Shorter Notices [*]

Richard Heeks. *Implementing and Managing e-Government: An International Text.* New Delhi: Vistaar Publications. 2006. x+293 Pages. Paperback. Indian Rs 450.00.

The Government is a rapidly growing phenomenon to solve many of the public sector problems. This book offers a comprehensive coverage of the e-government issues faced by public sector officials, managers and consultants. The text is divided into two main parts: first part provides a detailed discussion on the crucial issues of the e-government management. The issues, which faced by public sector managers, private sector providers, consultants and others in planning and operating e-government, include the management of strategy and projects, data security, privacy and quality, managing the people, money and policies. The second part focuses on the implementation of the e-government systems It explores the activities such as feasibility studies, system analysis, system design, construction and marketing.

The central features of this text book include: case studies drawn from across the globe, instructive diagrams and synoptic models, short in-class activities, assignment questions, and practice-based exercises.

As the only book addressing information systems in the public sector, it will be a useful textbook for teachers and students studying public policy, public administration and public management.

Avik Ghosh. *Communication Technology and Human Development: Recent Experiences in the Indian Social Sector.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 2006. 291 Pages. Paperback. Indian Rs 340.00.

The role of communication technology in facilitating the social change and fostering the goals of development programmes is now widely recognised. However, the application of communication technologies in social development programmes is a complex task which requires a professional approach, this book provides an understanding of the practical issues that arise in the planning and implementation of communication programmes to bring about behavioural change in the Indian context. The first section of the book gives a historical background to the evolving nature of the application of communication technology in development. The shift from the thrust of expanding mass media reach and coverage to disseminate information and

messages publicised by the government and communication programmes have grown to modify the behaviours. A combination of social and political consensus building through advocacy and mobilisation of the community, seeking their participation in the development programmes, is used to address the difficulties that individuals and families encounter in adopting new behaviours. Case studies of innovative applications of communication technology, both in India and abroad, are described to assist a holistic understanding of the evolution of role of the development communication. In Section II, the main content of the book is divided into three parts such as literacy, population and rural development. The focus is on the recent experiences in these social sector programmes. The author presents recent and major initiatives in the design and implementation of communication strategies in these three important social sectors including the issue of poverty alleviation. The case studies included in the book are based on the first hand experiences of the author, provide very practical information concerning the key elements in appropriate development of communication technology such as setting objectives, programme design, planning, application of hardware, a multi-pronged approach, the preparation of materials, accountability, the participation of local communities, and professional management.

In the concluding chapter, Avik Ghosh draws attention to various critical issues and concerns in the context of India's development. He argues that the importance of communication in facilitating social change and the need to involve local communities in such initiatives is not sufficiently appreciated by policy-makers.

This important book will be a useful handbook for all those involved in development communication and rural development. It can also be an essential textbook for the students of mass communication, social marketing, and all those engaged in the voluntary sector.

Bernard Bel, Jan Brouwer, Biswajit Das, Vibodh Parthasarathi and Guy Poitevin (eds.). *Media and Mediation: Communication Processes Volume 1.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 2005. 474 Pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 750.00.

This volume, the first in a three-book series titled *Communication Processes,* is devoted to understanding the politics in, and of, communication. It explores both the ground on which processes of communication unfold and the political configurations implied in communication processes. This two-pronged approach questions the preoccupation in Indian scholarship with the `deployment` of communication technology, and the 'impact' of mass media, and suggests a repositioning of 'communication' as an interdisciplinary domain of enquiry. Like in the subsequent volumes, the editors of this book juxtapose a pluralist universe of conceptual articulations, theoretical constructs and empirical validations.

In addressing these questions, the contributors steer through, on the one hand, the modernisation-inspired tradition of communication research in India, predominated by impact and reception studies and, on the other, global trends that shaped the glut of fashionable writings coincidental with and spurred by transnational television and the internet during the 1990s.

By reorienting the subject matter of communication, and reinstalling the politics therein, this volume will be of considerable interest to students and scholars of media studies, history and sociology, and evolving concerns in cultural studies and public policy.

Ranjita Mohanty and Rajesh Tandon (eds.). *Participatory Citizenship: Identity, Exclusion, Inclusion.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 2006. 250 Pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 550.00.

In a democratic set-up, the idea of citizenship contains within elements of participation. The state grants its citizens rights and freedom as embedded in the constitution and creates legal systems to protect them. It also aspires to translate these principles, founded on the idea of the universality of equality, into action. However, in a society marked by deeply entrenched inequalities, citizenship often remains an elusive experience for marginalised people.

This volume argues that the conventional understanding of citizenship is inadequate to capture the complex challenges a large majority of India's marginalised people face in actualising their rights and making their voices heard. It offers instead an extended connotation of citizenship and participation from the perspective of those bearing excluded identities, namely, the low caste, the poor, women and tribals.

Based on the experiences of these groups in their everyday relationships with the state and with society at large, the contributors to this volume detail and explore the possibilities and the problematic of their inclusion in attempting a change in existing relations. Among the issues discussed are `participatory citizenship` as a way of altering the existing relationship between the state and its vulnerable citizenry, and rescuing citizenship from its universal legal status to include the differential positioning of subjugated groups. The contributors conceptualise participation not merely as a voting/electoral mechanism but as one where all citizens have a legitimate and equitable stake in the processes of development and governance.

Combining theoretical discussions with empirical case studies, this volume delineates the possibilities and potentials of excluded people seeking inclusion, as well as the complexities and contradictions inherent in the process. It will be of great interest to scholars, and students in civil society, democracy, social mobilisation, gender and development studies. Practitioners and policy-makers will also find the useful in designing and implementing solutions to the issues that affect the inclusion and participation of marginalised citizens.

Vikram K. Chand (ed.). *Reinventing Public Service Delivery in India: Selected Case Studies.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 2006. 404 Pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 750.00.

This volume focuses on cases in successful innovations in public service delivery in India and draws lessons to initiate scaling-up and replication. It documents and analyses ten cases of innovation in service delivery across a range of sectors in India. The criteria used to choose these cases are four-fold. First, they represent some form of institutional reform in service delivery. Second, they have been culled from across a variety of sectors, making it possible to discern common threads in reform. Third, evidence to indicate a positive impact on service delivery includes surveys, and/or recognition by a credible external organisation. Finally, these cases are examples of stable initiatives that have been in existence for at least two years.

By presenting ten detailed case studies of how public services have been transformed across a range of sectors, this volume provides a deeper understanding of the key causal factors and processes involved in reform over time as well as some of the basic systemic issues that can potentially complicate the implementation of reform.