Digital divide: what can cooperation for development do

By Ismael Peña-López (@ictlogist), 19 May 2005

Next Monday (May 23rd) I'd be speaking in Sabadell introducing the presentation of the cooperation for development projects granted by the Fundació Sabadell Solidari.

I've been asked to talk about what cooperation for development can do to bridge the Digital Divide. As my speech will only be 20 minutes long, I'll split it in four parts which are the main subjects one should focus when facing the digital divide. All in all, the force idea will be that bridging the digital divide is not (only) about connecting PCs to the network.

Thus, the four parts will be as follows:

- **Infrasctructure and connectivity:** You must have a PC connected to the Internet to bridge the digital divide… o maybe not. What about cellulars? handhelds?

- **Capacitation and digital literacy:** Enough with hardware and software? Know how to install it or customize it? Know how to use it?

- **Uses and services:** Got a PC and know how to run desktop applications but… what for? e-Health? e-Learning? e-Governance? information and communication?

- **Law and rights:** This is new but I think it's getting more and more interesting. If all previous items are covered but copyright and intellectual property rights do not avoid the user to do anything at all… what for the whole ICT stuff? and… who should define how to rule the Internet, how to define it? is it a human right?

Only in 20 minutes, quite a challenge :)