DHRUPAD MATHUR

MY BACKGROUND

I was born and brought up in the legendry state of Rajasthan, popularly known as the Land of Kings and Palaces in India. I did my schooling in Jodhpur, where my father was posted for the government of Rajasthan. My mother was a homemaker.

Fascinated by the folklore and inspired by the stories of brave warriors of Rajasthan, in the initial year of my college life I wanted to join the armed forces; I participated actively with the National Cadet Corps during my college years. I was a cadet in the air wing during the first year. In the second year, I attained the rank of Cadet Sergeant and started leading the contingents. In third year, I received the rank of a Cadet Warrant Officer and was actively involved in parades, skit-shooting, range-shooting, gliding, and para-sailing. These activities infused both self-confidence and risk-taking ability in me, along with the discipline and sincerity that they demand.

I was associated with the National Service Scheme as a volunteer for social service, attending social service camps, participating in AIDS awareness rallies and literacy campaigns. I was also a volunteer in a crematorium. I was and still am touched by the sight of destitution. I don't know whether I have done anything substantial, but this is the spirit that drives me towards volunteering for causes.

MY EDUCATION AND TEACHING

I have a Bachelor's degree in science and did my MBA from Udaipur. During this time, I worked part-time as a web content developer. Thereafter, I did my Doctorate degree from Jodhpur and started teaching in the government engineering college. This was the beginning of my journey in teaching and research, which continued until two years ago. I had opportunities to teach at several prestigious colleges in the country, most notably the S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research in Mumbai.

Prior to teaching there, I taught courses at colleges typically under a university setup, but the S. P. Jain Institute was radically different as a professional institution. As well, the frequent interaction with industry and bright students was tremendous. The major advantage that I had at that point was a versatile skill-set acquired from my studies of pure science with a management degree and information technology certifications. A Ph. D in e-business helped as did an understanding of physical and biological systems.

I have been fortunate to become involved with Diplo, first as a participant and then as a tutor and fellow. I used to browse for information related to my research and, in 2005, I had my very first contact with Diplo after I spotted the web site. The details of programs and courses were interesting. Later, I applied for the Internet Governance Capacity Building programme (IGCBP) and under the able supervision of my tutor Veronica Cretu I started the course, which I found very interesting being my very first live e-learning experience.

I completed the IGCBP in 2005 and since then Diplo has been a blessing and has added dimensions to my development. The United Nations Fellowship at the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG) was a great learning experience. With the fellowship, I had an opportunity to work on the final draft of the WGIG report and participate in the WGIG process, which gave me tremendous understanding of international multi-stakeholder diplomacy. Working at the WGIG secretariat was my first exposure to the UN system. I got a chance to interact with people from diverse backgrounds.

"I draw considerably from my experiences in Diplo's IGCBP and translate them to the local needs of India. We interact with many people from different government agencies and ministries on different projects and proposals, advising on policy issues pertaining to capacity building (...). It is a sustainable project with great results. The participants of our capacity building projects are currently taking charge of managing local initiatives, drafting regional ICT policy plans and training their own teams.

Before the IGCBP and my fellowship in Geneva with the WGIG secretariat, I would not have felt confident to become part of such a complex task force."

MY CURRENT WORK

In the last two years, I have been working on the National e-Governance Plan of the government of India as Senior Consultant for Capacity Building in the Programme Management Unit at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India.

The National e-Governance Plan of the Government of India is an initiative of over INR 240 Billion. Working at the Capacity Building wing of the Programme Management Unit of the National e-Governance Plan, at Ministry of IT, Government of India, I am responsible for fostering the Capacity Building initiatives at the Program level, which includes policy, design development and implementation of the Capacity Building Programme across States, Union Territories and Ministries.

I draw considerably from my experiences in Diplo's IGCBP and translate them to the local needs of India. We interact with many people from different government agencies and ministries on different projects and proposals, advising on policy issues pertaining to capacity building, including specialized training, curriculum, content development, staffing and human resources for expert units for e-governance. It is a sustainable project with great results. The participants of our capacity building projects are currently taking charge of managing local initiatives, drafting regional ICT policy plans and training their own teams.

Before the IGCBP and my fellowship in Geneva with the WGIG secretariat, I would not have felt confident to become part of such a complex task force. But I have constantly drawn on my experience with the WGIG and we not only manage well inside our group, but also have successfully divided external tasks among group members. I have been assigned advising policy issues on specialised training, curriculum, content development, staffing, and human resources for expert units for e-governance.

The greatest outcome of the IGCBP has been the confidence that it has given me. By exposing me to an emerging body of knowledge and then by providing me with an opportunity to interact with a diverse international community, I have gained in abilities and self-respect. The biggest asset that I have today is that I have friends and acquaintances in almost every part of the world.

A SUMMARY AND A VISION

The IGCBP has been beneficial for my career. The programme gave me a hands-on understanding of various aspects of capacity building. Continuous interaction and learning since 2005 on the Diplo platform has provided me with skills that I use in the capacity building implementation here in India.

I want to make a difference by contributing to the social cause. I believe that committed and planned interventions can reduce the miseries in society. I aspire to touch and improve the life of common men. I see information technology as a enabling power that can be used for sustainable development. While fully aware that we have many issues to deal with, I feel that if we can ensure education for the masses, leading to respectful living and earning, we can transform society. It will require sustained efforts and perseverance on the part of nations and society to make it happen; yet, I believe that life is the greatest thing that that has happened to this planet and that all human beings equally need nurture and care.

I look forward to contribute substantially in the areas of

• public policy and programme management for large-scale development of technology
• the use of information and communication technology for sustainable development
• capacity-building and delivery of training.

A VISION FOR INTERNET GOVERNANCE CAPACITY BUILDING

Internet governance finds considerable challenge in the proliferation of activities in a networked society. India is developing fast as an information and communication technology based industry. Due consideration needs to be given to Internet governance with an inclusive approach towards various issues like security, privacy, freedom of expression, human rights, access, cybercrime, multilingualism, public policy, and cross-jurisdictional issues. These issues have a direct effect, not only on commercial activities, but on society at large.

India will be hosting the Internet Governance Forum in year 2008. Now is the time to initiate awareness and sensitisation of important stakeholders; and also for initiating an ongoing dialogue on Internet governance issues in India. To promote a multi-stakeholder approach in India, we need to sensitise and involve the stakeholders in this process. Hence, we need to have Internet governance capacity building for the government, corporate actors, academics, and civil society. Today, I feel committed to this cause.

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