IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IDEAS OF WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The world has been reduced a global village as a result of the emergence of ICT. This paper x-rayed the key issues raised in the world summit recommendations on the information society, the way forward for Nigeria in terms of world summit on the information society, global trends on ICT, status of ICT in Nigeria in terms of use as well as its impact on the Nigeria society. The paper concluded that Information and Communication technologies pervade every aspect of life: work, learning, leisure, teaching and health. The paper therefore recommended the use of ICT in our present day economy to bridge the information literacy gap that is evident in the absence of ICT usage.

Keywords: *ICT, implementation, ideas, world summit, information society*

INTRODUCTION

In recognition of the importance of information and communication technology as a means of shaping the future of the world and in achieving the development goals outlined in the millennium declaration, world leaders decided that a global vision and a global dialogue were needed to build the framework of an all inclusive and equitable information society. The information society is an evolving concept that has reached different levels across the world reflecting the different stages of development. Technology is rapidly transforming the environment in which the information society is developed. The unique two phase structure of the world summit on the information society (WSIS) provided an opportunity to take this evolution into account. The world summit on the information society (WSIS) is an initiative of the Information Telecommunication Union (ITU) a United Nations specialized agency. The summit was organized in two phases.

The first phase took place in Geneva. It was hosted by the government of Switzerland from the 10th to 12th of December, 2003 and hosted by Tunisian government. The summit on the information society was organized on the premises of the desire and commitment to build a people - centred inclusive and development oriented information society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share

information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and people to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life. The key issues raised in the world summit on the information society agenda include:

The role of governments and all stakeholders: Private/business sector, civil society, the UN, other international/inter-governmental organizations and non governmental organizations in the promotion of ICTs for development with cooperation among these stakeholders.

The provision of Infrastructure and Service: The provision of Information and Communication Infrastructure and Service adapted to regional and local conditions and made policies that create favourable climate for stability, predictability and equitable and affordable access to ICT.

Access to Information and Knowledge: The ability for all to access, contribute and disseminate information, ideas and knowledge via easily accessible, enriched and protected information made available in the public domain and an increasing awareness of the possibilities offered by different software models and licenses to encourage diversity of choice.

Capacity Building: Each person (including people outside the formal educational structure) should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skill and knowledge in order to understand, participate actively in and benefit fully from the information society and the knowledge economy. Attention should be paid to lifelong learning and improving professional skills. Given the wide range of ICT and the information specialist required at all levels, building instructional capacity deserve special attention. Also, national capacity in ICT research and development should be enhanced. Furthermore, partnership, between developed and developing counties in R and D, technology transfer, manufacturing and utilization of ICT products and service should be encouraged.

Building Confidence and Security in the Use of ICT: Strengthening the trust framework, including information security and network security, authentication, privacy and consumer protection while enhancing access and trade. Also, it is necessary to prevent the use of information resources and technologies for criminal and terrorist purpose, while respecting human right.

An Enabling Environment at National and International Levels: At national level, it can be achieved through government intervention in correcting market failures, maintains fair completion, attracting investments, creating a secure, safe ad healthy working environment, appropriate for the utilization of ICTs and to serve national priorities. Also, at international level, a dynamic and enabling international environment can be created supportive of foreign direct investment and international cooperation in the areas of finance, debt and trade and a full and effective participation of developing countries in global decision making. Furthermore, the development, adoption an respecting of international standards and norms that take into account the needs of user and a word wide access to service regardless of underlying technology, are of paramount importance.

ICT Application Benefits in all Aspect of Life: ICT applications are potentially important in all areas of life, hence, applications should be user friendly, accessible to all, adapted to local needs in languages and culture and supportive of sustainable development.

Cultural Diversity and Identity, Linguistic Diversity and Local Contents: Cultural diversity is a common heritage of humankind. The information society should be founded on and stimulated respected for cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and foster dialogue among cultures and civilization. Also, the creation, dissemination and preservation of content in diverse languages and formats must be accorded high priority in building an inclusive information society, paying particular attention to the diversity of supply of creative work due to recognition of the rights of authors and artists. The development of local content suited to domestic or regional needs will encourage social and economic development and will stimulate participation of all stake holders including people living in rural, remote and marginal areas.

Media: There is need to have the freedom to seek, receive, impart and use information for the creation, accumulation and dissemination of knowledge and the responsible use and treatment of information by the media in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards. Also, traditional media in all their forms have an important role in the formation society and ICTs plays a supportive role in this regard. Diversity of media ownership has to be encouraged, in conformity with national laws and taking into account relevant international conventions. In addition, international imbalance affecting the medial particularly as regards infrastructure, technical resources and the development of human skills should be reduced.

Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society: There is need for the information society to respect peace and uphold the fundamental value of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance shared responsibility and respect for nature, justice and the dignity and worth of human person should be fostered. Also, the widest possible protection should be accorded to the family, to enable it play it crucial role in the society. Furthermore, there should be respect for fundamental freedom of others.

International and Regional Cooperation: The information society intrinsically global in nature and national efforts need to be supported by an effective international and regional cooperation among government, the private sector civil society and stakeholders, including the international financial institutions in areas such as finance and technical assistance (UN/ITU, 2005).

GLOBAL TRENDS ON INFORMATION SOCIETY

Higher institutions of learning are now expected to contribute to society by widening access to higher education, continuing professional development, applied research, contributing to local economic impact and improving social inclusion. Reviews of experiences in the use of ICT for education (for example, UNESCO 2003) indicate the following:

a. ICTs are becoming an integrative part of national education policies and plans. ICTs are reflected in university strategic plans and documents derived from that plan, such as information policy plan, information master plan and information projects plans.

b. The convergence of technologies has become a driving force for educational reform, making it possible for teachers and learners (and related support professionals) to connect better to information, ideals and each other via effective combinations of pedagogy and old and new technologies.

c. ICTs for teaching and learning undergo at least three phases: a substitution phase where traditional teaching occurs with the use of new technologies; a transition phase where new teaching and learning practices begin to appear a established practiced start to be questioned; and a transformation phase where the new technologies enable new practices.

d. Lecturers are to break away from professional isolation. With ICTs, they can easily connect with lecturers from other countries and with sources of teaching materials.

e. With information more readily available, learners are not dependent on lecturers and librarians for information. Learners are helping redefine the role of lecturers and librarians, so learners can focus on analyzing information and sharpening their critical thinking skills.

f. ICTs are altering the functions of libraries and changing the role of libraries with a wealth of learning resources on the internet, some of which are freely available, librarians are becoming information managers. These librarians will be computer experts and information brokers. (Nentwich, 2003) who will be involved in structuring and will be engaged in publishing as well as in teaching.

g. Researchers are no longer faced with a lack of information but a glut of information. Data sharing peer review and developing a network of contacts are no longer constrained by distance as access to e-mail, web based file and data sharing and web logs becomes more iniquitous.

h. There is an increasing prominence of for - profit as makers of products and providers of services (Microsoft in partnership with Blackboard; Hewlett - Packard and place ware) or end-to-e- learning solutions (e-college). Another example is when large corporations offer courses for academic institutions (cable and wireless virtual academy in partnership with Global Technology University and Stratchcyde University in the United Kingdom). In this example courses are offered online and credits are easily transferred across national borders. Another example is setting up franchise - like arrangement where an institution (A) approves an institution (B) in another country to provide one or more of A's programmes to students in B's country.

i. Universities are entering into partnership with the private sector, in order to stay current as well as to get help on maintaining operation and financial viability of ICT based education programmes.

j. The internet and associated ICTs is making it possible for various forms of cross border education, including trade ineducation. The relevance of traditional and quality assurance mechanisms is been questioned and new mechanisms for ensuring quality in transition education are been proposed LaRocque and Latham, 2003).

TRENDS IN AFRICA

The Association of African Universities (AAU), along with the World Bank, acknowledges in Revitalizing Universities in Africa a "declining quality of university education" as a result of dwindling resources while enrolments are growing. Yet, there are positive signs as most African institutions have started to implement plans to ensure sound institutional management, transparent and accountable governance, a thriving intellectual environment, a modicum of facilities for faculty members and students, and above all, effective leadership. Universities have started to develop institutional strategic plans with stakeholders' involvement. Increasingly their strategic plans have been used to renegotiate relationships with government. Universities are starting to build capacity for teaching and research at an international standard in one or more academic areas crucial for their country's economic or social advancement, foster and reward research; develop management information systems, and devise management training courses for all universities managers.

Africa Dot Edu: ICT Opportunities and Higher Education in Africa (2003 highlights the challenges faced by African universities as they begin to realize the promise of ICT. Part one looks at the evolution of the internet in Africa, the institutional policies that contribute to the development of the internet, and the relationship among higher education, economic growth and IT. Part two looks at regional initiatives, such as the African Virtual University, African digital libraries, community learning centres, distance learning, open content, institutional policies and learning. Another set of studies examines the use of IT that is not specific to the functions of higher education institutions but has implications for developing new curriculum in higher education institutions for example, e-commerce and e-government. Another useful resource is ICT for teaching, learning and research - A workshop for African Universities: Securing the Linchpin (2002).

a. ICTs are being reflected in university strategic plans and institutional guidelines. More and more African universities are seeing the benefits of adding “e” to learning. Universities like Eduardo Mondlane University (Uganda), Obafemi Awolwo University (Nigeria), and University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) have ICT institutional guidelines that are aligned to their university strategic plans.

b. The use of ICTs for university management of financial personnel and educational resources is exemplified by the University of Pretoia's Client Service Centre. The Client Service Centre includes the following services: all general enquires University of Pretoria, residence, applications, payments,

study financing, student account, student and personnel cards, parking disc, course consultation, and a computer laboratory for all registered students to access the Virtual Campus. Another example is the University of Western Cape's integrated information strategy.

Having seen the key issues in the WSIS agenda, how then do we appropriate and implement this action line in our country - Nigeria?

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY IN NIGERIA

The implementation of the ideals of WSIS in Nigeria should be a collective responsibility of the following:

1. They need to initiate a structure dialogue with all relevant stakeholders via at least one functioning public/private partnership (PPP) or Multi-sector Partnership (MSP) to promote technologies, and R and D programmes in areas such as translations, iconographies, voice assisted services and the development of necessary hardware and a variety of software models including proprietary, open source software and free software, such as standard character sets, language codes, electronic dictionaries, terminology and thesauri, multilingual search engines, machine translation tools, internationalized domain names, content referencing as well as general and application software and in making available adequate and affordable ICT equipments for end users.
2. Encourage research on the information society including on innovative form of networking adaptation of ICT infrastructure, tools and application that facilitate accessibility of ICT for all and disadvantages groups in particular.
3. Encourage initiatives to accessibility access, including free and affordable to open access and books and open archives for scientific information.
4. Support the creation and development of a digital public library and archives services, adaptation to the information societies, including reviewing nation library strategies and legislation developing a global understanding of the need for hybrid libraries and fostering national cooperation between libraries.
5. Develop national policies and laws to ensure that libraries archives, museums and cultural institution can play their full role of content including traditional knowledge providers, in the information society, by providing continued access to record information.
6. Support efforts to develop and use ICTs for the presentation of natural and cultural heritage, keeping it accessible as a living part of today culture. This includes archives collection and libraries as the memory of humankind.
7. Develop framework for the security of the e-archives and other electronic records of information.
8. Design specific training programmer in the use of ICTs in order to meet the educational needs of information professional such as archivists, libraries,

museum professional, scientist, teachers, journalist, postal workers and other relevant professional groups. Training of information professional should not focus only on new methods and techniques for the development of provision of information and communication services, but also on
relevant management skills to ensure the best use of technologies while the training of teachers should focus on the technical aspects of ICTs, on development of content, and on the potential possibilities and challenges of ICTs.

9. Provide affordable or free of charge access for citizens to the various communication resources, notably the internet, by establishing sustainable multi-purpose community public access points. These access points, should to the extent possible, have sufficient capacity to provide assistance to users, in libraries, educational institutional, public administration, post office and indigenous ICT training centres, with special emphasis on rural and underserved areas, empowering local communities in ICT use and promote the production of useful and socially meaningful content (traditional, knowledge) and nurturing local capacity for the creation and distribution of software in local language.
10. Promote affordable and reliable high speed internet connection for all universities and research intuitions to support their critical role n information and knowledge production, education and training and to support the establishment of partnerships, cooperation and networking between these institutions
11. Promote electronic publishing, different pricing initiative to make scientific information affordable and accessible in all countries on an equitable basis.
12. Promote the use of peer-peer technology to share scientific knowledge and pre-prints and reprints written by scientific authors who have waived their right to payment.
13. Promote the long-term systematic and efficient collection, dissemination and preservation of essential scientific digital data, for example, population and meteorological data.
14. Give support to media based in local communities and support projects combining the use of traditional media and new technologies for their role in facilitating the use of local languages, for documenting and preserving local heritage, including landscape and biological diversity and as a means to reach rural and isolated and monadic communities.

Given the range of the ICT in the academic landscape, how does one determine the difference that is attributable to ICTs in teaching and learning and research and the underpinnings of information services and management? How does one examine the relationship between the form of ICT, how it is used, in what context it is used, and any impact on the user? To answer the first question let us take a look at global trends on ICTs and universities. Secondly, let us review the range of ICT utilization

in Africa in general. We will then examine the changes brought about by the use of ICT in one case study, Net Tel @ Africa. To start answering the second question requires formulating a research framework that includes an ICT impact Assessment Tool to predict impact and to access impact over time of the utilization of various forms of ICTs for different functions in the African academic landscape.

The era of information age has been characterized by the emergence of the computer and other related technologies in the dissemination of information and knowledge. The trend in librarianship today bears every mark of a future yet unknown. The digital age has been succinctly captured by Kruger (2005) in her provocative questions. "Will flesh and bone librarian be relevant in fifty years times? Of course the status of information professionals will grow in the information economy - surely we have established that. But will they be flesh and bone? The question of flesh and bone is pertinent. It requires an answer from every librarian today. Simply, the concepts of being addressed by Kruger, is that can librarians continue to look at and practice librarianship the way they are used to and still be relevant? Can we continue render services as in the traditional pattern that we have always done and still be current? Doing things in the normal way, can we last in the new information and communications technology era? What then is the more appropriate approach to librarianship that will benefit us all especially in Nigerian and more especially Nigeria academic institution? The trend is the integration of ICT in teaching and learning at all levels of education from primary to higher institutions. No country can successfully resist this because of globalization.

No doubt one of the driving forces of globalization is the advance of telecommunications in general and the internet in particular, with globalization there are so many possibilities. Despite advances in information and communication technologies, a wide digital disparity exists between developing and developed nation Annan (2001). Although the internet growth for Africa as at December 3, 2004 was remarkable (186.6%), internet world states that 2004 represents only 1.4% population penetration and 1.6% of the users in world. This means that 98.4% of the entire global internet users are outside Africa. Data shows that Nigeria has the largest number of internet users in the West African sub-region.

The liberalization when the Nigeria communication commission licensed over 50 internet services providers to market services. Small when is considered against the fact that Nigeria represents 20% of the entire sub-Saharan Africa. The ICT status in Nigeria, Ernest Ndukwe - Chief Executive of Nigeria Communication Commission in his presentation at World Summit on Information Society provided authoritative in Nigeria.This study was therefore carried out in 2008 to access the extent of use and the stutus of ICT in Nigeria as well as the implementation of the ideas of WSIS in Nigeria.

Table 1: Status of ICT Infrastructure in Nigeria

ICT Facility	Dec.00	Dec.02	June03	Dec.03	Mar.04
No of connected digital mobile	Nil	1.6m	2.05	3.1m	3.8m
No of connected fixed lines	450,000	702,000	724,790	850,00	888,854
No of national carriers	1	2	2	2	2
No of operators I.S. PS	18	30	30	30	30
No of active licensed fixed line operators	9	16	19	30	30
No of licensed mobile operators	1	4	4	4	4

Source:The African ICT policy monitor is an initiative of the Association for progressive Communication (APC).

The above table shows that it is evident that ICT facilities in Nigeria experienced radical growth between 2000 and 2004. The most pronounced sector of growth was in mobile communication with digital mobile lines growing from zero in December 2000 to 3.8 million in March 2004 (Ndukwe 2005) growth from 540,000 in December, 1999 to over 47000 by March, 2004.

- Zero private investment in ICT in December, 1999 to estimated 4 million by December, 2003
- Teledensity of 0.4 line per inhabitant in 1999:1.96 in 2002:3.33 in 2003 and 3.92 per 100 inhabitants in 2004.
- Several towns and cities estimated at 48% of the population and 18% of landmass have potential access.
- Geographic penetration of fixed lines as at March, 2000 has reached all states of the federation over 200 towns and cities: 90% of estimated landmass; and estimated population of 205 (Ndukwe 2005)

Table 2: Status of ICT in Nigeria in Terms User Population

Population (millions)	-	132.8
Literacy rate	-	66.8
Gross national income per capital	-	290
TVs per 000 people	-	68
Radio per 1000 people	-	200
Telephones main line per 1000 people	-	5
Mobile phones per 1000 people	-	4
Personal computers per 1000 people	-	6.8
Internet uses (thousands)	-	

Source: The African ICT Policy Monitor is an initiative of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC). The state of ICT in academic institutions in Nigeria and its social consequences.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A survey carried out on the state on availability, use and consequences of information and communication technologies in academic institutions shows that most of the academic institutions have and make use of information and communication technologies in teaching and learning and that the use of ICT in these institutions of learning have far reaching consequences. The introduction of ICT in schools without proper staff development plan and Pedagogical perspective will not yield the expected

results successfully implementation of ICT in schools requires a long - term commitment from all level of government and all stake holders.

The many facilities on the internet such as the electronic mail (e-mail) World Wide Web (www) and the news group have not assisted in the dissemination of information but also has enhanced education in our academic institution. Many countries have documented their success and failures during the integration of ICT in their curriculum. The use and availability of information and communication technologies in Nigeria has great consequences on the citizenry. It was observed that the use of internet stimulates group work and social interaction. A school connected to the internet can collaborate at local, national and international levels to widen the students and teacher horizon allowing them to know and interact with people from other cultures. Lecturers are able to break away from professional isolation. With ICTs, they can easily connect with sources of teaching materials.

Researchers are no longer faced with a lack of information but glut of information. Data sharing peer review and developing a network of contracts are no longer constrained by distance access to e-mail, web based file and date sharing and web logs become more ubiquitous. The use of internet and associated ICTs is making it possible for various forms of cross border education including trade in education. The use of ICT ensures an increasing prominence for - profit institutions, as makers of products and providers of services (Microsfot in partnership with black Hawlett - Packard and place ware) or end to - end - learning solutions. ICTs are altering the functions of libraries and changing the role of librarians with a wealth of learning resources on the internets, some of which are freely available, librarians are becoming information managers.

ICTs are becoming an integrative part of national educational policies and plans in Nigeria. With information more readily available learners are not independent on lecturers and librarians for information. Learners are helping redefine the role of lecturers and librarians so learners an now refocus on analyzing information and shaping their critical thinking skills. Administratively ICT makes school administration less burdensome. Information on students, curricula, activities, budgets can easily be published on the web for all stakeholders. At the classrooms level, teachers can more easily keep students marks, personal and academic records are easily produced using pre-formatted documents, teachers can also maintain their lecture notes, exercises and evaluation in digital formats.

In spite of the various consequences of the ICTs which have favourably affected the lives of the citizenry the ICT also has some negative consequences on the citizenry. These negative consequences include the internet scams hence according to Adekunle (2006), that “with the advent of this venture into the Nigerian society, youths have seen this new trend or making fast money a career. As many youths make easy fast money through internet scams, more youth are attracted daily to join their ranks”.

Another negative consequence of the ICT is the internet fraud which as

negatively affected so many Nigerians. In Nigeria, communication has been better and as a result, life has become easier to even the common man. The G.S.M. system was introduced in Nigeria in 2003 and were fast diminishing in number in the country but created a network for business men and women to do things easier and faster. It has also facilitated so many sectors like the banking sector which has introduced e-banking, the commercial sector which uses e-commerce as means of trading. The new dimension which is expected very soon is e-medicine. They have helped but to a limited degree.

In the developing world like Nigeria, a large percentage of the populace suffers under repressive regimes that have delivered few incentives, have limited literacy skills and have suffer from harsh economic conditions. As a result, documents are largely viewed as empty promise. However, people are attracted to documents and ideals presented in pictorial form. Whether or not information and communication technology (ICT) for development has been a widely discussed issue for many years. The development gateway went directly to its members in a survey to ask people on the ground about the impact of ICT on development.

The problem lies in the fact that despite the internet's ability to transform people, Nigerians can't have access because it is all about the cost of purchasing computers and getting linked. It is very costly to get in the internet (is democracy technology, but when there is no real empowerment for people to have internet there is no saturation). But in Nigeria we read to get over the fact that internet is a tool for committing web fraud and poor enjoyment, instead of education and development. ICT can speed up the creation of alliances between different partners. First of all however, only then there will be economic growth and social inclusion and will be its own will help social inclusion ICT conditions in developing countries.

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