ICT in Sudan: An Economic Analysis of Impact and Use in Universities

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Technology can be a double-edged sword for emerging economies. In Sudan, information and communication technology (ICT) has proved an important tool for producing and transferring knowledge. Yet it has also created a new digital divide, which has only deepened existing inequalities. The question therefore arises: how can countries like Sudan 'catch up' without increasing social exclusion?

Dr. Samia Nour's new book, ***Information and Communication Technology in Sudan: An Economic Analysis of Impact and Use in Universities***, explores the dual implications of technological change, i.e. creative-destruction effects and positive-negative impacts.

The book focuses on two issues: the positive impact of ICT in facilitating production, creation and transfer of knowledge in Sudanese universities; and the negative impact of ICT in creating a digital divide, adding a new dimension to the existing challenges of inequalities and disparities in Sudan.

The award-winning author finds clear positive correlations between the use of ICT and literacy rate, per capita income, and rate of urbanisation. However, she finds a negative correlation between the use of ICT and the poverty gap ratio.

Results confirm theories about the links between ICT, age and educational level in Sudan – the so-called digital divide. The research also finds that barriers to the use of ICT, including lack of electricity and internet, are nearly twice as high in rural areas as in urban areas.

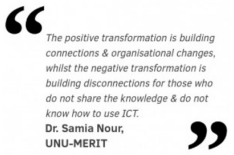
The book builds on research performed by Dr. Nour during her time as a visiting fellow at UNU-MERIT, from October 2010 to December 2011. It is intended for researchers, practitioners and policymakers and will be published on 14 March 2015. See below for the abstract in both English and Arabic.

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Note to Editors: *UNU-MERIT is a joint research and training institute of United Nations University and Maastricht University, based in the south of the Netherlands. The institute explores the social, political and economic factors that drive technological innovation, with a particular focus on creation, diffusion and access to knowledge. Working with its School of Governance, UNU-MERIT covers all aspects of governance in domestic and global organisations, from risk assessment to policy analysis, design and evaluation. For more details: http://www.merit.unu.edu/about-us/*

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