Introduction to “Health information technology for development: use of ICTs for health equity” minitrack

Mathias Hatakka
Örebro University
Örebro, Sweden
mathias.hatakka@oru.se

Nilmini Wickramasinghe
Epworth Health Care and
Deakin University
Melbourne, Australia
n.wickramasinghe@deakin.edu.au

Sajda Qureshi
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Omaha, USA
squreshi@unomaha.edu

1. Introduction

Concepts of health equity, healthcare access and outcomes are important to understand the challenges and opportunities for creating a better world with ICTs. In particular, the concept of health equity can help us understand the duality between healthcare access and outcomes. The growing use of mHealth applications have offered opportunities to address some of the individual, community and public health challenges that current ICTs do not address and often complicate the quest for better healthcare provision. One such success in the field of information systems and information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D) is the HISP project which has been adopted in several countries with great success.

The importance of healthcare in development can be seen in both the millennium development goals and in the ‘new’ sustainable development goals (SDGs) [1, 2]. Many of the SDGs are directly, or indirectly related to healthcare. Most apparent is the goal “good health and well-being” that relates to making sure that all individuals have access to health care and safe medicines and vaccines. Hence, the international community recognizes equal access to health care as paramount for the global development agenda.

This mini-track aims to discuss issues such as: Use of ICTs to enable equitable healthcare provision; Healthcare applications to combat the spread of infectious diseases; Use of mobile healthcare applications to provide greater access to healthcare; Location based mHealth applications for disabilities and/or multiple chronic conditions and in epidemiology/public health surveillance, community data collection and remote monitoring of patients; and Evaluation of mHealth and other innovations in offering equitable healthcare to individuals and communities in need.

2. References