

What Theory of Change Can Contribute to Capability Approach: Towards Evaluating ICT-Enabled Interventions

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Abstract: Sen's Capability Approach (CA) has emerged as holistic lenses for theorising development within Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) discourses. There is ongoing research on operationalising CA for ICT, with a number of frameworks having been developed. However, there seems to be minimal usage of these frameworks when CA is applied on ICT4D studies. This paper explores lessons that can be advanced from Theory of Change (TOC) approach to strengthen the methodology and operationalisation of CA, in relation to evaluating ICT-enabled interventions. We give an overview of the two approaches and their application. Three areas are discerned, where TOC can contribute to CA: Methodologically, by providing steps that are more accessible and clearer to the public; by providing an avenue for evaluating personal decisions; and by providing a diagrammatic way of presenting results from an evaluation, in addition to the narrative. This is a far more powerful communication tool compared to having the narrative alone.

Keywords: Sen's Capability Approach, Theory of Change, ICT4D, Evaluation, Development Outcomes.