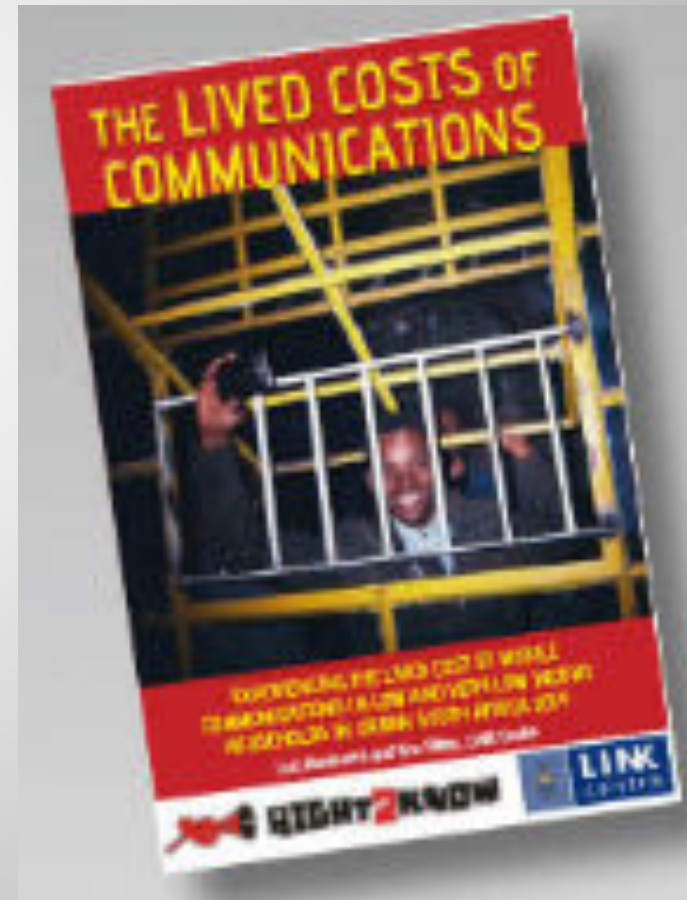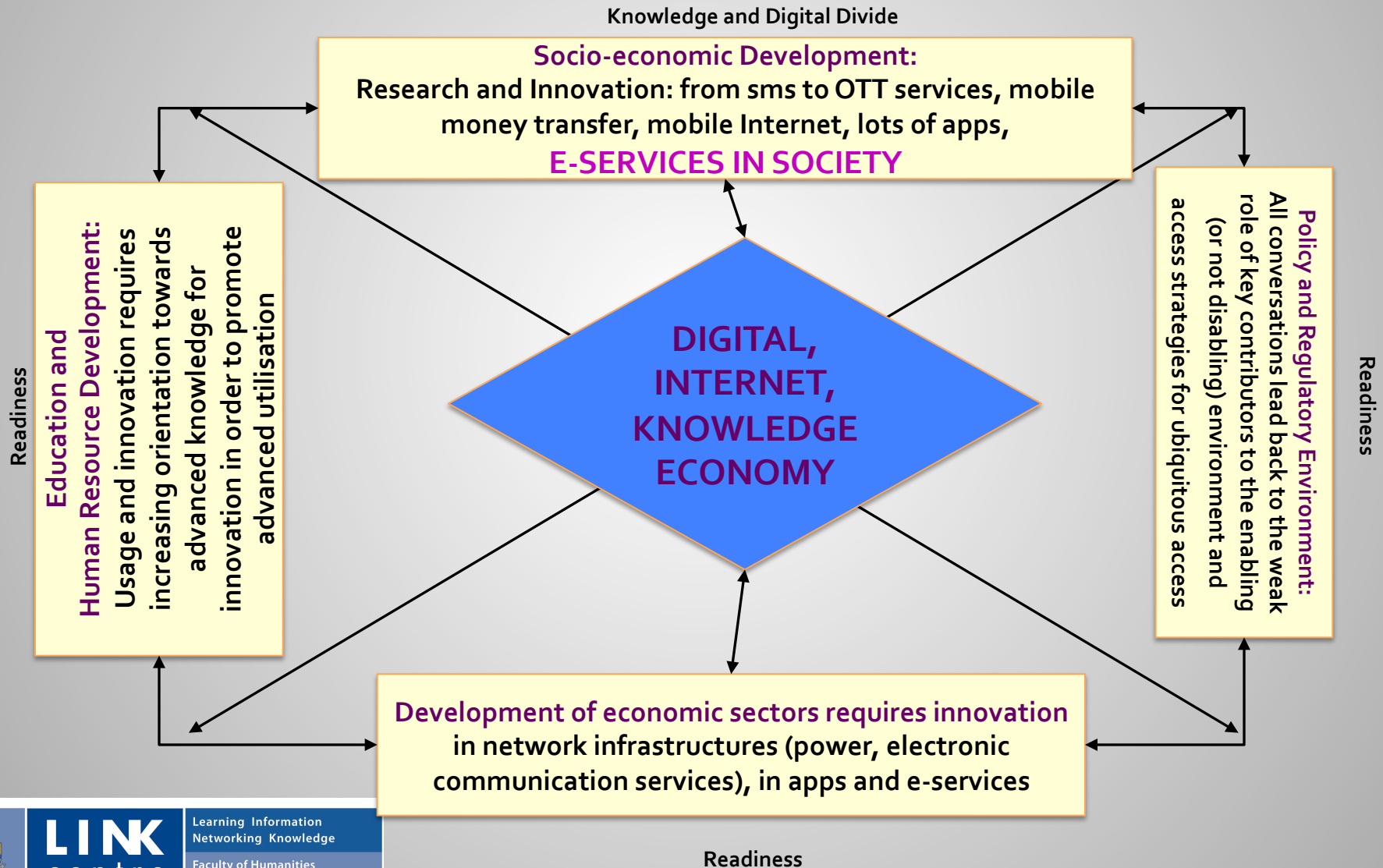# *People centered Internet:*
A (South) African perspective
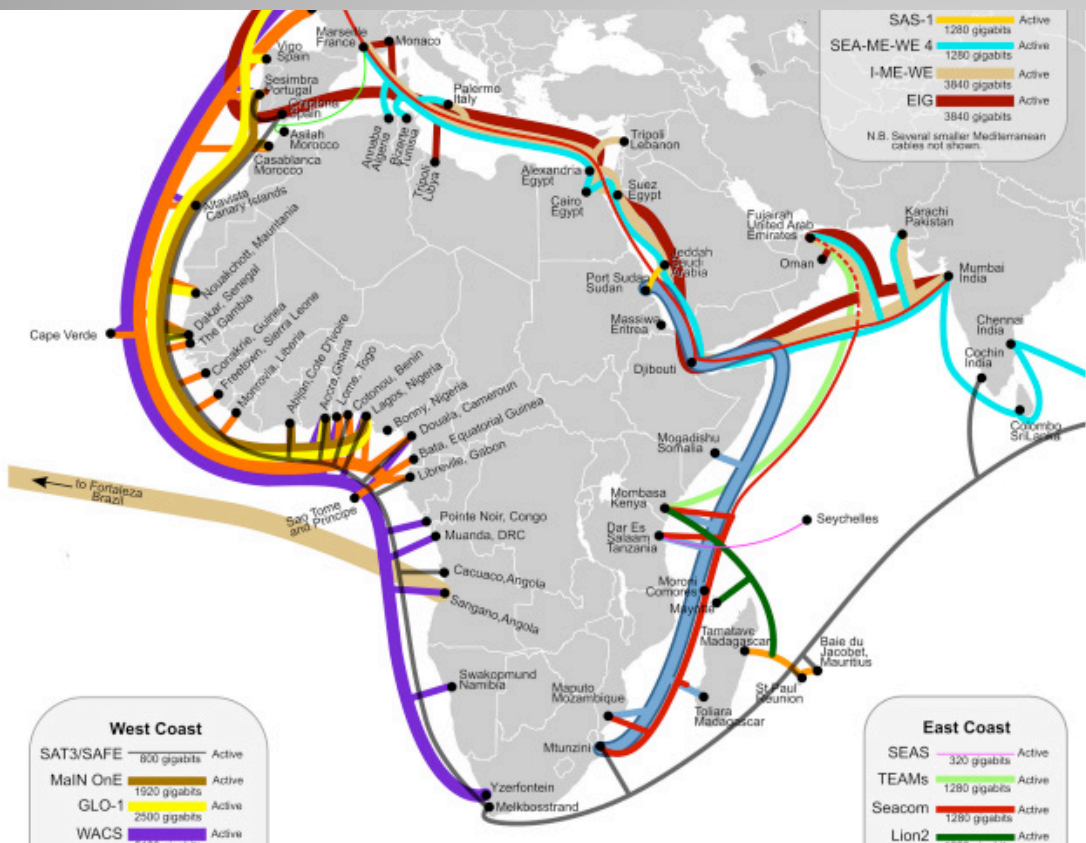## *on theory, lived experience and policy realities*

Global Forum, *24 - 25 October 2015*

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UNDERSTANDING NEW FORMS OF VALUE IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY : THE LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH-BASED KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge and Digital Divide

Socio-economic Development:
Research and Innovation: from sms to OTT services, mobile money transfer, mobile Internet, lots of apps,
E-SERVICES IN SOCIETY

DIGITAL, INTERNET, KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Readiness

Education and Human Resource Development:
Usage and innovation requires increasing orientation towards advanced knowledge for innovation in order to promote advanced utilisation

Policy and Regulatory Environment:
All conversations lead back to the weak role of key contributors to the enabling (or not disabling) environment and access strategies for ubiquitous access

Readiness

Development of economic sectors requires innovation in network infrastructures (power, electronic communication services), in apps and e-services

Readiness

SAS-1 1280 gigabits Active
SEA-ME-WE 4 1280 gigabits Active
I-ME-WE 3840 gigabits Active
EIG 3840 gigabits Active
N.B. Several smaller Mediterranean cables not shown.

West Coast
SAT3/SAFE 800 gigabits Active
MaIN OnE 1920 gigabits Active
GLO-1 2500 gigabits Active
WACS 5120 gigabits Active

East Coast
SEAS 320 gigabits Active
TEAMs 1280 gigabits Active
Seacom 1280 gigabits Active
Lion2 1280 gigabits Active

Map labels (West/North coast): Marseille France, Monaco, Vigo Spain, Sesimbra Portugal, Lisbon Spain, Asilah Morocco, Casablanca Morocco, Vista Canary Islands, Nouakchott, Mauritania, Dakar, Senegal, The Gambia, Conakry, Guinea, Freetown, Sierra Leone, Monrovia, Liberia, Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, Accra, Ghana, Lome, Togo, Cotonou, Benin, Lagos, Nigeria, Bonny, Nigeria, Douala, Cameroun, Bata, Equatorial Guinea, Libreville, Gabon, Cape Verde, To Fortaleza Brazil, Sao Tome and Principe, Pointe Noir, Congo, Muanda, DRC, Cacuaco, Angola, Sangano, Angola, Swakopmund Namibia, Maputo Mozambique, Mtunzini, Yzerfontein, Melkbosstrand

Map labels (North/East): Palermo Italy, Annaba Algeria, Bizerte Tunisia, Tripoli Libya, Tripoli Lebanon, Alexandria Egypt, Cairo Egypt, Suez Egypt, Fujerah United Arab Emirates, Karachi Pakistan, Port Sudan Sudan, Jeddah Saudi Arabia, Oman, Mumbai India, Chennai India, Cochin India, Massawa Eritrea, Djibouti, Colombo Sri Lanka, Mogadishu Somalia, Mombasa Kenya, Dar Es Salaam Tanzania, Seychelles, Moroni Comores, Mayotte, Tamatave Madagascar, Baie du Jacobet, Mauritius, St Paul Reunion, Toliara Madagascar

South Africa map labels: ZIMBABWE, BOTSWANA, Messina, Polokwane, PRETORIA (TSHWANE), Johannesburg, NAMIBIA, SWAZ., MOZ., Upington, Kimberley, Bloemfontein, Ladysmith, Richards Bay, LES., Njesuthi, Durban, De Aar, SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN, Saldanha, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, INDIAN OCEAN, Cape of Good Hope, Prince Edward Islands not shown, 0 100 200 km, 0 100 200 mi

African e-transformation and the political-policy context

Insight – more than Internet access – despite policy statis, e-transformation has emerged particularly strongly in Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, in circumstances where (i) these economies are seeking well established 21st century development trajectories and (ii) the current levels of development of these economies provide a good basis for ICT absorption and early e-transformation in the services sector, in the agricultural sector (iii) there is high demand for mobile and Internet communications across all income levels.

There's only time for one quick idea on each question, so let's be devilishly advocative!

South African household income and mobile communications usage

5 focus groups in low and very low income households – ZAR6400 (USD500) to ZAR3201 (USD250) per month + less than ZAR3201 per month. Main usage is making and receiving calls, social media 77% had Internet access from their mobile phone and approx 60% downloaded mobile apps

Issues for the people-centered Internet

- **Frustration with airtime vouchers, value for money – R6, R10 – every cent counts** "I always buy R5 but does'nt last a day, or buy megabytes for access to Internet, need to have a plan, 30 MB for R100, 20MB for R30, if you buy R10 airtime you have to use it in 24 hours, you must phone it out to get the R200 (FREE) and only to Operator X...you cant use the full amount in the short space of time"...Keep the money for Saturday to phone Upington so I can learn a lot about the family. When I get my grant I buy airtime maybe R20... Participant has never made a Skype call.

- **Internet culture versus technology determinism** – Uberforgood (collecting goods for charitable distribution through the Uber app); Sasolforgood and FNB (innovation in corporate social investment includes employee volunteering and matching funding from bank for employees financial contributions to social investment)

- **Rural health development, see Kgabo clinic on Facebook** at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Winterveldt-Kgabo-Clinic/ 473805656098120

LINK centre
Learning Information Networking Knowledge
Faculty of Humanities
University of the Witwatersrand

forgood
Connects people to Causes

Policy Vignette 1: Long-term transformation Damned if you do and damned if you don't!

- From a country perspective, governments should not even attempt to crowd out the private sector, which often appears attractive and becomes a policy obsession. Policy should seek to extend the role of the private sector even more strongly towards digital inclusion innovations, of which there are already some.

- Policy should aim for a government contribution that starts at the end of the spectrum of digital transformation that is closest to where the most disadvantaged citizens are and furthest away from private sector interests, for example e-education and e-health in the public sphere. While PPPs are often lauded, they have rarely come together in African contexts, because of the complexity of the risks faced by both parties. Collaboration may have more value than formal PPPs.

- In October, the Gauteng provincial government established a Department of e-Government. Now begins the process of creation and institutional innovation, with many possible false turns along the road to success.

Policy Vignette 2: Integrating digital transformation and national development strategies
We're already doing it!

- Policy makers often respond with this statement. Across countries in the SADC region and other countries on the African continent, electronic communications strategy or e-government strategy has often followed the adoption of national development strategies.

- This is the case in South Africa, where the national broadband strategy South Africa Connect evolved the National Development Plan, and in Malawi where the National ICT Policy and the ICT Master Plan (both 2013) followed adoption of the National Long Term Development Perspective for Malawi, popularly referred to as Vision 2020.

- A brief review of country e-strategies suggests that there is often a hiatus after policy adoption, as countries and institutions struggle to adjust to the implementation requirements under real world, rather than policy (best practice) conditions.

Policy Vignette 3: Policy roles…
Policy, conflicted success and leadership!

- e-Transformation in South Africa and in many African countries veers between conflicted success and precarious success (McConnell, 2010):

- (i) conflicted success, where there is enormous contestation about the value of the outcome of a particular e-transformation process, for example the e-tolls introduction in South Africa which has generated widespread resistance amongst road users and consumers alike, because the electronic tolling system was the least efficient form of collecting user fees and possibly the easiest basis for refusal to pay; and

- (ii) precarious success, where there is "serious and potentially fatal damage to policy legitimacy", as with the future of e-education, which hangs in the balance due to absence of progress over the period of a decade.

- So it could be argued that the most important thing policy-makers can do is to ensure that they lead implementation towards **resilient success**, even if this is easier said than done.

Policy Vignette 4:
Insiders, outsiders and other stakeholders

- All stakeholders should receive attention, perhaps not equal attention, but nevertheless attention.

- In many SADC countries, for example, South Africa and Swaziland, government stakeholders (insiders) are prioritized, sometimes placing the private sector/ICT industry/academic and scientific institutions (outsiders) at the margins, and excluding other stakeholders in the non-governmental and community-based sectors.

- This is a much more complex reality than can be easily understood, as the marginalization and exclusion of stakeholders often leads to policy failure, yet policy-makers engage in many policy-defeating behaviors. Why? This is a particularly important subject of study.

So what future research and innovation

is a priority for

digital transformation

and the people-centered Internet

in Africa?

THANK YOU TO THE "LIVED COST"

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS