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Örebro University School of Business

Last updated: 14 May 2012

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The department runs a 120 ECTS credits Masters Programme in Electronic Government, focusing on eGovernment and the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in public administrations combined with organisational change and new skills in order to improve public services and democratic processes. More information.

Research connected to South Asia:

Prof. Åke Grönlund is involved in research on Electronic Government and E-democracy. He is founding faculty and member of the Steering Committee of the multidisciplinary **DemocrIT research programme on ICT in democratic processes**. This is a multidisciplinary research programme carried out in cooperation between the Media and Communications Studies (MKV) at Örebro University and a number of other subjects, also involving several PhD students.

SPIDER, the Swedish Program for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Developing Regions, has provided funding for two Bangladesh related projects led by Prof. Grönlund:

• "**Bangladesh Virtual Classroom**", conducted from October 2005 to May 2007, as a collaboration project between the Universities of Örebro, Umeå, and BRAC in Dhaka, Bangladesh. During the course of the project also Bangladesh Open University (BOU) joined by means of a Memorandum of Understanding setting the framework for cooperation in pursuing field trials. The project was funded with SEK 900 000 from the Swedish Program for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Developing Regions – SPIDER.
The project had two parts:
1: Using Mobile Technology to Create a Virtual Interactive Participatory Classroom using sms technology.
2: Conducting an Educate the Educator Program to introduce interactive teaching methods.
More information about the Bangladesh Virtual Classroom Project.

• A continuation of this project, titled "**Bangladesh Virtual Classroom sustained**" was given SEK 1 million for the period 2007–2009. It now targeted a large-scale implementation of an interactive TV and SMS "classroom" setting for ICT-enabled distance tuition at Bangladesh Open University. The project deliverables also includes development of pedagogical methods, methods for economic production of interactive courses and methods for technically and economically feasible delivery of such courses throughout Bangladesh. The collaborating partner on the Bangladeshi side has been Dr. Yousuf M Islam, Director for Research and Advisory Services at BRAC University in Dhaka. More information.

For the same period, 2007–2009, SPIDER gave funding also to another project led by Prof. Åke Grönlund:
• "**Agricultural market information for farmers (AMIS)**". It also focused on Bangladesh, and was given SEK 1 million as a grant from SPIDER. More information about the project.
Abstract: The project will develop an agricultural market information system to improve local agricultural markets and empower small farmers in rural Bangladesh using low-cost existing SMS infrastructure to create a viable local organization for information collection and dissemination. Focus is on the collection and distribution of market information to beneficiaries rather than on the in-formation system as such, using appropriate technology given the local context.

Sirajul Islam defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "**Creating opportunity by connecting the unconnected : mobile phone based agriculture market information service for farmers in Bangladesh**" on Thursday 10 November 2011. The faculty opponent was Professor Rahul De from Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Bangalore, India.
The thesis is framed within the research area of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D), which is concerned with how ICT can make a difference to the lives of the poor. This study focuses primarily on mobile phones and how they can be used as part of an Agriculture Market Information Service (AMIS) in order to provide crucial information to farmers in Bangladesh. More information, incl. link to full-text thesis.   🆕

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Serving in the area of ICT4D especially for the underserved communities of developing regions is not only his professional interest, but also a passionate concern as he has about ten years of theoretical and practical experiences in such an emerging domain. In addition to his on-going academic research, he also works as a part-time research assistant at the Informatics department by managing the entire AMIS project. More information.

In conjunction, Mr. Islam also serves as a Research Associate with the lead personnel of a project called "Unos-Uno" which is concerned about analysing the effects and results from various perspectives of the implementation of "one-computer-per-student" in some municipalities and schools in Sweden. More information.

To date, Sirajul Islam has more than 15 research publications and many of these have been published in some high ranking journals relating to ICT4D, e-government, information systems and e-practices. Go for his publications list. He was one of the fellowship recipients jointly offered by Singapore Internet Research Center (SiRCA) of Nanyang Technology University, Singapore and International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. This award programme seeks to identify future research leaders and to facilitate their development through the support of research. The award is intended to ensure capacities to conduct research in the area of Information and Communications Technology for Development (ICT4D or ICTD) which is built in Asia.

Bangladeshi researcher wins the 'Börje Langefors best doctoral dissertation award' in Sweden

For his eminent thesis, Dr. Sirajul Islam has been given the 'Börje Langefors second best 2011 doctoral dissertation award' (or Börje Langeforspriset in Swedish) from the Swedish Academy of Information Systems. The award was conferred on May 9, 2012 in a befitting manner during the annual conference of the Academy hosted by Linköping University. Börje Langefors Award is a prestigious academic honor awarded each year by SISA for the best doctoral dissertation in Sweden in the study areas -informatics, information systems, Data and Information Science or equivalent. The prize aims to reward as well as encourage development of high standard research in Sweden, and to demonstrate exemplary research in informatics. This award has been named after Swedish Professor Börje Langefors (1915-2009), one of those who made systems development a science. NEW!

The motivation for the award conferred to Sirajul as stated: "*Sirajul Islam's dissertation reports a design-oriented action research project that sought to create sustainable societal effects by facilitating mobile technology adoption. One interesting aspect of this change effort is that it nicely illustrates how informatics research can help underprivileged groups to strengthen their positions through innovative IT use. The research project was executed through a well-designed process that is presented in a comprehensive yet detailed way. In particular, it reveals how and why certain practical and theoretical issues were tackled to push the project forward. Constituting the core of the thesis, the set of articles suggests that the result produced were not only locally relevant but also globally impactful.*"

Dr. Siraj is a member of the ICT for development (ICT4D) research group at the Informatics department of Örebro University. He has several research publications in the area of ICT4D and eGovernment (electronic government) published in reputed international journals and conferences. He is a recipient of the 'Strengthening ICTD Research Capacity in Asia (SIRCA-I)' fellowship from the Nanyang Technology University, Singapore and serving as a reviewer and program committee member for some international journals and conferences related to ICT4D and eGovernment research. Dr. Siraj is presently working as an Assistant Professor in Informatics at the Örebro University, Sweden and Co-ordinating the 'International Network for Postgraduate Students in the Area of ICT4D (IPID)'.