The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Exploring Emerging Tech in International Development

Project Title	The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Exploring Emerging Tech in International Development
Project Summary	Help USAID explore the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of emerging technologies in international development.
Country	United States

Project Description

Emerging trends in technology like the gig economy and tech-based approaches like artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain, 3D printing, and the Internet of Things present great promise for introducing high-impact innovations in developing country contexts. But often these types of technological innovations present as many challenges as they do benefits when it comes to leveraging them for equitable, inclusive development gains. This project will consist of activities that allow the U.S. Agency for International Development to better understand both the promise of new tech as well as the pitfalls that we need to be cautious about when these innovations impact international development.

This project will strive to cover a range of types (2-3) of emerging technology, key tech trends, or novel approaches to applying existing technology. The expectation will be to consider both the technical underpinnings of a new technology or tech trend, as well as the social and/or economic impacts of integrating these new approaches into developing country contexts.

Activities that may be part of this project:
* Researching innovations and trends in emerging technology to better understand potential benefits and disruptions in the field of international development;
* Landscaping current use of emerging tech in developing economies, working to document types of applications that are being integrated across sectors and geographies;
* Gathering/synthesizing information about documented and/or potential concerns around integration of this / these emerging tech applications in developing country contexts;
* Carrying out quantitative and/or qualitative analysis on impacts of emerging tech in low- and low-middle-income countries.

The team you'll be supporting -- the Strategy & Research team in the Center for Digital Development of the U.S. Global Development Lab -- has carried out significant research on artificial intelligence, machine learning, and digital identity. We'd like to further our exploration of these fields as well as consider 3-4 additional types of emerging technology (e.g., Internet of Things, 3-D Printing, Drones) or novel applications of digital tech. Which technologies, trends, or tech approaches you work on can be jointly determined, guided by team needs and VSFS intern interests. Depth vs breadth can be jointly determined as well; for example, you might study 1

significant tech trend or type emergent tech in great depth (e.g., studying multiple aspects of the Future of Work/gig economy) or you could cover multiple different technologies or emerging tech-based approaches (e.g., 3D printing, machine learning, and applications of differential privacy) in developing economies. This will be an exciting project that can cover a number of cutting-edge research topics and should lead to concrete outputs that will boost your career and your understanding of the field of international development!

Required Skills or Interests

Skill(s)
Analytical writing
Data analysis
Design thinking
Economic analysis
Software development

Additional Information

To learn more about the team you'll be working with -- the Strategy & Research team in the U.S. Global Development Lab's Center for Digital Development -- go here: https://www.usaid.gov/digital-development/strategy-research

Language Requirements

None