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Panel 12 What is Different with Information Technology Implementation in Less Developed Countries and Why Should We Care?

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PANEL 12

WHAT IS DIFFERENT WITH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

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This panel will discuss the issues related to the implementation and management of large information technology (IT) application and infrastructure projects in less developed countries (LDCs). The panelists will speak from their academic and professional experience with international agencies and projects in countries with large differences in resources, IT and communications infrastructures, IT expertise, and political and managerial cultures. The topics to be addressed are:

- 1. Applications.** With increasing globalization, IT implementation issues are being transformed from a local problem to one that affects much larger constituencies and is dependent on broad conditions. Government policies and regulations and public infrastructure, for example, may play an important role. The implementation of systems developed locally or adapted from other countries and cultures is strongly dependent on these issues. What lessons can be learned from the implementation and operation of systems in these environments?
- 2. Methodology.** The local environment (technical, political, cultural) in LDCs is quite different from that found in the central economies. How do concepts, approaches, and prescriptions developed for IT projects in central economies apply to LDCs? Is there a difference in the dimensions to be considered or variables and relations to be emphasized? What technology is appropriate (bleeding or leading edge, traditional)? What insights can be obtained from analyzing the implementation of large infrastructure or application projects in LDCs that may be useful for scholars developing globally applicable approaches and for implementers who have to localize their systems in these countries and also for organizations that finance, manage and control international IT projects?
- 3. Scenarios.** Technological and business trends (globalized applications and communications structures), cultural, and political developments may set new conditions for IT applications design and implementation in LDCs. What scenarios can be built from these insights and what are the implications for business and policy makers both in central economies and LDCs?