



June 07, 2007

Recommendations from the UN GAID Chairman

As Chairman of Intel, I have been fortunate to travel to 30 countries each year to witness the impact that technology can have on individuals, communities and nations. Over the years, I have been able to compare the strategies that dozens of countries are using to expand and capitalize on the role of technology to advance development, and to make its benefits available to more people.

Broadly speaking, I have seen a three-fold role for governments:

- I. Investing in education and training to provide citizens with the opportunity to participate in the digital economy
- II. Implementing policies to create an enabling environment
- III. Increasing access to and use of technology through public-private partnerships, local content and electronic services

Attached, I have attempted to crystallize my observations and experiences into eight recommended national strategies for using technology to advance development.

Finally, despite the commonalities in approach by different countries, it is evident that one size does not fit all. Therefore individual governments should look at successful models in other countries, with the intent to adapt these models to best fit their specific circumstances.

Craig R. Barrett
Chairman of the Board, Intel Corporation
Chairman, UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development

I. Investing in education and training

1. Train teachers to integrate technology into classrooms

Computers aren't magic, teachers are. Putting the right technology tools and teacher training in place now will help the next generation learn skills required in today's global knowledge economy.

2. Foster skills development by targeted training programs

Harnessing the power of technology requires new skills from government employees, medical personnel, businessmen and entrepreneurs. Governments should offer training programs to public sector employees, and invest in courses for current and future private sector employees.

3. All schools should have free access to the Internet

School districts or individual schools should not have to make difficult trade-offs between connecting the school to the Internet and other investments. Government policy can take the cost of Internet access away from schools with programs such as universal service funds, competition-neutral direct public subsidies to competitive service providers, or aggregating demand of schools, government offices and health care facilities in a given community. Free Internet access can also be made available to citizens after normal work hours.

II. Implementing policies to create an enabling environment

4. Competitive telecommunications markets are necessary to allow for affordable Internet access

Developing countries will not be able to integrate into the global knowledge economy unless their citizens, schools and businesses have affordable Internet access. Evidence from across the world has shown that competition through liberalization and privatization of telecommunication markets drives down prices. Flexible, technology-neutral radio spectrum policy can also spur competition by allowing new, breakthrough wireless technologies to enter the market.

Governments should also embrace, not reject, innovative technologies such as broadband wireless and voice-over-IP.

5. Minimize or eliminate tariffs and taxes levied on information and communications technology (ICT) products

Widespread usage of technology increases the long-term productivity and national competitiveness. The resulting economic growth will offset revenue loss from eliminating direct tariffs and taxes on ICT products. Successful ICT products will always need an ecosystem of local companies, including telecom operators, software developers, computer assembly, distribution, and retail businesses. Cutting tariffs on ICT products will not sacrifice local industry, but will spur local job creation and growth.

6. A clear legislative framework can help businesses grow with ICT

Trading goods and services over the Internet can open new market opportunities. Legislation can accelerate these opportunities by establishing clear, minimum rules for eCommerce, electronic signatures and copyright protection. By reducing red tape and encouraging entrepreneurship via tax incentives and low-cost loans to small and medium sized businesses, governments can catalyze economic growth.

III. Increasing access to and use of technology through public-private partnerships, local content and electronic services

7. Proactive public-private partnerships can accelerate up-take of the Internet and personal computers within lower income groups

By working with local and multinational businesses, governments can dramatically increase the affordability of computers in three ways:

- a. Facilitating volume discounts by companies, tax incentives and innovative financing schemes that allow for payments by monthly installments.
- b. Offering locally relevant service and content bundles targeted at different groups of population.
- c. Establishing community centers (backed by a sustainable small business model) to extend shared access into rural communities and disadvantaged socio-economic groups.

8. Governments can lead by providing eGovernment and eHealth services

Making key government content and services, such as tax filings and licenses, available on-line in a secure, easy-to-use manner will cut red-tape, helping increase Internet use and foster economic development. Telemedicine is about to emerge as a key application to enhance health care for citizens in remote areas worldwide. Governments can accelerate the availability of eHealth services with legislation to allow the electronic transmission of medical records and licensing that will allow doctors to work remotely.