

Safeguarding the interests of the marginalised: rhetoric and reality of global ICT4D initiatives designed to deliver the SDGs



Tim Unwin
UNESCO Chair in ICT4D

eBornio Knowledge Fair 25th
October 2017



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Outline



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- Introduction
 - The context: economic growth with inequality to eliminate poverty
 - Development for ICTs (D4ICT)
- Four challenges:
 - Sustainable development and the SDGs
 - Representation and the voices of marginalised communities
 - Cyborgs and the Big Con
 - Safeguarding the interests of the marginalised



Economic Growth with Inequality?



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<http://www.hindustantimes.com/world/lamborghinis-versus-garbage-salaries-spain-battles-inequality/story-SnY3lsblpkStfrjhB5bDZK.html>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

The early 21st century: an era of economic growth

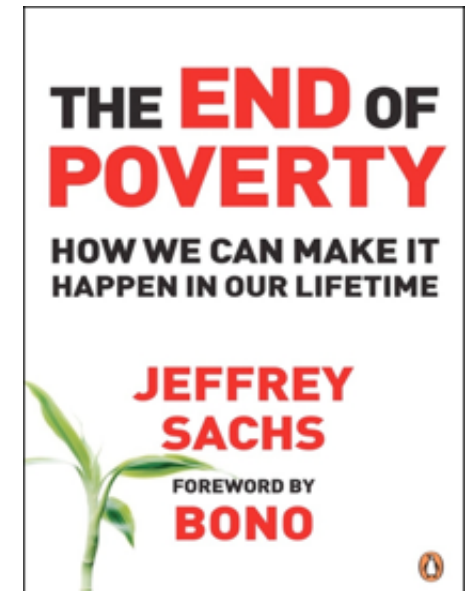


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- Enshrined in the MDGs of 2000
- Economic growth will eliminate poverty
 - Based on an absolute definition of poverty
- Key role of private sector as an engine of growth
 - MDG 8 on partnerships, especially ICTs
- Institutionalised by
 - Global institutions
 - World Bank, IMF, UN agencies...
 - International agreements
 - MDGs, World Summit on the Information Society...
 - The international ODA system
 - Donor and recipient governments



MDGs 2000



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And we failed to deliver them...

Meanwhile inequality has increased (UNDP, 2015)



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“Even with all the economic and technological advancements at the world’s disposal, people do not have equitable benefits from progress, human capabilities and opportunities do not always flourish, human security is at stake, human rights and freedoms are not always protected, gender inequalities remain a challenge, and future generations’ choices do not get the attention they deserve”.

Even the World Bank (2016)

agrees



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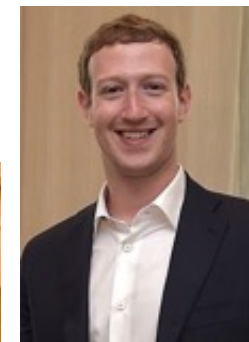


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“Although there are many individual success stories, the effect of technology on global productivity, expansion of opportunity for the poor and the middle classes, and the spread of accountable governance has so far been less than expected”

Oxfam (2017)

- Eight people (all men) now own the same wealth as half of the world's population
- Five of these men have made most of their money through ICTs
 - Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, Carlos Slim Helu, Mark Zuckerberg, Larry Ellison
 - ICTs also significant in other richest people's portfolios.



Should reducing inequality be at the heart of development?

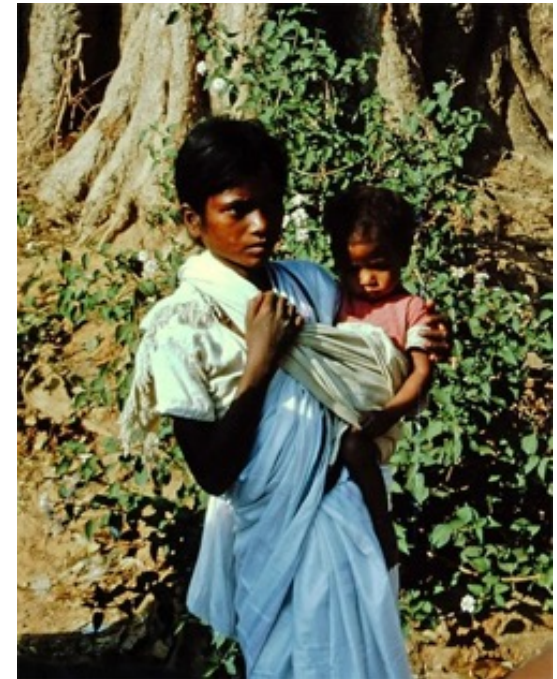


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- Focus on interventions with the most marginalised
 - Those with disabilities
 - Women in patriarchal societies
 - Indigenous peoples
- Redistribution through taxation
 - Challenging neo-liberalism
- Role of regulators for privatised utilities
 - Serving the interests of all citizens
- In practice, need to balance both inequality and growth
 - Roles of different stakeholders
- Some recognition in SDG10



ICTs and increasing inequality



The evidence



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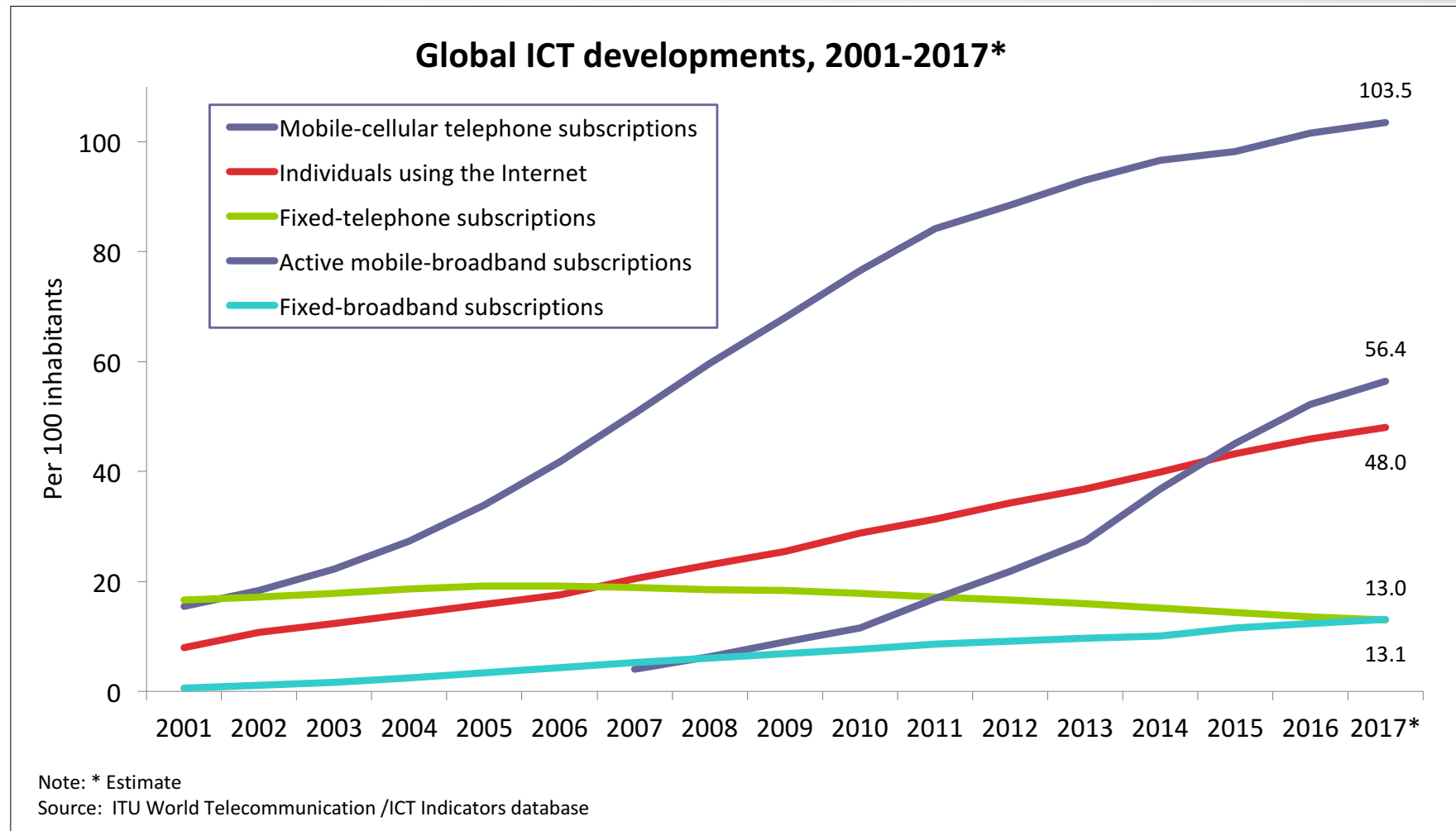
Global ICT developments



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<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

Internet users per 100 inhabitants

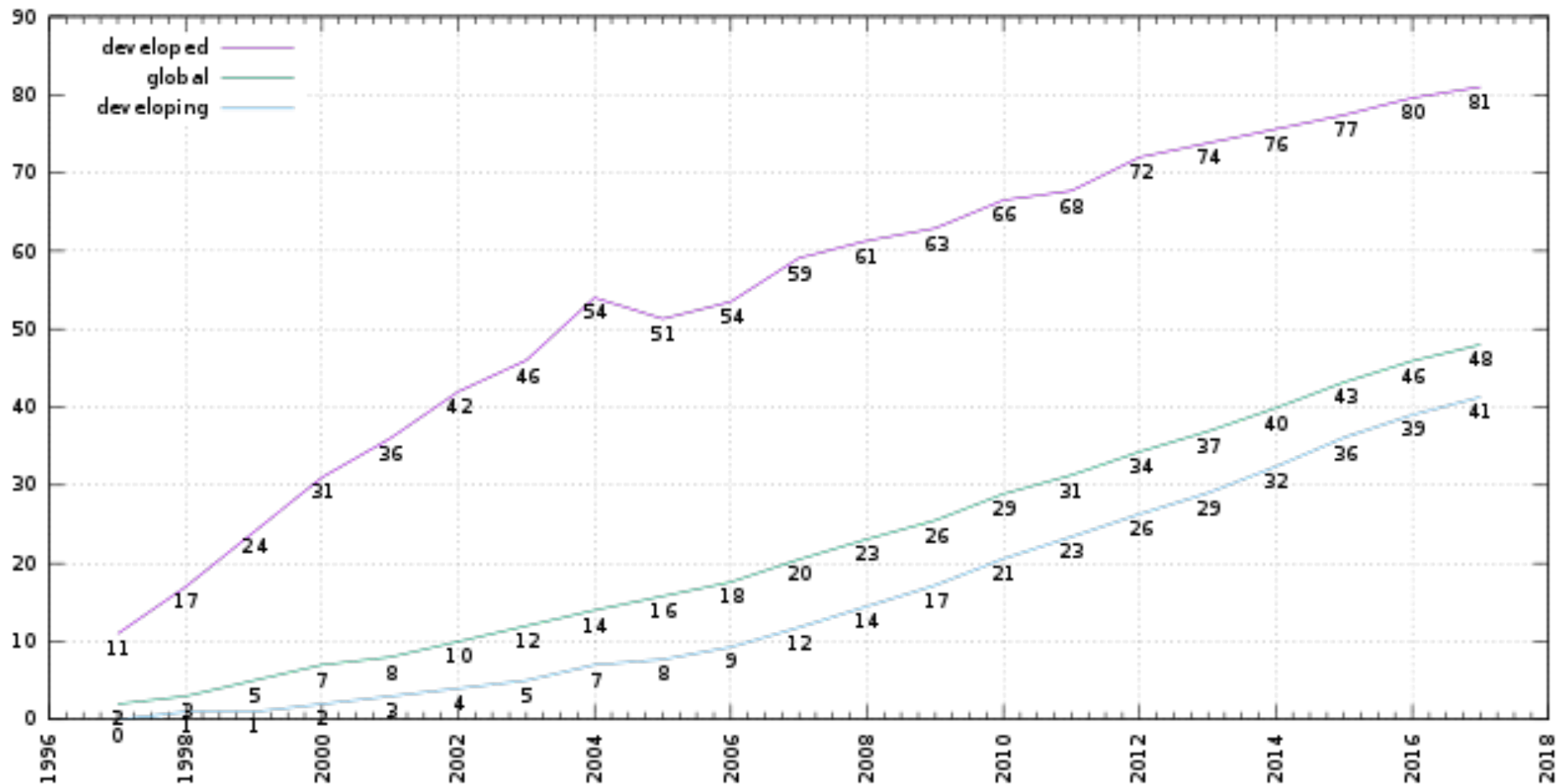


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Internet Users Per 100 Inhabitants



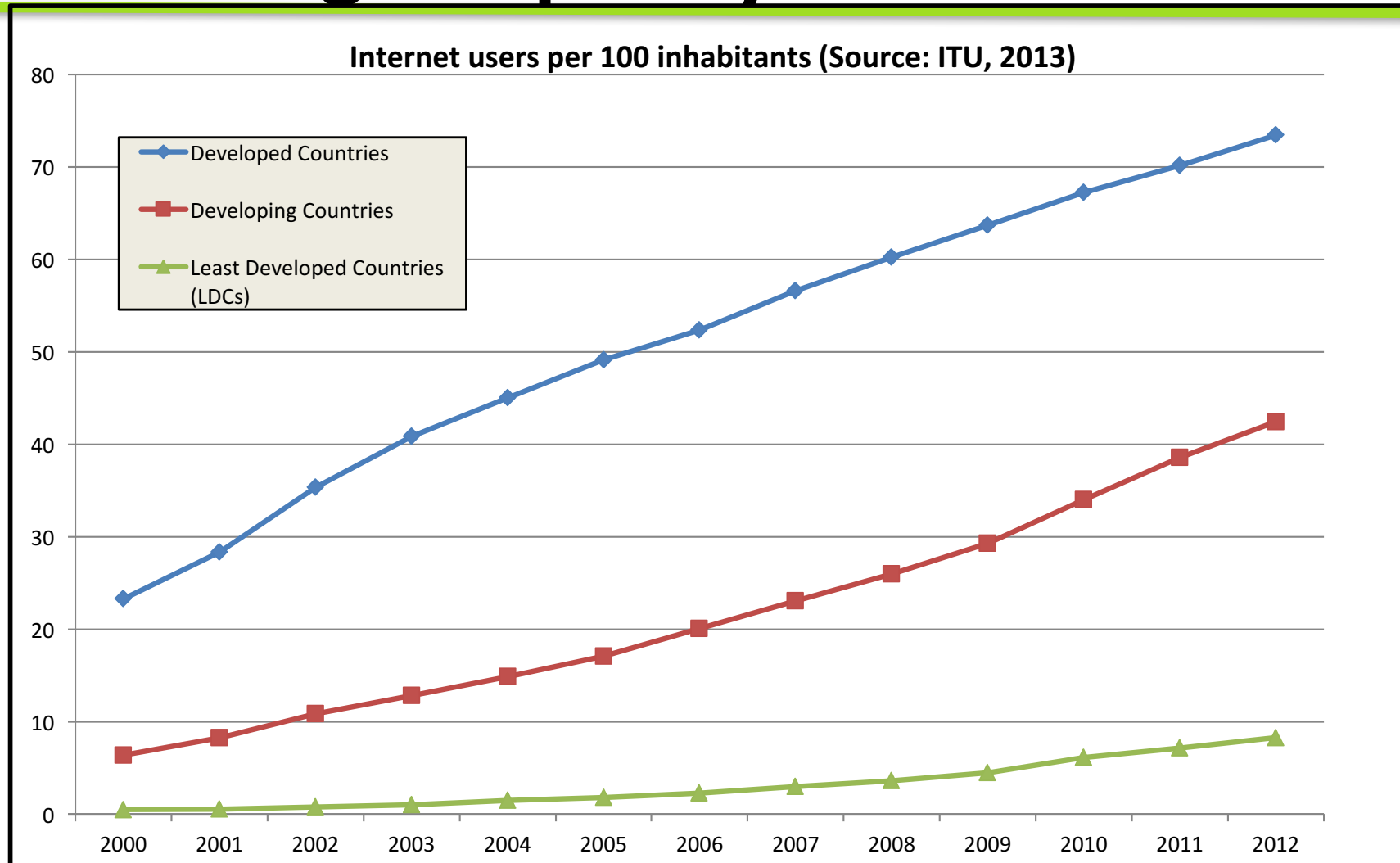
Growth indeed, but increasing inequality



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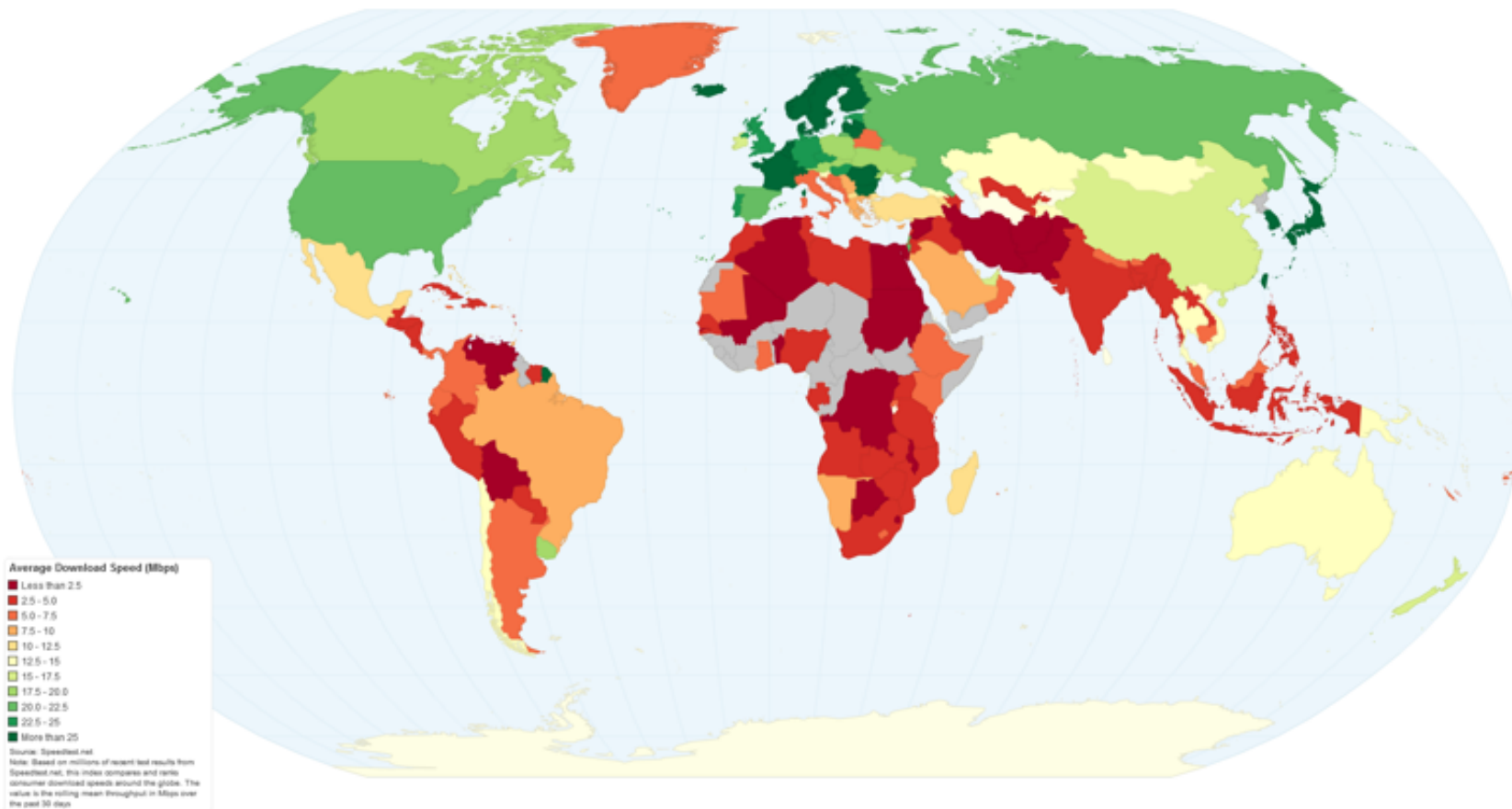
World broadband speeds 2014



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<https://www.vox.com/a/internet-maps>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

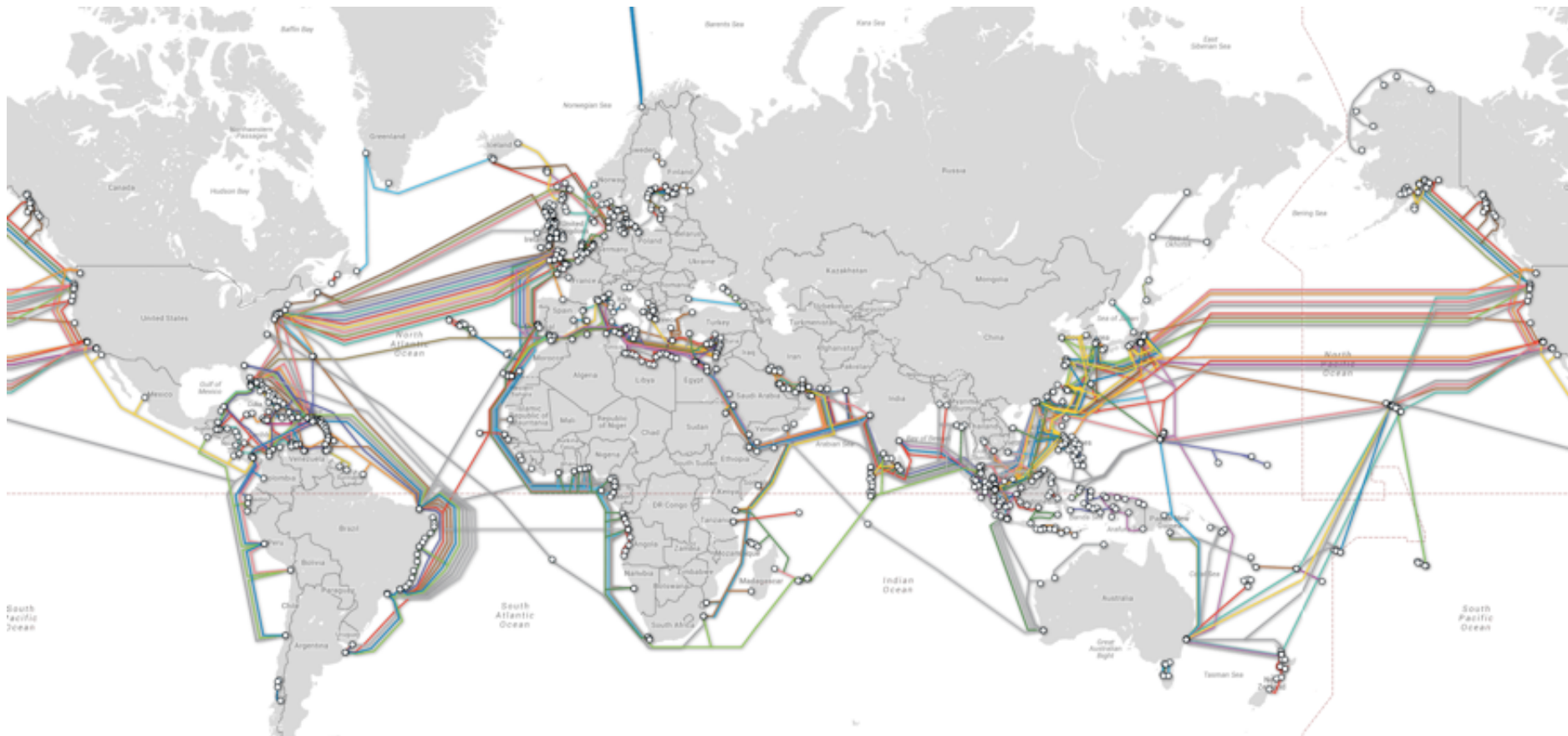
Submarine cables, 2016



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<https://cdn.arstechnica.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/05/world-submarine-cable-map.png>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

An increasingly unequal world driven by ICTs



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- Hegemonic belief that economic growth will eliminate poverty
 - Enshrined in MDGs and SDGs
- Strong evidence that this has been associated with an increase in digital inequality
 - World Bank, UNDP, Broadband Commission...
- Yet remarkably little attention being paid to what to do about this
 - Usual recipe is more of the same
 - Increase access, affordability and skills...



We now have Development for ICTs (D4ICT) not ICT for Development (ICT4D)



And if this is to be changed,
we must understand the
interests that underlie it



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Private sector interests in D4ICT



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- Expanding markets for ICTs in poorer countries
- Drive to connect the next billion
- Search for innovation and cheap labour for ICT sector
- Role in global ICT governance
- Heavy US dominance
 - Especially Google and Facebook
- Pilots in the expectation that donors will fund roll-out

The Microsoft logo, consisting of the word "Microsoft" in a bold, sans-serif font.



The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in a lowercase, sans-serif font inside a blue rectangle.

The Google logo, consisting of the word "Google" in its multi-colored, sans-serif font.



Government interests in D4ICT



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- Governments of poorer countries
 - ICTs as “modern”
 - ICTs as “real” tokens for re-election
 - Cost reduction of e-government services
- Donor governments
 - Supporting their ICT sectors
 - Global ICT political system and governance
 - Cost reduction of transactions



<http://www.abufarhanazmi.com/img/gallery/image03-big.jpg>

Civil Society interests in D4ICT – 2014 Ebola example

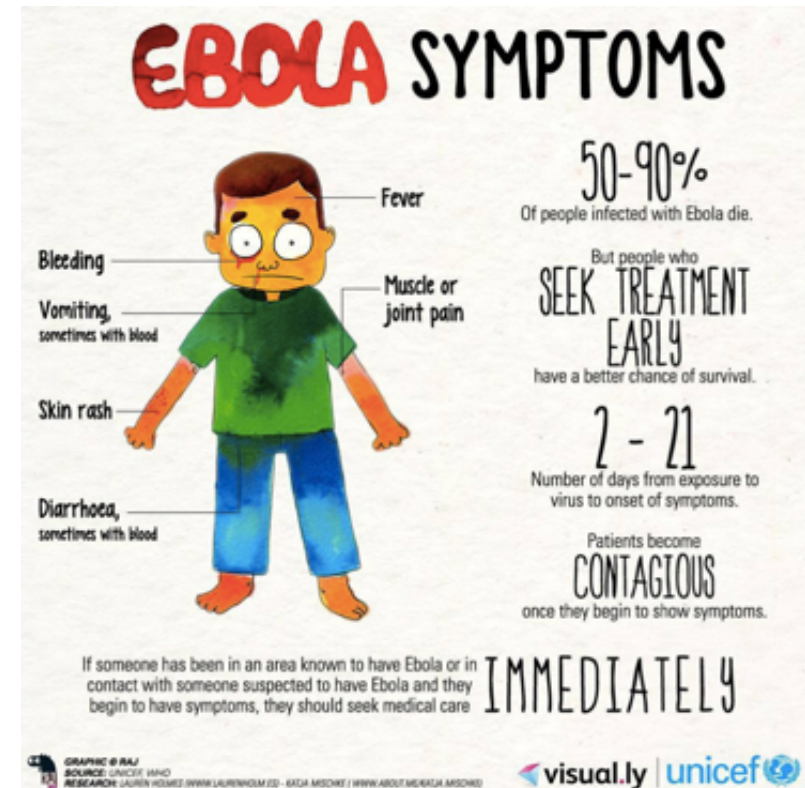


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- Numerous organisations sought funding for digital/online solutions
- Some large grants disbursed
- Yet less than 5% Internet connectivity in Sierra Leone
 - So “online” was pointless
- Some simple ICT solutions were beneficial
- Civil Society more generally seeks to maintain itself
 - And uses ICTs to do so



1. ICTs and the SDGs



A new era of rhetoric – but will it make a difference?



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SDGs 2015



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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**Who can remember all of these,
let alone the 169 targets?**

The WSIS Process: ICTs and the SDGs



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	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	e-gov	e-bus	e-hea	e-hea	e-emp	e-env	e-agr	e-sci	C8	C9	C10	C11
SDG 1																		
SDG 2																		
SDG 3																		
SDG 4																		
SDG 5																		
SDG 6																		
SDG 7																		
SDG 8																		
SDG 9																		
SDG 10																		
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SDG 14																		
SDG 15																		
SDG 16																		
SDG 17																		

ICTs and the SDGs



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Morning mist in Ba'Kelalan



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Recent books on ICTs and the SDGs



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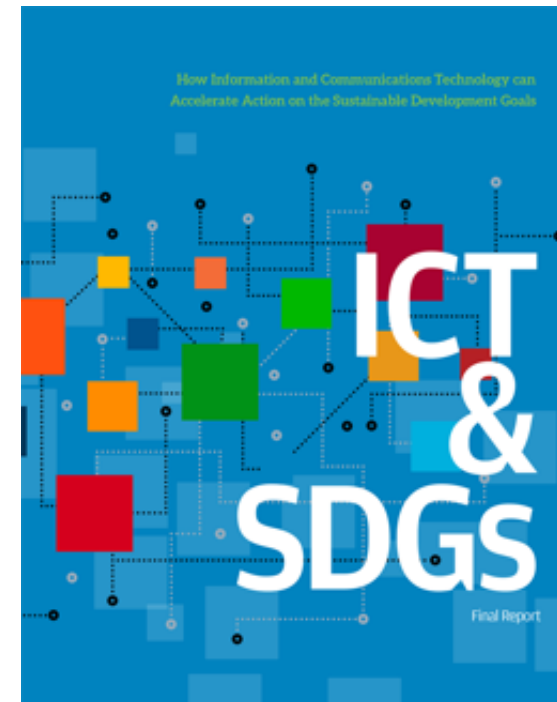
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The ITU



http://www.itu.int/pub/D-GEN-ICT_SDGS.01-2017

Ericsson and Earth Institute, Columbia University



<http://unsdsn.org/resources/publications/ict-and-sdgs/>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

Problems with the idea of sustainable development



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- Long heritage of interests in sustainable development
 - 1987 *Our Common Future*
- SDGS essentially combine arguments of MDGs with environmental issues
- Sustainability implies maintenance of something – but what?
- Development implies positive change and growth
- Notions of sustainability and development are in tension



Why the SDGs have failed already



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55. The SDGs and targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. Targets are defined as aspirational and global, **with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances**. Each government will also decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated in national planning processes, policies and strategies. It is important to recognize the link between sustainable development and other relevant ongoing processes in the economic, social and environmental fields.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

Why the SDGs have failed already



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- Each country is expected to set its own targets
- How many have yet done so?
 - And yet it is two years since agreement was reached
- No baseline data for many of the SDGS in many countries
- So it is simply not possible to evaluate whether they will have been successful
- The SDGs are serving as a vehicle
 - For UN Agencies to have a role
 - For companies and organisations to make a lot of money

Top down efforts to measure



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ICTs are making matters worse: growth not equality

- ICTs only mentioned four times in SDG targets
 - 4b scholarships for ICT training
 - 5b empowerment of women
 - 9c access to ICTs
 - Universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020!
 - 17.8 technology bank and capacity building by 2017
- Main focus in SDGS remains on economic growth to reduce poverty
- No explicit link of ICTs to reducing inequality (SDG10)
 - And little global attention to this
- ICTs remain as being seen mainly as increasing the very growth that will lead to greater inequality

ICTs are making matters worse: environmental impact



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- Many claims about how good ICTs are for the environment
 - Reducing air flights by video-conferencing
- Corporate-financed initiatives to reduce carbon imprint, and some other environmental factors
 - Global e-sustainability initiative (GESI)
 - But these are very partial
- No-one is including satellite debris
 - a very major issue
- Need for holistic assessment
 - Huge energy demands of sector
 - Air conditioning, server farms and data centres



<https://ttechcrunch2011.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/intelsat-satellite.jpg?w=738>

ICTs are making matters worse: business models

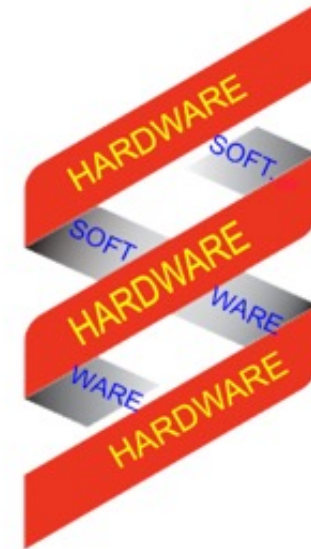


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- Inbuilt obsolescence
 - Life-span of mobile devices
 - Not built to be updated or reusable
- Helix of unsustainability
 - Hardware update needs new software
 - Software and content demand needs new hardware
- Drivers of modernity and fashion
- E-waste now a significant issue



2. Representation and the voices of marginalised communities



ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2014

Focusing especially on global conferences



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A voice?



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International ICT events



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- Proliferation and duplication
 - ITU, ICANN, IGF...
- Small countries and organisations do not have sufficient qualified staff to attend
- And even if they did they often cannot afford to send them
- Applies to governments, private sector and civil society.
- Increasingly global governance is being influenced by major corporations
- Even representatives of poor and marginalised are usually from elites.



WRC 2012, Geneva

Towards some solutions



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- Importance of widespread national consultations
 - Multi-sector dialogue
 - Trusting national representatives
- Participation in regional groupings
 - Reaching relevant consensus
- Use of online platforms
 - But often create new “elites”
 - And those who have time to participate may not be the most knowledgeable
- Engaging academics practically in learning with the poor and marginalised
 - Co-creation of knowledge
 - Co-creation of implementation
- Use of multiple languages



3. Cyborgs and the “big con”



<https://www.occupycorporatism.com/secrets-of-the-transhumanist-agenda-revealed-at-2013-conference/>

The poorest and most marginalised are likely to suffer most



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<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

Cyborgs and the “big con”



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- Increasing digital interface between humans and machines
 - Driven by interests of global corporations
 - The monetisation of lives
- Implications for privacy and security
- But focus here on
 - Is it too late? Are we already all cyborgs?
 - A clever business model
 - you can have something for free, but what you will give is worth vastly more

How do we communicate?



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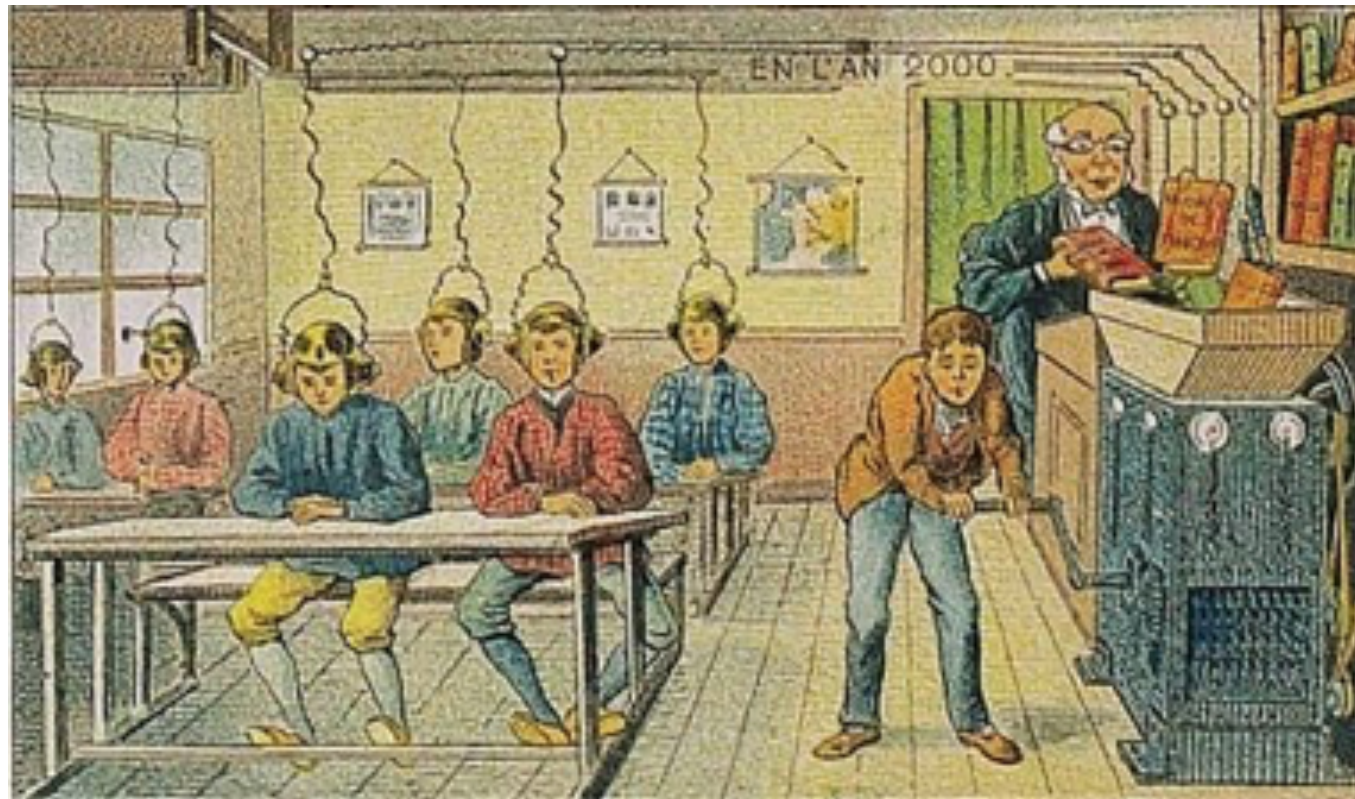
How do we learn?



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Villemard's 1910 image *À l'École*, depicting how he thought a school might look in 2000

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Humans and machines



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- Computers getting people to log on to them in the morning
- Cars driving people around
- Machines taking our memories from us and helping us forget them
 - Telephone numbers
- Not being allowed to forget things we don't want to remember
 - FB sending sad events as memories
- Work being done on neural implants
- Chipped humans
- Are we all already cyborgs?

Chipped humans



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A demonstration of implanting a radio frequency identification microchip. The Swedish company Epicenter has about 150 employees with RFID chips implanted. Photo by Paul Hughes/Wikipedia

April 4 (UPI) -- About 150 employees the Swedish technology firm Epicenter agreed to have a microchip inserted in their hands, the company said.

<http://www.upi.com/Swedish-company-implants-microchips-in-employees/6541491315939/>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

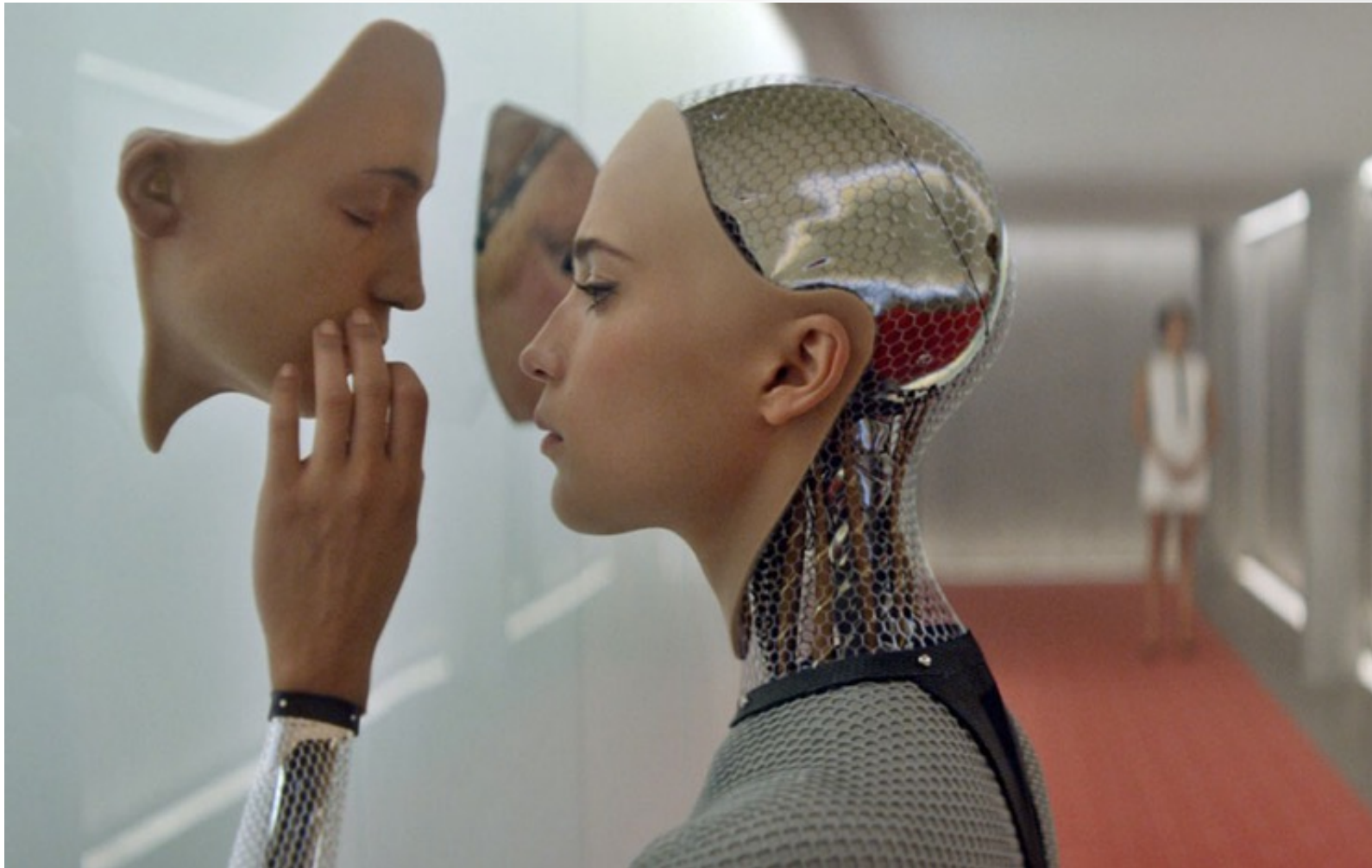
“Australian Scientists Say We Are On Our Way To Becoming Cyborgs”



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<https://www.dmarge.com/2016/06/humans-could-become-cyborgs.html>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

But cyborgs are real now



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<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/EaHh50PHN5M/maxresdefault.jpg>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

The “big con”

- Giving someone something “for free” when they give you something much more valuable in return
- Social media:
 - Facebook gather 98 bits of information about everyone, and sells it to advertiser
 - Google uses everything it gets from users of all its “services” to generate revenue
- Global corporations using cheapest tax regimes
 - Usage does not go back to poorest countries as tax revenue that could be used for “development”

How much does Google know about you?



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Source: Dellgines rural Internet

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

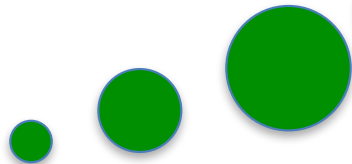


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It's actually much more interesting to ask, what do they *not* know about you!



Big Data and Open Data

- Big Data
 - Massive growth industry
 - Power of data analytics
- Open Data
 - Getting governments (and others) to make all data open and freely available
 - Ostensibly for transparency
 - But companies want this to make money
- Who benefits most?
 - Citizens, especially the poor?
 - Or those who have the skills and resources best to analyse it?

Big Data



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BIG DATA

A COMPETITIVE WEAPON FOR THE ENTERPRISE

Big Data is all around us, produced across all digital processes. Every day, the number of exabytes (1 billion gigabytes) created grows exponentially. In fact, **90%** of the world's data has been generated in just the past **2 years**.

The Global Hadoop* Market

\$1.5B in 2012 **\$50.2B** by 2020

Petabytes of data are generated every minute through mobile, digital ads, social media, Web logs, electronic devices, and sensors that can be combined and analyzed to give companies insights never before revealed in siloed reports. Enterprises can use this available data to gain new understandings of their customers' behavior and internal operations.

WHO'S USING IT?

Companies across a variety of industries are leveraging Big Data as a competitive advantage, with Financial Services taking the lead followed by Technology, Telecommunications, and Retail.

BUSINESSES INVESTING IN BIG DATA, BY REGION

Region	Currently Investing	Planning to Invest within a Year	Investment Increase	Total Investing
NORTH AMERICA	22.8%	18.5%	48.9%	56.3%
EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA	16.8%	21.0%	45.2%	44.3%
ASIA/PACIFIC	23.6%	23.3%	58.8%	52.9%
LATIN AMERICA	27.8%	12.2%	42.3%	38.9%

Around the world and across industries, tech advancements are enabling companies to take advantage of Big Data's offerings.

BIG DATA USAGE, BY INDUSTRY

Financial Services	22%
Technology	20%
Telecommunications	14%
Retail	9%
Government	7%
Health Care	7%
Advertising & Entertainment	6%
Energy	6%
Data Services	5%
Energy & Utilities	2%
IT Consulting	2%
Shipping	1%
Transportation	1%

TOP HIGH-IMPACT USE CASES

Big Data enables data discovery, helping you find new insights and ask questions you never knew to ask. Integrate and analyze structured and unstructured data across all channels to better understand and discover the customer journey, find new revenue streams, gain huge operational efficiencies, and more.

BIG DATA "USE CASES" WITHIN BUSINESSES

Customer Analytics	48%
Operational Analytics	21%
Fraud & Compliance	12%
New Product & Service Innovation	10%
Enterprise Data Warehouse Optimization	10%

*Based on 2014 data on marketing

CUSTOMER ANALYTICS

- Increase customer acquisition
- Reduce churn
- Increase revenue per customer
- Improve existing products

OPERATIONAL ANALYTICS

- Industrial monitoring and optimization
- Supply chain efficiency
- IT operation analytics
- Network planning and optimization

NEW PRODUCT & SERVICE INNOVATION

- Integrated analytics
- Data-driven new products
- Data-improved service offerings

IS BIG DATA RIGHT FOR YOU?

As technology grows, Big Data will become crucial in understanding your customer, company, and industry. Enterprises that leverage and combine data from multiple sources will gain a deeper understanding of their customer interactions, including what gets them to spend more time with their product, what causes churn and, ultimately, how to improve purchasing decisions. Companies that properly interpret their Big Data will get faster insight to boost production efficiency and develop new data-driven products and services, which will help them gain a competitive edge over their peers.

Datameer

*Datameer is an open source, low-cost storage and compute platform for Big Data.

SOURCES: Datameer, scorecardby.com, theguardian.com, expert.com, allbizmarketresearch.com

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/louiscolombus/2016/05/09/ten-ways-big-data-is-revolutionizing-marketing-and-sales/#27370dc921cf>

<http://unwin.wordpress.com>

4. Safeguarding the interests of the marginalised



Towards a more ethical consideration of ICTs in “development”



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The interests of those in isolated areas...



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Safeguarding the marginalised

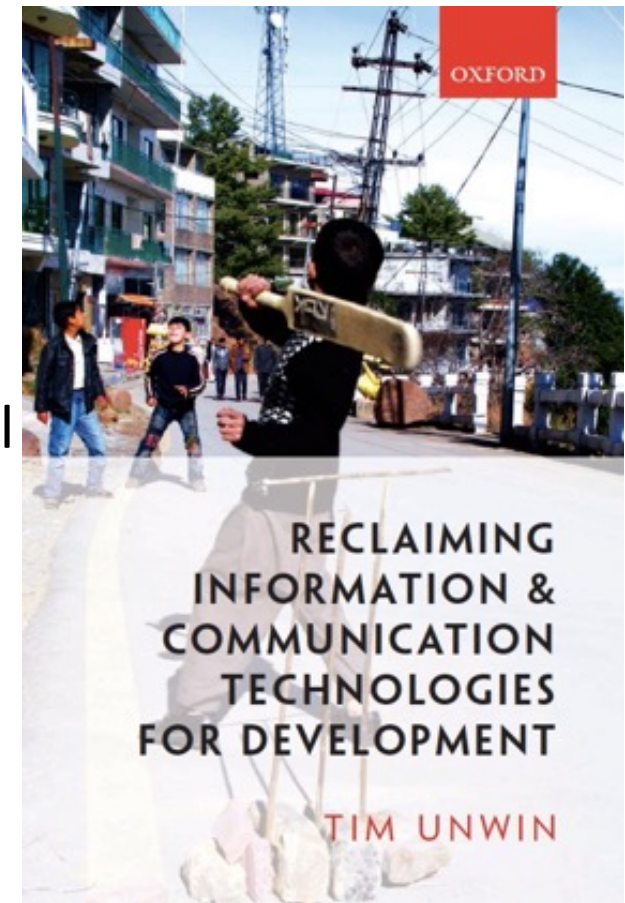


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- Political
 - Prioritising the poorest and most marginalised
 - Shift from “rights” towards “responsibilities”
 - Governments have responsibilities to all
- Social
 - Community solutions
 - *With* not “for”
 - “Nothing about us without us”
 - An emphasis on reducing inequality



Safeguarding the marginalised



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- Economic
 - Economic empowerment
 - Focus on needs
 - Reduce emphasis on economic growth as solution to poverty
 - Sustainably funded solutions
- Technology and culture
 - Recording material culture
 - Maintaining minority languages
 - Sustaining values
 - Supporting religions



Technical solutions



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- Secure systems to maintain privacy
- Wireless community networks
 - With powerful external firewalls
- Open rather than proprietary
- Content relevant to local priorities
- Devices
 - Untrackable
 - Sustainable
- Careful training and advice
 - Awareness of how ICTs are used to exploit people
 - Marginalised are especially vulnerable



Conclusions



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- Starting a discussion...
- Hopefully I have challenged some of your thoughts...
- How can indigenous people empower themselves through ICTs?
 - Here is a great place to learn
- Those from the “outside” should focus on *with* not *for*...
- From the “inside” being prepared to remain “isolated” in some respects
 - Wisdom in using the “good” and leaving the “bad”...



Discussion



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Chair in
ICT for Development
Royal Holloway, University of London