



## BOOK REVIEW

# The Global Information Technology Report: Efficiency in an Increasingly Connected World

S. Dutta and A. Lopez-Claros (eds)

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The Global Information Technology Report 2004–2005 is edited by Soumitra Dutta and Augusto Lopez-Claros. Professor Dutta is the Dean for Executive Education at INSEAD and Augusto Lopez-Claros is Chief Economist and Director of the Global Competitiveness Programme at the World Economic Forum in Geneva. The book is written as a report, and is replete with economic statistics. It attempts through statistical comparisons, on a technology and country base, to evaluate the importance of information technology in the economic development process. The book examines a broad range of information technology issues and includes key comparative performance indicators, such as, the 'Network Readiness Index'. The book is separated into three parts. Part one, covering chapters one to seven, analyses the diffusion and usage of information technology, and more particularly, the use of information and *communications* technology (ICT) across 104 countries. Each chapter is written by a different author, and the chapters provide a very good economic analysis of the use and integration of ICT across different countries in the world. The data provided is detailed and in many aspects highly interesting. For example, the analysis of 'Networked Readiness' provides a statistical comparison of individual country readiness according to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. Each chapter provides a well written evaluation of different aspects of ICT, such as, ICT sector and the global economy, the regulatory framework for telecommunications for the 21st century, building a sound foundation for the information society, and next generation IT outsourcing. Part one concludes with a case study entitled 'Rearing Taiwan's ICT Industry'. These first seven chapters are statistically detailed and provide a means of monitoring and comparing national performance of in terms ICT development and usage. The chapters would make excellent material as discussion cases for Masters students. Part two of the report contains country profiles from Algeria to Zimbabwe. Part two is purely a listing of statistical tables by country to support and elucidate some of the discussion and analysis in part one of the book. The three key indicators reviewed in part two of the report are the Environment Component Index, the Readiness Component Index, and the Usage Component Index. Individual countries are ranked within these indicators, in the manner of a league table. Part three of the report provides analysis and guidance on how to read the data tables and provides even further statistical tables and statistical analysis. Overall, this is a useful reference work, and the authors and publishers are to be congratulated on the level of details and the scope of country comparison. This report is a factual and informative piece of work that on a year-by-year publication basis will reveal the true growth success of ICT across the globe.