



From the Editors

The current issue of *ITID* brings together four research articles. Two explore the development effects of mobile money—one in Kenya and the other in rural Mexico. The other two articles study innovation diffusion—one focuses on the use of educational animated videos to improve farming practices in Ethiopia and the other looks at the diffusion of open source software in Kenya. All four articles highlight the importance of human factors in successful development. As such, they resonate with the central theme of (*ITID* co-editor-in-chief) Kentaro Toyama's new book, *Geek Heresy*, reviewed in this issue.

In "Family Networks of Mobile Money in Kenya," Sibel B. Kusimba, Yang Yang, and Nitesh V. Chawla use social network analysis to trace the use of mobile money in rural counties in Western Kenya. They map digital money transfers within 12 family networks, overlapping them with family relationships. They find that, on the whole, digital money transfers follow and amplify existing relationships within these groups. Cesar Renteria uses a different methodology to trace the impact of mobile money in "How Transformational Mobile Banking Optimizes Household Expenditures: A Case Study from Rural Communities in Mexico." His quasi-experiment takes advantage of a government-led mobile banking pilot project in rural Mexico. He shows that intervention reduces expenditures on communication and transportation (but not on other budget items) with the resulting savings set aside in bank accounts rather than used for greater expenditures elsewhere. In both cases, the technology is successful at amplifying or improving existing practices rather than ushering in new practices.

In "A Pilot Study Using Educational Animations as a Way to Improve Farmers' Agricultural Practices and Health Around Adama, Ethiopia," Julia Bello-Bravo, Gemechu W. Olana, and Barry Robert Pittendrigh evaluate the potential of educational animated videos to improve farming practices. They find the videos to be generally well received and useful, but discover that farmers would be more receptive if the videos were brought to them by local organizations they are already familiar with, amplifying existing relationships. In "Investigating the Role of Innovation Attributes in the Adoption, Rejection, and Discontinued Use of Open Source Software for Development," Melissa Tully examines the factors that contribute to the adoption of the open source platform Ushahidi in seven Kenyan organizations. She finds the ability to try out and observe the platform in advance is an important contributor to its eventual adoption.

Anirudh Krishna's review of *Geek Heresy: Rescuing Social Change from the Cult of Technology*, a new book by Kentaro Toyama, provides a nice complement to these four research articles. Krishna situates

FROM THE EDITORS

Toyama's argument between techno-pessimism and techno-optimism, describing the supportive conditions needed for technology to deliver on its promise. As Krishna stresses, Toyama's central point is that technology alone is never enough but often works best when amplifying existing conditions for development. The four research articles presented in this issue clearly bring grist to that mill.

François Bar

François Bar
Editor-in-Chief

Kentaro Toyama
Editor-in-Chief