Developments in Participatory Methods for Software Development

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What is ICT about?

- ICT concerns
  - Applications
  - Proliferation (accessibility)
  - Implementations
  - Use
  - Benefits / results

What is ICT about?

- ICT concerns
  - Applications
  - Proliferation

Use

- •Integration
- •Way of life
- •Support & enabler of satisfaction
- •Ownership

Consequence ?

Change !

Practical as well as **Socio-human** dimensions

Socio-technical orientation

- ICT anchors in a society of humans

- Consequences become a society phenomenon

- Design & Development of ICT artifacts need be viewed as interventions in reality

  – Inclusive

  – Responsive   Participation

Participatory Design (PD)

- Approaches and Methodologies whose point of departure is the current or future users of the [IT] artifact under development

- Users are central actors:
  - Inform, consult and collaborate in the process
  - Co-determine artifact and workplace development
  - Play key role in mutual learning

PD components

- Goal is improving quality of life
  - Focus is servicing the intervention, not technology
- Orientation is collaborative
  - Understanding and respecting use/technology knowledge domains
  - Negotiating focus and goals through familiarity of other
- Process is iterative
  - Ideas generated from real work situations – evaluated and discarded or explored further
  - Mock-ups, prototypes, design scenarios of real use

PD components (contd.)

- Building relationships and appending to context
  - Building the right team and familiarity
  - Contextual inquiry – design at work

PD: a historical perspective

- Projects in Scandinavia
  - 1970s: trade unions interest in how technology would affect their working conditions and interests (Norway, Sweden, Denmark)
  - 1980s: embrace in office work projects (government, administration and health)
- Spread to other regions:
  - Italy – local authorities
  - Germany – GMD (school and local authority)_
  - Canada – university self managed office automation
  - UK – managers, clerks of city Library

Results from PD projects

- Development of policies, control structures and infrastructure

- Democratization of work practices

- Development of context specific approaches
  - General european socio-technical approach emphasizing collective resource
  - North american joint approach emphasizing technical and efficiency specifications

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For us in Kenya

- Need for reflection on practice
  - Study developing a methodological framework for practice of PD
- Our contextual implications
  - Social dimensions
  - Expression space
  - Support for articulation of 'our solution'
- Need to address
  - Attitudes to other domain knowledges
  - Democratic space in our social structures

Conclusion

We have a challenge to not only

- embrace technologies or
- build infrastructure

but also to

- Build our socio-technological identity based on our context

Thank you