



BFES Advocacy Meeting

ICT for Poverty Reduction in South Asia

Date: Tuesday, 22 February 2005

Time 14:00 – 16:00

Venue: Room XXII, (Building E, first floor) Palais des Nations

Host: Bangladesh Friendship Education Society (BFES – Bangladesh)

Audience: Representatives of governments, multilateral agencies, bilateral donor agencies, civil society organizations, media, private sector (40-50)

Language: English, simultaneous translation into French and Spanish

Background and Objectives:

The possible impact of information and communications technologies (ICTs) on development has recently become a much-contested issue within the development discourse. Practitioners of ICTs take an optimistic view and highlight the positive effects of the Internet and other forms of ICTs to create new economic, social and political opportunities for developing countries and the poor. On the other hand, there is pessimistic view and claim that ICTs due to existing socio-economic inequalities will favor the privileged segments within society and not reach the economically and socially disadvantaged thus leading to a widening of the socioeconomic gap within developing countries. The contextualized approach to ICTs underscores the importance of the socio-economic and cultural context, which is being considered crucial for the better understanding of the potential effects of ICTs on development and the empowerment of poor communities.

South Asia is not behind of these debates and contests. BFES and its partners from the region are advocating through the best practices and models, which are the potential for national and regional policies for ICT4D. Policies stand on the people's foot have important role in implementing WSIS Declaration and Plan of Action. Session will follow these pertinent issues.

Program:

Address of Welcome: **Reza Salim**, Associate Director, BFES

Panel:

1. **Dr. Toufiq Ali**, HE Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva – *Chairperson*
2. **Mr. Charles Geiger**, Executive Director, WSIS Executive Secretariat – *Special Guest*
3. **Dr. Basheerhamad Shadrach**, Director, One World South Asia
4. **Mr. T I M Nurul Kabir**, Vice President, Bangladesh Association for Software and Information Services
5. **Mr. Willie Currie**, Program Manager, Association for Progressive Communication (APC)
6. **Rinalia Abdul Rahim**, Executive Director, Global Knowledge partnership (GKP)

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