

Assignment 4

INFO 6600: Tech for Underserved Communities

Due: December 1st, 2016 Before Class

Governments all over the world have spent considerable resources on E-governance initiatives. These ICT-based platforms are supposed to encourage citizen participation and make governments more accountable, transparent, and effective. But as discussed in class, many systems are more designed to serve the needs of the government rather than the communities.

In this assignment, you will design an E-governance system from the perspective of communities that have been our focus this semester: marginalized, remote, low-literacy, and low-income. Your job will be to envision a system that brings actionable information to the people and makes their voices heard.

Start by identifying a relevant E-government initiative and related open data sources. Some examples from India are given in the appendix, but feel free to explore from other parts of the world. Select one scheme or program from the platform that can be enhanced further.

Create a document that answers the following questions:

1. Write a few sentences describing the E-governance data set/initiative that you chose.
2. Who are the intended users of the E-governance system you have selected? What are some of the limitations of this system? Who currently might be excluded from using it and why?
3. How and where can people report any problems regarding the official information being provided? How can they resolve any disputes? (e.g., they did not receive what the system says they did).
4. What do you think individuals or communities could do with this information if they had access to the data through an appropriate and usable new community system or application? i.e. How could communities benefit from having this information?
5. Suggest three different systems/techniques that could be used to better disseminate the information contained in the datasets to marginalized communities in appropriate ways. What are the pros and cons of each system/technique?
6. Pick one of your suggested techniques from question 5 and design for a new system to provide individuals or the community with relevant information.
 - a. Write a few paragraphs that describe your idea and design. What is its intent/goal? What constraints or user needs affected your design choices?
 - b. Create a system flow diagram that shows how your new design provides people with access to information. Include different stakeholders in the diagram.

- c. Create mock-ups/wireframes/sample messages of screens/components/interactions that show your ideas.
7. Who are some other stakeholders who might also use your new system? Why and how would they participate? What additional information or tools can be exposed to these other stakeholders to meet their needs or make their jobs easier? (Do not be limited by the constraints of the existing datasets.)
8. Think about actually deploying the system you designed. What challenges would you anticipate in your deployment? e.g., social challenges, technical challenges, other stakeholder challenges.

As usual, I'm looking to see that you've thought deeply and engaged with the topic/content.

Appendix

1. Information portal for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), India:
<http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx>
2. Comprehensive view of fair price shops that sell subsidized food grains in Bihar, India:
<http://sfc.bihar.gov.in/fpshopsSummaryDetails.htm>
3. School wise report card for Madhya Pradesh, India:
http://educationportal.mp.gov.in/Public/Schools/School_Report_Card_New.aspx?MP=1
4. Call Center Interface of Government of Telangana:
<http://rdcallcentre.telangana.gov.in/gotoFirstPage.do>
5. Open data initiative of Indian Government:
<https://data.gov.in>