

► HOPE AGAINST HOPE!

As we bring out the second edition of the magazine, let me begin with sincere thanks to every reader, contributor and criticizer for their unprecedented support and valuable comments on the first issue of i4d. For us, this is not only endorsement but also encouragement of our efforts and mission. The question of entering the massive and skewed information market acceptably, is no more the *prima fascia* of our deliberation. The test now is to best convey the right attire of our efforts to every reader with every issue. The domain of 'information for development' is vast. Issues are many; solutions and discussions take place often; resolutions form at many places; however, aggregation of these is seldom done. As we move on, let us foster our dedication to collect, share and disseminate information that is relevant and in need. A matter of working with hope against hope.

This volume of the magazine attempts to take up the issue critically: Are ICTs really viable in the rural environment? It is understandable that technologies fall within the larger domain of human existence and the infusion of any technology is impossible without a certain degree of resonance with the beneficiaries. Why does ICT often become unviable in such milieu? What can take them towards viability or sustainability? This issue of i4d is structured in a way where these questions are addressed in multiple manners. Rajesh Jain reflects in his article over the root of these questions trying to provide possible pointers. In another article, Richard Gerster tries to address the problem of poverty and find if ICTs can contribute in its reduction. Though the argument has a donor perspective, it serves the important purpose of providing insights to remedial actions. Sanjay Jaju's article steps upon the ground and explains the problems in implementing e-governance projects in India. On similar lines, Amit Guring of Drishtee provides some glimpses of pleasure and pain in implementing an ICT project in rural India. Fredrick Noronha traces the entry of computers in schools in Goa and the role being played by the state government in making this mission (im)possible!

Another relevant factor, which many might ponder now, is whether this magazine is only for India? We think the first few issues of the i4d are similar to a stone thrown in a calm pond. As the ripples form, it creates bigger ripples around it... spreading outwards. We believe that the amount of information to be shared among all the developing countries across the globe is mammoth. We see i4d as this stone thrown in the huge ICT for Development pond that definitely is not only Indian.

Happy reading.



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