**Worksheet on Technological Choice**

**Course: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Exercise One:** *Socio-Technical Systems*

**Read your case study in Technological Choice. Pay attention to the context in which this choice is being made (and the people who participate in the choice-decision) Then prepare a STS table to summarize your group’s description of the case’s socio-technical system.:**

1. Describe the technology under consideration. Are there alternatives? Are these alternatives under consideration in the choice-situation?

2. Complete your description by addressing the following components: physical surroundings, people/groups/roles, procedures, laws, markets, and information/communications systems. Feel free to add components such as the surrounding natural environments.

3. Summarize your discussion/description by preparing a table like the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Technology: hardware/software | physical surroundings | People/groups/  roles | Procedures | Laws / Governments | Markets (Financial etc) | Information and Communication Systems |

**Exercise Two:** *Defining or Specifying the Choice Problem*

Define the problem raised in your case study from the standpoint of choice. Address those making the choice, the alternatives from which the choice is to be made, and the surroundings in which the choice will be implemented.

(For example: In the OLPC case, the problem is whether the XO machine is a technology appropriate to furthering the education of children in developing nations. “Developing nations” needs to be further specified by, say, Uruguay, South Africa, Mexico, Puerto Rico.)

Rank the following alternative endings for the video.

**Exercise Three:** *On a scale of 1 to5 (1=bad, 5=very good,) rate the following in terms of order of importance*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Potential Choice Criteria** | **RANK** |
| A | The technology choice should address Capabilities such as Life, Bodily Integrity, and Bodily Health. |  |
| B | The technology choice should address Capabilities such as Sense/Imagination/Thought, Emotion, and Practical Reason. |  |
| C | The technology choice should address Capabilities such as Affiliation, Other Species, and Play. |  |
| D | The complexity of the technology, whether this complexity is manifest or latent, and whether this complexity enables or frustrates control should be addressed in the choice. |  |
| E | The politics of the technology, whether it encourages at the extremes a democratic or authoritarian approach to management, should be addressed in the choice. |  |
| F | The actions/practices/procedures promoted and constrained by the technology should be addressed in the choice. |  |
| G | Whether the technology promotes change (is a destructive technology) or whether it upholds the status quo should be addressed in the choice. |  |
| H | The cost of the technology and how that cost (as well as the associated benefits) are distributed should be addressed in the choice. |  |

Notes / Comments:

**Exercise Three: Critical Thinking and Decision-Making**

Does your case represent a Best Practice in technology choice? Why or why not? C. Avgerou rejects the notion of BP for technological choice. Can you think of any way in which this notion might be prejudicial to the community in which the choice will be implemented?

**Exercise Four: Participation**

Who participated in the technology choice made in your case? How adequate was this mode of participation? Do you see signs or paternalism exercised by one group over another or ways in which the participation of a given group could have been improved or enhanced?

**Exercise Five: Happiness**

Do you think that stakeholders became more or less happy as a result of the choice exercised in your case? (Maybe some become happier while remained the same or even declined in happiness.) What concept of happiness are you using? What do you think is the relation between happiness and the realization of Capabilities?