

All over the world, welfare services are increasingly being provided in digital ways. From e-government initiatives which have introduced software programs, apps, and biometrics to the bureaucratic process, to algorithms and artificial intelligence which are governing social service delivery in novel ways. The development sector, too, has witnessed a digital turn. Outside the purview of the state, companies, social enterprises, non-governmental organizations, and more or less loose coalitions of people have engaged in digital social service provision, such as in the field of health-care, education, or housing.

In this workshop, we explore the design, implementation, and consequences of digital welfare and development projects in the Global South. We not only hope to reflect on how digitalization is shaping the nature of social services but also on the social relations and power dynamics that emerge from and are embedded in the digital. For example, how do various actors provide, make use of, and engage with new regimes of digital welfare and development? How are digital welfare and development programs being designed, implemented, and adapted by technology designers or policy makers? How do users of digital welfare schemes, who are now faced with chat bots, apps, and portals, relate to the digital? How does digital service delivery shape subjectivities and socialities? And how are social inequalities addressed, alleviated, or perpetuated through digitalized welfare and development?

Organizers:
Sandra Bärnreuther
Smriti Sharma

Registration is required to attend the event in-person or online. To register please contact:
rahel.vonrotz@stud.unilu.ch



digitalizing social services

new regimes of welfare and development
in the global south



1 June 2023

Program: Day 1

09:00 – 09:30

Welcome and Introduction

Session 1

Designing Interventions, Governing Populations

09:30 - 10:15

The financialization of social policies in Mexico: The challenges of converting cash transfers into digital financial products (Solène Morvant-Roux, University of Geneva)

10:15 – 11:00

From techno-solutionism to techno-utopianism: Digital public services in India (Bidisha Chaudhari, IIIT Bangalore)

11:00 – 11:30

————— *Coffee Break*

11:30 – 12:15

Maximum data, minimum insights: Indian bureaucracy's tryst with Digital India (Aakash Solanki, University of Toronto)

12:15 – 12:30

Open Discussion

12:30 – 14:00

————— *Lunch Break*

Session 2

Genealogies and Temporalities

14:00 – 14:45

Updating Care: Genealogies of India's digital turn in the health sector (Sandra Bärnreuther, University of Lucerne; Sreya Dutta Chowdhury, Max Planck Institute for Anthropology, Halle; Smriti Sharma, University of Lucerne)

14:45 – 15:30

The meantime of development: Digitisation of bureaucracy and the spirit of future making in India (Ursula Rao, Max Planck Institute for Anthropology, Halle)

15:30 – 16:00

————— *Coffee Break*

16:00 – 16:45

Beyond Experiments: What Futures for Digital Health? (Vincent Duclos, Université du Québec à Montréal)

16:45 – 17:00

Open Discussion

19:00

————— *Conference Dinner*

2 June 2023

Program: Day 2

Session 3

Intermediaries

09:00 – 09:45

Digital Giant with Feet of Clay: Exploring the Indian Platform State at the Village Level (Marine Al Dahdah, CNRS/IFP-CEMS)

09:45 – 10:30

From 'sustainable developers' to new gatekeepers: racialized 'trust' building as extraversion among managers of technology hubs and incubators in Accra, Ghana (Tessa Pijnaker, University of Birmingham)

10:30 – 10:45

Open Discussion

10:45 – 11:15

————— *Coffee Break*

Session 4

Inequalities

11:15 – 12:00

The Gender digital divide in the digitalization of Tax in Kenya (Nimmo Osman Elmi, University of Linkjoping)

12:00 – 12:45

Surrogate Welfare Schemes and Specter of Inclusivity: Gender non-conforming communities in Contemporary India (Banhishikha Ghosh, University of Zurich)

12:45 – 14:00

————— *Lunch Break*

14:00 – 14:45

From FairWork to FemWork: Mapping actionable labor futures through a feminist approach (Payal Arora, Erasmus University Rotterdam)

14:45 – 15:00

Open Discussion

15:00 – 15:30

Final Discussion and Planning of Publication