Preface

This book aims to provide a thorough examination of the dimensions of end-users in ISD. The need for a diverse and profound introduction of methods and approaches regarding the users and information systems development was made evident by both the minitrack “End-Users in Information Systems Development: Theories, Applications and Implications” run by the editors in HICSS conferences in 2005 and 2006 and the Information Systems Journal special issue on “User – the great unknown” with Juhani Iivari. It is also obvious that the detached tradition of human-centred ISD creates problems in terms of accurate sources of information when trying to understand the multifaceted nature of the area. At present, it is important to aim for a solid view of human-centred ISD.

This book provides a comprehensive view to different human-centered ISD methods and approaches and will benefit IS researchers, practitioners and students. The representatives of the fields of Human–Computer Interaction (HCI) and Computer Supported Collaborative Work (CSCW) are most likely to be interested in our approach. For this reason, we do not offer only a theoretical handbook or a collection of practical experiences, but both of them as well as some critical discussions of utilization the methods in ISD and their implications with some interconnecting commentary viewpoints. As the title of the book: “Reframing Humans in Information Systems” illustrates, we aim to provide a novel and accurate viewpoint to the understanding of the user in ISD. Our aim is to reframe the phenomenon by connecting scientific constructs produced within information systems science that has recently provided a plethora of multidisciplinary user views without explicitly defining clear constructs that serve the IS field in particular.

We have divided the book in three thematic areas that are interwoven in ISD. First, human systems analysis focuses on understanding the user as human beings instead of utilizing a task- or role-related view. Second, methodology section studies ISD methods and how humans are involved there. Third, we include articles that consider humans as the users of a certain system in the practices of everyday life.

By presenting such variety of viewpoints, we hope to convince the reader of acknowledging and perhaps even understanding the user holistically. This kind of reframing of humans in ISD will be emphasized if and when more user-friendly systems are designed and developed. Therefore, we dedicate this book to the users
of future information systems: Hopefully you personally will not have to suffer from incompatible, illogical, unusable, impractical, irritating, stressful, time-consuming, resource-demanding, unsafe, graceless or complicated systems that support your objectives poorly. We have enough of those in current organizations.