

Date : 3 November, 2010
Workshop 4 : Reviewing, Rethinking, and Reorienting ICTs for ESD
Coordinators: Ms. Shivani Jain and Mr. Anoop Mohan,
Moderator : Ms. Fernanda Baumhardt
Rapporteurs : Shefali Atrey and Shraddha Ganwani

Session 4 : 12:00 to 13.30 Hrs

Session 4 A. Satellite Communication for Education

Timings-12.00-1.00 pm

Speaker- Dr B.S Bhatia, President, AV-CODE



Format- PowerPoint Presentation

Dr. Bhatia gave the briefing on what his presentation would focus on; he said that it would throw on an open-ended discussion on improved technologies and upcoming innovations in Satellite communication & ICT for ESD.

He said that use of satellite for ESD, had been started early in our country by Dr. Vikaram Sarabhai, it specifically was being used in rural areas. Satellite made it easy to take the communication immediately to masses; this was followed by various other technologies that were used for communication. It was then incorporated in all the operational activities taking place at the state and country level.

Dr. Bhatia said that he had worked with Site and thus can inform about the genesis of satellite communication in India. Later on the Dth Technology was also invented.

Few factors that he pointed out:

He stressed on the point that today in India, we have very substantial networks available to reach to any part of the country, we can reach to primary schools, colleges, B-schools etc and all are technology is available, there are networks available even for workers and farmers. We have the access, we just need to implement on it

Next is the generation of content, the problem is not the access it is the production of content, yet many open universities like IGNOU have adopted satellite communication and have attained success.

The third point that he laid emphasis on was that Indians are sensitive towards the needs of sustainability and are willing to support causes of environment.

Dr. Bhatia said that the problem lies in producing quality content for the educational material for this satellite communication, he said that specific agencies should be assigned the task for generating content.

In India today things are rapidly changing, Primary school curriculum has been changed; it now incorporates sensitivities regarding sustainable development. The Rehabilitation council of India, has a specialized network for patients, we also have computer education of blind. Technology is being used effectively in all the sectors; the question is how to effectively use it for sustainability?

Talking about the genesis of satellite communication and technology he said that India was suffering from rural population vast, and illiteracy, so India has consciously attempted to use Science and Technology as an instrument to accelerate national development. The greatest communication technology adopted today is mobile phone.

Dr. Bhatia also gave some statistics on poor education scenario in India today. The drop-out rate is extremely high & the situation of the teachers is even worse, there is continuous requirement to train teachers, we are lacking in terms of quality and quantity both. The same is prevalent in higher education.

The next problem is the Challenge of Access sometimes there is no access and at times even if the access is there the people are ignorant about it. Satellite technology can help in imparting quality education tremendously. Educational broadcasting has been adopted by various universities like IGNOU and others, training and development has also been made through satellite communication. The first initiative was taken to train the State and Central Government officials through satellite communication.

Dr. Bhatia then moved forward, and talked about Advantages of TDCC (Tactical data communications central)

- First of all he said that the multiplicity of people, that acts as a hurdle in the educational sector can be solved through satellite communication. For instance, 40-60 individuals can study together through satellite communication, and not necessarily in a classroom. The communication tools like Internet; fax etc can be used for better communication.
- It also helps in uniformity
- It leads to Enhanced involvement of the trainers
- It helps in sharing the same network for different age-groups so the cost gets shared.

He also talked about G-SAT-3/EduSat which was the first satellite offered to the education sector, for free for better reach. He also said that there are various technological possibilities through which various avenues for satellite communication in Education can be explored.

Elaborating his point he explained the DTH servicing and its relevance in education

He said that there are various broadcasting services availed by private companies, that also incorporate active learning services e.g. TATA SKY. To illustrate his point he accessed the TATA sky site for active learning, where various activities like gaming, quizzing that led to knowledge enhancement were being shared. There was also one tab for Active stories-where stories were told in digital format in the form of slides & it was made in such a way that the pace could be managed by the individual himself. The individuals could also write & upload their stories. He said that If such services are used in education the teachers could make effective use of it, for telling stories and brainstorming activities.

Concluding his presentation he said that Substantial infrastructure exists in the country, but Content is the constraint. There should be agencies that take this responsibility, and also develop the educational material for sustainable development.

Question-Answers

Question- Is there any project that has been taken up by you, that incorporates mobile technology for education?

Answer- We have various technologies like radio and broadcast being used by universities like IGNOU, MICA and Gujarat University. CEE should also have the license to impart education

through radio and other technologies. All the technologies today are converging, internet and mobile all can work effectively, any technology can be used, having mobile classrooms is very easy today, and it will also conserve time. The mobile technologies are being used in private tuition classes.

Question- What percentage of Indian population that has been covered under satellite education, and what is the scope of satellite education in future?

Answer- The percentage is less, also the ownership is less, but the reach is high. But Ownership and access are not the same. Even if you don't own, you can have the access, today in Gujarat almost all schools have computers, and television sets so the results can be produced.

Question- Suppose an NGO has some visual programme on organic farmer, this NGO gives it to you and then you transmit, but how do you deal with language barriers?

Answer: It will depend on which state you want to transmit to; if it is all states in the country then we can opt for national broadcasting. For overcoming the linguistic barriers we can dub the film in regional languages and then broadcast. The private regional channels can also be very effective; many of these channels are dying for content. The network is there and reach is there, it is all about negotiations between the content providers and the broadcasters.

Question: There are pre-conceived notions in the minds of parents that a classroom should be in a particular format, with the teacher redressing the queries personally, do you think that these notions would make them resistant to adopting the digital format of classroom; do you think this could be a barrier?

Answer: Don't restrict technology, innovative usage of technology is the solution to this, this is different than broadcast, it is a training channel, we can have deliberations and discussions and there will be no hurdles of commercialization. In such a case It is also a question of employers, distance education is not considered good, but I personally believe it is a matter of time, people are changing, the demand for education is so high, the jobs are increasing, your classrooms are not adequate, so you have no choice, the quality of education is the question, the monitoring of the education has to be done and all this can be done effectively through Satellite communication.

Session 4B

Facilitator: Ms. Fernanda

Agenda: To procure reccos for EC

Timings-1.00-1.25 p.m

Ms. Fernanda did an interesting activity where it was decided to empower the youth, one would film the other would be the reporter. She said that "We would like to film your testimonials, on

the basis of your expertise, and experiences gained through this 3-day workshop on how we could use the communication, technology in promotion of Earth Charter? Be natural, and honest, if you didn't know about the EC before coming here then share it? What is the future of ICT and EC, and what are the recommendations that you would like to make? Share it all"

The activity of filming of recommendations by the youth began & the recommendations made by the participants were as follows:

Dr.Prabhudas

"People condemned advertising initially, I wrote to the President of the country, the media houses, the Prime minister but no one hear me, finally I sent my appeal on how people have stopped giving advertisements on saving trees, to IOCI bulletin, and my article was published in the bulletin. I'm telling you what one can do, so imagine what the world can do? The media is playing a major role in this. Suggestion: we should learn from past and present too, Rajasthan was greener area, but now it's a desert, mass-destruction led to it. We should learn present technology, and construct channels, satellite and other tools that help in preserving environment"

Sir, what is your view on charter, after attending this conference?

"I didn't know much about the charter before attending the conference but now I know about it. I'm thinking to promote it in Gujarat through my expertise, this workshop was very informative"

Mr. Ramesh Gadhvi

"Through Earth Charter conference, I have known things better about the charter, and that ICT can play a major role in saving earth and trees for better future. Environment safe Technology can be invented and used towards promoting the charter."

Ms. Richa sodhi

"I belong to an organization called World around you and we inculcate environmental sensitivities in children through education. I'm happy to be here, it is very important to know the various technologies that can be used, for inter-personal communication, technology should not be limited to commercial media, it should be used to promote developmental tools like EC. As far as EC is concerned I have known a lot about EC through this conference I would suggest EC to get youth and people around work towards execution of the principles, & bring constant changes in approach for sustainable development.

Mr. Pranshul Mehta

"I belong to the organization World around you and we inculcate environment mannerisms in children so that they realize its importance. When we talk about environment we only talk about trees, but why can't we save our own materials and resources, unless and until we understand our own uses and make optimum utilization of resources, we won't be able to reach sustainability."

Do you think you can teach all the other principles of EC through this mode?

“We would definitely take further initiatives”

Mr. Rudd lubbers

“EC is important for development, you have to change and promote it, EC is a set of ideal principles for sustainability, the use ICT should be done effectively to communicate and make the world aware about EC. Communication is the most effective weapon to raise voices, practicing this we can bring the essence of the Earth Charter through ICT tools, leading to sustainability and development.”

Dr. B.S. Bhatia

“EC plays an integral role in sustainable development; we need to accelerate responses to EC through ICT. Secondly we should make use of social networking; the trend of social media makes communication faster and speedier, so we should use ICT and all the latest communication tools to accelerate the process.”

Youth participants

DAIICT student: “Ict can be very effective in communication of Earth Charter so it should be wisely used”.

Ankita: “Traditional means should be coupled with technology to promote the charter”

Utsav: “I didn’t like workshop initially, but later after reading the charter, & after interacting with people here, it has come to my knowledge that we need to work towards sustainability, ESD and Earth Charter. Usage of ICT technologies can definitely make a difference”

Mridula: “I will be changing things within me and ICT will be an outcome”

Session 4C : Vote of thanks

Facilitator: Mr. Anoop Mohan

Timings-1.25-1.30 pm

The workshop came to an end after a group photograph and conclusions made by -Moderators Mrs. Shivan Jain, Mr. Sanjay Joshi, & Ms. Fernada Baumhardt, on recommendations to be made in the plenary.

The Recommendations made in the plenary (In brief)

- 1) ICT should be used to promote the spirit of Earth Charter
- 2) A media firm should be hired for handling Earth Charter communications
- 3) There should be an inventive utilization of Mobile phone technology in communication.