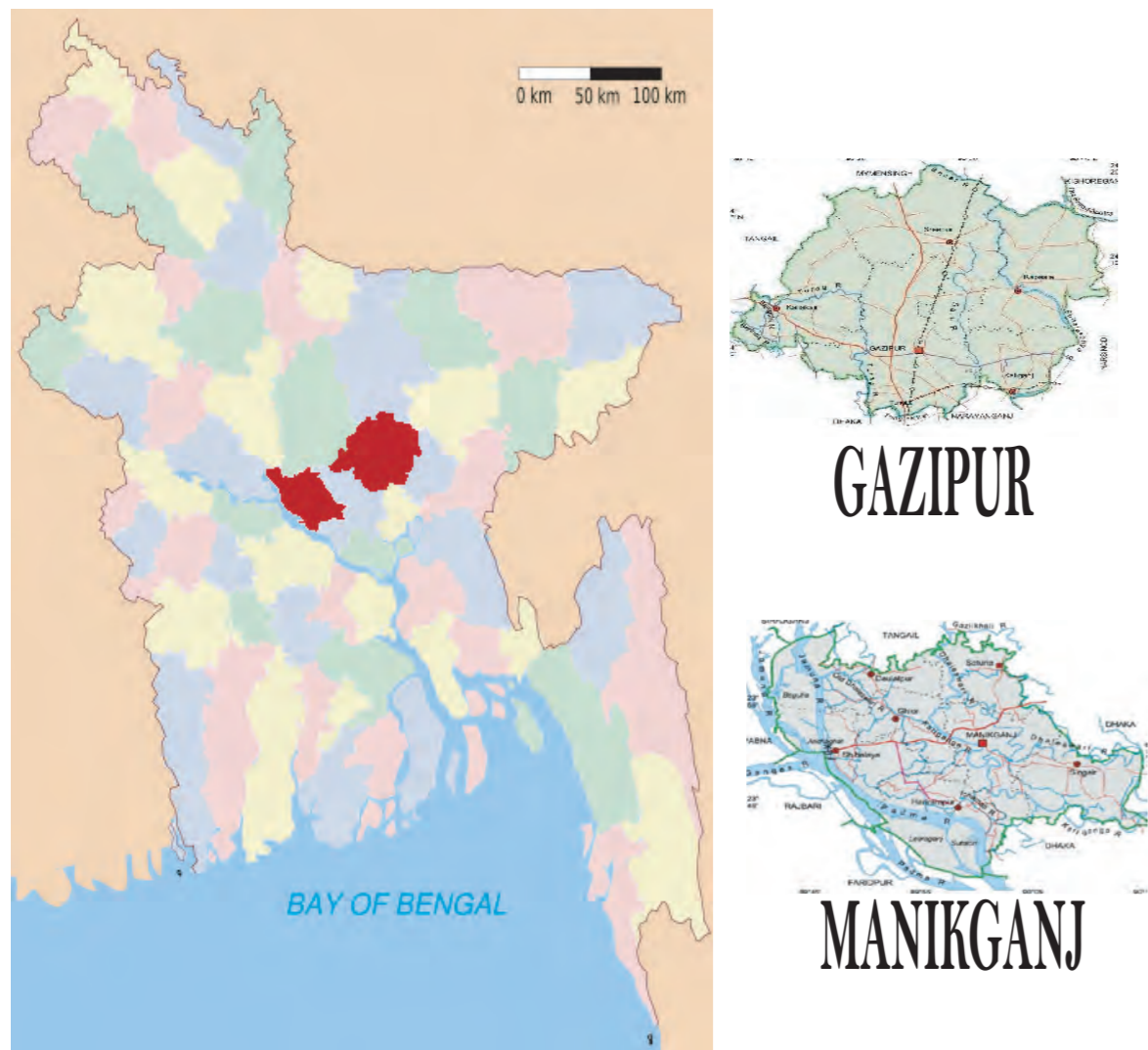
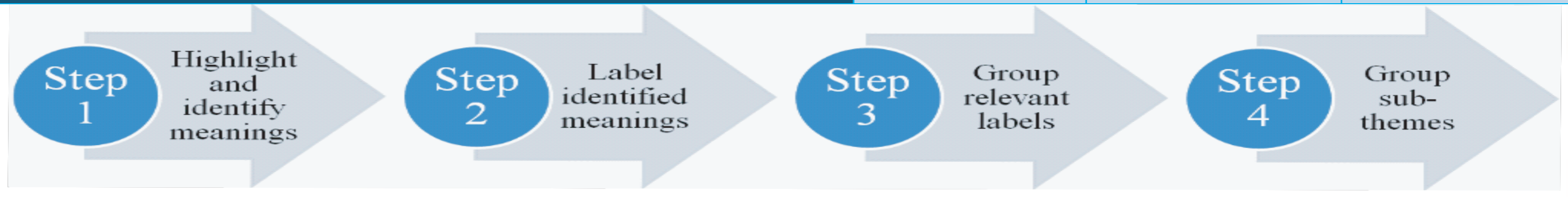
How and to what extent do ICT-led development/ ICT4D projects influence the sustainable socio-economic progress at community level?

Research Objective

Design and test an impact assessment framework for ICT4D projects in developing countries so that policy-makers, international donor agencies and NGOs can build on to gain a better understanding of ICT4D projects at the community level, from the participants' point of view.

Methodology

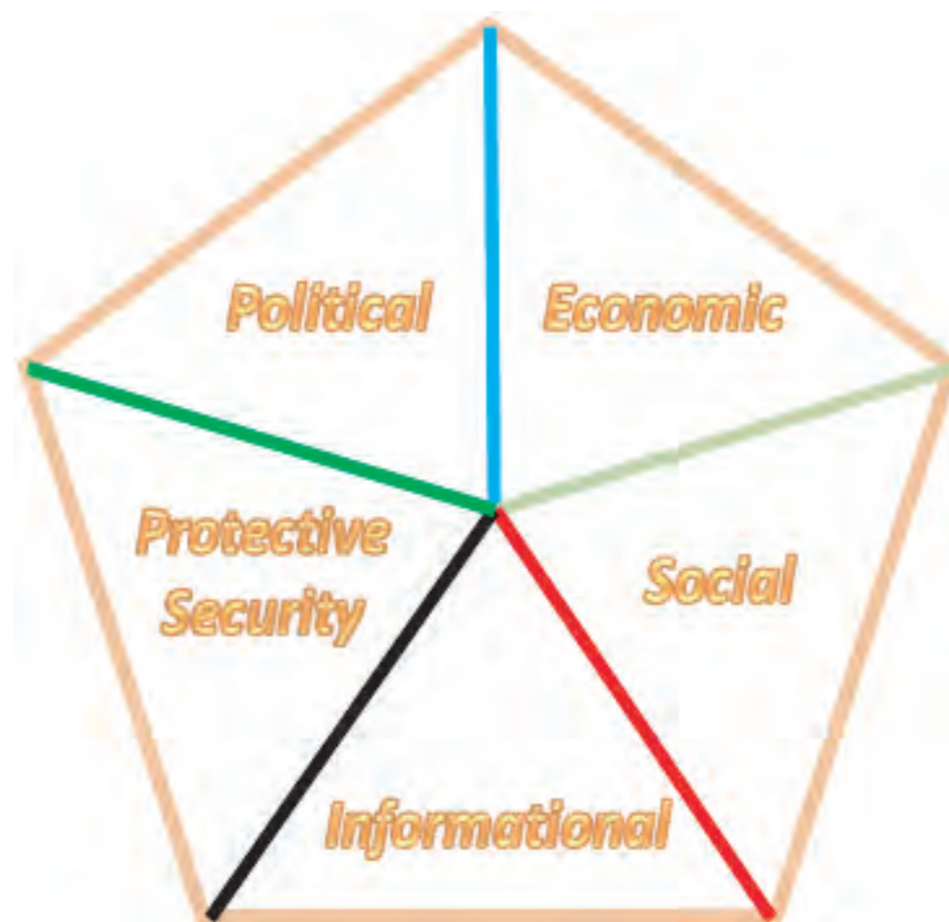
Research Approach	Study Sites	Sources of Secondary Data	Sources of Primary Data	Category/feature of the participants	Number	
Interpretive approach in qualitative tradition (case study)	Gonokendra (Multipurpose Community access centre)	GPCIC	Statistical report, official record etc.	Site premises and daily operation	2 Gonokendras and 1 GPCIC	
Data Analysis Techniques				Village Profile	Village people in meeting places	2 Villages
Thematic data analysis (themes are generated from the field notes and interview transcripts)				In depth interview	Participants and officials	3 officials, 20 participants and 2 trainers
Data Analysis Tasks				Focus group discussion	Participants, general people and officials	4 FGDs



Research Study Sites in Rural Bangladesh



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Theoretical Framework: Sen's 5 Freedom

Preliminary Output

Political Freedom

- Legal Awareness
- Expressing opinion
- Role playing & interaction

e.g. A participant stopped the marriage of her sister while the proposed bridegroom's parents demanded dowry.

Economic Freedom

- Meaningful Livelihood
- Resource Access
- Economic Information

e.g. One divorced female participant improved her livelihood after obtaining income-generating information (i.e. cloth making).

Social Freedom

- Locally Appreciated
- Social Status
- Increase Social Skills

e.g. One female participant starts her own business in the locality and gains respect from the community members.

Informational Freedom

- Easy Access
- Information Processing
- Welfare Service Information

e.g. ICT interventions help to introduce newer type of education systems in the schools which is the Computer Based Practical Lab.

Protective Security

- Natural Calamity Precaution
- Sharing Disaster Information
- Building Awareness

e.g. One of the participants starts a disaster management club in his community to fight the adverse effects of global warming.



Research Team in Field Visit