Gigabit Libraries and Beyond: Improving Broadband Access Worldwide

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ISLD-ALA Webinar

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Agenda

Gigabit Libraries and beyond
- Access to knowledge
- Role of Libraries

Improving broadband access worldwide
- Digital development
- Affordable and Meaningful connectivity
- Cost of exclusion
- Community Access
Access to knowledge

Information poverty is that situation in which individuals and communities, within a given context, do not have the requisite skills, abilities or material means to obtain efficient access to information, interpret it and apply it appropriately.
Access to knowledge

- Participation
- Economic empowerment
- Justice
- Freedom

Actand-Action-Actor-Tool
Digital Development

Percentage of households with computer and/or Internet access at home, 2019*

- **World**
  - Urban: 72%
  - Rural: 37%
- **Africa**
  - Urban: 74%
  - Rural: 28%
- **Arab States**
  - Urban: 70%
  - Rural: 6%
- **Asia & Pacific**
  - Urban: 81%
  - Rural: 36%
- **CIS**
  - Urban: 68%
  - Rural: 34%
- **Europe**
  - Urban: 78%
  - Rural: 66%
- **The Americas**
  - Urban: 74%
  - Rural: 50%

Percentage of individuals using the Internet, 2019*

- **Developed**
  - Urban: 98%
- **Developing**
  - Urban: 87%
- **LDCs**
  - Urban: 67%
- **LLDCs**
  - Urban: 67%
- **SDS**
  - Urban: 52%
Digital Development

Percentage of female and male population using the Internet, 2019*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab States</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<td>CIS</td>
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<td>Europe</td>
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<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Americas</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCs</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLDCs</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIDS</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ITU estimate. Source: ITU

Policy
Spectrum
Infrastructure
Costs
Access
Affordability
Devices
Content
Skills
Taxation
Affordable and Meaningful connectivity
Affordable and Meaningful connectivity

1. Broadband policies should improve the availability of high-quality, affordable broadband services in underserved rural areas.
2. Rural broadband policies should draw from real-world experience – locally, regionally, and globally.
3. Rural broadband policies should harness the resources and capabilities of the private sector and complementary providers, such as community networks.
4. Rural broadband policies should be comprehensive.
5. Rural broadband policies (and all broadband policies) must be gender responsive.
6. Effective implementation will require evidence and standards - internet with defined broadband speeds, relevant devices, etc.

Meaningful connectivity
- Getting the right speed
- Having an appropriate device
- Connecting with enough data
- Using the Internet regularly
Cost of exclusion

- There is substantial gender gap
- Loss to the GDP
- Loss of productivity

**Figure A** Cumulative cost of women's exclusion from internet use in 32 countries, 2011–2020

*Source: Alliance for Affordable Internet, 2021*
Role of Libraries and Librarians

**Advocacy**
- Broadband for libraries
- Rights and Justice
- Cost of exclusion

**Democratization**
- Knowledge Networks
- Freedom and choice
- Participation

**Capability-building**
- Skilling, reskilling and upskilling
- Livelihoods
- Productivity

**Bridging the divide**
- Free, meaningful, affordable access
- Inclusive and equitable access
- Community access
Libraries, as democratic institutions, have the ability to advocate, democratize, popularize and enhance affordable, meaningful and equitable access; build human capabilities; thus, transform societies and empower communities.
Thank You

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