HÀ NỘI — While the Internet, mobile phones and other digital technologies are spreading rapidly throughout the developing world, the anticipated digital dividends of higher growth, more jobs, and better public services have fallen short of expectation.

The findings have been pointed out in a 2016 World Development Report on digital dividends compiled by the World Bank.

At the workshop launching the report in Hà Nội yesterday, Deepak Mishra, 2016 World Development Report Co-director, said that the benefits of rapid digital expansion had been skewed towards the wealthy, skilled, and influential around the world, who are better positioned to take advantage of the new technologies. In addition, though the number of Internet users worldwide has more than tripled since 2005, four billion people still lack access to the Internet.

The report authors suggested closing the digital divide by making the Internet universal, affordable, open and safe, in addition to strengthening regulations that ensure competition among business, adapting workers’ skills to the demands of the new economy, and fostering accountable institutions, which are called ‘analogue complements’ to digital investment in the report.

The workshop also created a platform for the Vietnamese Government, policy makers, organisations and businesses to discuss how to utilise digital technologies to promote the country’s growth.

Nguyen Thanh Tuyen, deputy head of the Department of Information Technology under the Ministry of Information and Communications (MoIC), said that the Vietnamese Government has paid great attention to IT education. By 2015, the number of high school students who had access to the Internet had reached 99.9 per cent. All schools, colleges and universities now had Internet access via fiber optic cables.

Two years ago, the MoIC issued a standard for IT skills based upon an international computer driving license. The ministry is working with the Ministry of Education and Training to implement the standard nationwide, Tuyen said.

Regarding the potential development of digital technologies in Viet Nam, Trung Gia Binh, Chairman of FPT Corporation said that Viet Nam has an advantage of having half a million people in the software industry.

He hoped that each university in Viet Nam would have international development assistance funds to support students to set up start-up businesses.

Deputy Prime Minister Vũ Đức Đam said that there are no reasons to curb the development of digital technologies. “Developing digital technologies is not the job of any single institution, but all,” he said.

The Vietnamese Government pays attention to putting forward policies that strongly encourage digital technologies’ development. — VNS

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