

ICT capacity building for knowledge and information access in disadvantaged communities

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The thesis investigated Kenya public libraries involvement in provision of ICTs to the Public and how it mitigates in narrowing the digital divide in disadvantaged rural communities. Most of the countries adopt different approaches in implementing information technologies to build general knowledge and digital literacies among citizens. The initiatives are usually geared to hasten access to information infrastructures but often limited to urban areas. In the contemporary period, digital literacy is of equal important to allow all citizens' participation in socio-economic developments. Among the aspects studied are how the Library ICT initiatives are geared to enable and empower people in rural communities not just a matter of the provision of hardware and software resources but support in ICT access, skills training to reduce the existing disparity. Usually the disadvantaged (rural) communities are characterized by poor information infrastructures, low digital literacy rates that further limits access to information and participation in civil society. This study used public libraries case study, particularly evaluating its role in building and developing ICT capacity at the grassroots level. It includes understanding implementation paradigm, utilization, affordability, digital literacy training and community participation, which are fundamental to develop national strategy to enable the rural poor achieve economic development through access to information technologies.

Keywords: digital divide; information literacy; capacity building; digital inclusion; rural communities and development; public libraries; developing countries

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