NGOs and the internet in Nepal

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Abstract

The number of registered NGOs in Nepal has skyrocketed in the last ten years, growing in number from 220 in 1990 to somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000 today. At the same time internet and e-mail use has increased rapidly. The Electronic Networking Project, funded by the International Development Research Centre and implemented by the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development was a key for joining these two sectors. This article outlines the growth of both sectors, and analyzes how NGOs view the internet and how they are using it. There is an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards these technologies amongst NGOs and a view that they are primarily useful in allowing individuals and organizations to easily access a great deal of information for the first time, and also for maintaining contacts and creating networks internationally. Issues for NGOs regarding the internet include the cost of telephone calls and integration of the use of the internet and the development and maintenance of websites into other office routines. Finally, a common perspective about knowledge sharing in Nepal is explored as it relates to the use of the internet and the structure of websites in Nepal.

Layton Montgomery is currently the executive secretary of the Mountain Forum Secretariat and in the final stages of a PhD at the University of Wollongong in Australia. His research focuses on social aspects of the introduction and spread of the Internet in Nepal and Bhutan. He has lived in Nepal off and on since 1988, primarily working in the education sector. He has also worked for several years in both Ukraine, and Botswana, as well as his native country, the United States. He holds a B.S. in mathematics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an M.Ed. in international education from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Notes to readers

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