Qual Meets Quant:

Bridging the Gap between Technical and Social Researchers to Foster International Development through Mobile Platforms

in conjunction with the 4th International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development, ICTD 2010, London, 13-16 December

www.qualmeetsquant.org

DATES

Paper submission deadline:
15th October, 2010.
Notification of acceptance:
15th November, 2010.
Camera-ready submission:
23rd November, 2010.

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The increasing ubiquity of mobile phones in developing economies has enabled the capture, for the first time in history, of massive amounts of behavioral human data in areas of interest to international development. Proper analysis of such data could provide important insight into areas from health and education to microfinance and agriculture. Unfortunately, much of the research related to mobile phones and development has been done in methodological silos: technical researchers focus on quantitative analysis; ethnographers perform in-depth qualitative research; and policy makers extrapolate policies from published research.

This workshop intends to bring together technical and social researchers, as well as policy makers, to explore the potential of mixed-method approaches to analyzing these new sources of data. On one hand, large quantitative datasets are being generated by mobile devices adopted either for personal use or as data-gathering tools by practitioners from NGOs. On the other, ethnographers and social researchers carry out qualitative research to gain a deep understanding about mobile technology acceptance and human behavior. Finally, organizations such as the United Nations and the National Statistical Institutes periodically compile large datasets of statistical information including demographic and socio-economic indicators to assess social progress.

Joint analysis of quantitative data gathered through ubiquitous technologies, qualitative research and statistical indicators is likely to provide a deeper understanding than would be possible from analyzing any single body of evidence in isolation. In fact, interactions between these fields might provide a first step to move beyond mere correlations and seek the cause-effect relationships that policy makers aim to understand.

To foster this collaboration, the workshop will consist of short paper presentations followed by a round table focused on evaluating new analytical approaches and understanding how different research techniques can be combined towards a holistic understanding of mobile technology and its potential to foster international development. Technical and social researchers as well as policy makers are welcome to the workshop.

TECHNIQUES FOR SOCIAL COMPUTING

Data Collection and Analysis
Spatio-temporal Analysis
Multiple-source Analysis
User Modeling and Personalization
Mixed-method approaches
Research Design
Adaptive Interaction
Causality Inference
Mobility Analysis
Social Network Analysis
Data Mining, Visualization & Machine Learning

APPLICATION DOMAINS

M-Education and Mobile Learning
M-health
M-banking, Microfinance and Microcredit
M-Government
M-Agriculture
M-Employment
M-Commerce
Social Protection
Transportation Systems
Disease Surveillance
Urban Planning