ICT Repair Ecology in a Mumbai Slum

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Abstract. ICT repair eco-systems in a Mumbai slum, is an expanding business, which involves practice repair, formatting, and maintenance of phone hardware and software. The purpose of the study is to understand the ethnographic engagement, based on anthropological and developmental frameworks, to analyze the ICT repair eco-systems, in urban slum settings. The methodology used to conduct the study would be Context inquiry; Field Observations, Open ended interview.

Keywords: We would like to encourage you to list your keywords here. They should be separated by middots.

1   Project Description

We will conduct a study and report on an ethnographic engagement of ICT repair eco-systems in a Mumbai slum. Our reportage will include an overview of business practices of repair, formatting, and maintenance of phone hardware and software and what are central to the process of business sustenance, expansion and skill building. We will also focus on the entrepreneur as key actor in the repair eco-system and describe the context of business and social networking in the mobile phone enterprise. Much of the repair enterprise happens within the structures of grey or informal economy and our study will highlight the relationship between micro enterprises and local economic cultures that help sustain business networks.

2   Theoretical Framework

Our research will mainly borrow from the ICTD literature by way of framing the study of repair ecologies in urban slum settings. We take inspiration from both anthropological [1, 2] and developmental [3, 4, 5] frameworks to analyze ethnographic data. By deploying the above frameworks in evoking the ecology of the mobile phone business in an urban slum setting, we will draw attention to the following concepts: 1) the unique potential of ICTs as an entrepreneurial commodity, 2) the micro-and small

enterprise (MSE) as an active channel for local technology infusion 3) local social networks as pivotal in expanding technology adoption and aligning with the needs of the low-income

3   Method: Rapid Ethnography

1+ half days of field work
Context inquiry; Field Observations, Open ended interview
Demographic profiling of field site, Participant sampling and profiling
Quick count of the nature and type of ICT businesses in the field site

4   Outcome/Deliverable

Presentation and report on the following:

1. Overview of ICT repair businesses in an Urban Slum
2. Outline repair ecology/eco-system and social networks
3. Relationship between informal economic structures and the micro-enterprise of repair business

5   Team

Current Team includes:
Nimmi Rangaswamy is Area Lead-Human Interactions at Xerox Research Centre, Bangalore. She is also Adjunct Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad. She is a social anthropologist with a current focus on digital social media studying ; She is researching Facebook use among youth living in the urban slums and low-income neighborhoods in Hyderabad and Chennai.

Jose Abdelnour Nocera is Associate Professor (Reader) in Sociotechnical Design and Head of the Sociotechnical Centre for Innovation and User Experience at the University of West London. He is the current Chair for UNESCO IFIP TC 13.8 working group in Interaction Design for International Development as well as Chair for the British Computer Society Sociotechnical Specialist Group.

Expecting participation from a diverse group of people who would be interested to work in similar area. People from other developing nations having similar experiences, students, hackers, researchers, people who can communicate in the local language.

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