

***e-ForAll* is a strategic public policy guide to the application of ICTs in the fight against poverty.** It is founded on three basic principles:

First, the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have an enormous **potential** to improve the livelihoods of low incomes peoples by reducing the cost of providing services to traditionally marginalized communities and facilitating the build up of constructive social capital. *e-ForAll* comprises some key steps that are necessary to realize this potential.

Second, *e-ForAll* should put ICTs at the service of everyone in a society. Public policy should provide for the competitive and transparent enabling environment to facilitate ICT business development. *e-ForAll* should also include concrete programs to open **opportunities** for the poor to increase their incomes and improve their livelihoods, **empower** them through participation in the decision making process, and enhance their **security** from adverse shocks and health hazards⁵.

Third, ICT development for socioeconomic change will require considerable **State support and financing**. Nevertheless, in a developing country context, State support cannot proceed without regards to cost, impact and effectiveness. ICT initiatives to combat poverty must be suited to the low productivity environment in which they are to be applied, and any subsidies required **must be cost effective and result in sustainable benefits**.

The table overleaf incorporates these principles into a model ICT development program based on an *e-ForAll* policy guide. The list of activities is meant to be illustrative, not comprehensive, and their classification regarding impact on opportunity, empowerment or security is indicative. In practice overlap is expected and desirable.

Elements Comprising an e-ForAll Public Policy Guide		
<p>Widespread Access to Networks Are there widespread low-cost means for the majority to access ICT networks, services and equipment? Are there specific programs geared to address access requirements of low-income peoples.</p>	<p>a Does the regulatory framework stimulate fair and transparent competition, and the participation of a broad range of operators? b Are there country initiatives to bring connectivity to remote rural areas at a cost that is sustainable and affordable, both to the State and to users? c Are there programs to increase awareness in the population of the opportunities that ICTs have to offer? d Are there efforts to provide support, on a competitive basis, to socioeconomic development initiatives that make use of ICTs to service the needs of low-income communities?</p>	<p>Opportunity/ Security/ Empowerment</p>
<p>Democratic Networked Learning Do public systems of education integrate ICTs and prepare a computer and Internet literate workforce that is capable of frequently upgrading its skills?</p>	<p>e Are efforts being made to ensure that the formal school system, teachers in particular, are fully equipped to help students benefit from computerized and networked learning? Is primary and secondary education delivering the strong literacy skills that ICT skills must build on? f Are there technical training programs in the community to prepare a workforce that is computer and Internet literate and is capable of upgrading its skills frequently? g Are there programs that make use of ICTs to address the educational and training needs of low-income adults?</p>	<p>Opportunity</p>
<p>Networked Competitive Development ForAll Are small firms, microentrepreneurs, small farmers and wage workers being incorporated into the network economy?</p>	<p>h Do public institutions use ICTs to make job information available online to improve the performance of labor markets? i Are small firms and microentrepreneurs being supported and trained in the use of ICTs to improve their competitiveness (productivity, marketing service delivery) and develop strategic partnerships with other enterprises? Do microenterprise service providers (savings, credit, training, business development) make effective use of ICTs? j Are there national systems of public procurement that facilitate supply by competitive micro and small enterprises?</p>	<p>Opportunity</p>
<p>Networked Social Development Are national institutions that support social development and security making effective use of ICTs in their delivery of services to the poor?</p>	<p>k Are there low-cost opportunities for poor people to themselves apply ICTs to strengthen bonds with other peoples and community groups and enhance their incomes and security? l Are ICTs being used to improve the performance and service delivery of agencies entrusted with food security, public health, public safety, domestic violence prevention and counseling, and disaster prevention and mitigation? m Are there initiatives specifically targeted to incorporate traditionally disenfranchised groups (e.g. indigenous peoples, women, persons with disabilities, unemployed youths, small and landless farmers) into the Network Society.?</p>	<p>Security</p>
<p>ICTs and Poverty in National Dev. Policy Is poverty reduction a centerpiece of national policy? Is the application of ICTs to reduce poverty encouraged? Are ICT development and poverty reduction policies affordable, institutionally viable, transparent, sustainable, participatory and subject to review and adjustment?</p>	<p>n Are there efforts to develop sustainable e-Government systems to service the needs of the poor, and engage their participation in the design and operation of these systems? o Is the State implementing an effective system of decentralized decision-making to engage the participation of low-income and traditionally disenfranchised groups? Are ICTs being used to give these groups an effective voice? p Is poverty reduction a centerpiece of national development policy? Do policymakers understand the role that the State needs to play in order for ICTs to help combat poverty? q Are there reliable mechanisms for interagency coordination and for partnerships with private and civil society institutions? r Are government ICT support programs transparent, sustainable, accountable and cost effective? Are there systems for monitoring ICT project impacts and adjusting programs based of lessons from experience? Does the public have an input in program design?</p>	<p>Empowerment Institutional Viability</p>