Preface

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have to do with the various technologies that enhance the creation, storage, processing, management and dissemination of information. ICTs also refer to the different infrastructures that are used in these processes, their applications and the numerous services these infrastructures render. ICTs comprise of three elements: media of communication (e.g. radio, television); information machine (e.g. Computers); telecommunications technologies and equipment (satellites, fibre optic cables, phones, facsimile machines) (NetTel, n.d’).

ICTs are always evolving and have been contributing immensely to economic, political, social, scientific and educational development in every society where they are deployed. It is the existence and utilization of appropriate policy that would enable individuals, institutions, organizations, nations, or regions to benefit from the developments propelled by the application of ICTs. ICT policy is capable of bridging or reducing the gap between those who do and do not have access to ICT. An ICT policy statement is an essential step towards creating an enabling environment for the deployment of ICT for the development of the society. Absence of ICT policy can impede the development of information infrastructure in affected organizations and societies. The availability of ICT policy has the potential of building capability and capacities in the community, thereby enabling individuals to participate in an economy and society that increasingly relies on ICT. Though ICT policies are very important, not all institutions, countries, regions, etc. have been able to formulate, adopt and implement policies. Some that have put ICT policies in place, may even have defective ones which would not enable them to derive desirable developmental benefits. Review of literature has not been able to reveal any book that has addressed different ICT policies. This book will therefore bridge this literature gap.

ICT as a field is interdisciplinary in nature. Every field of human endeavour depends on as well as derives benefits from it. It is therefore not surprising that contributors to this handbook are from various subject disciplines – computer science, library and information science, mass communication, law, etc. These scholars have addressed ICT policy from their various backgrounds. This has therefore made the handbook to be relevant to different fields of study.

The handbook also has contributors from different world regions – both developed and developing countries. This shows that ICT and its policies have been embraced and adopted in different parts of the world. The contents of the book would therefore be useful to scholars, researchers and practitioners in different parts of the world.

This book aims to provide the most complete and reliable source of information on current developments in the field. Specifically, the book will be a source book on ICT policies; be a guidebook to those who are involved in ICT policy formulation, implementation, adoption, monitoring, evaluation and application; provide background information to scholars and researcher who are interested in carrying out
research on ICT policies; furnish teachers of information technology with necessary knowledge which they can impart to their students/trainees; provide ICT users with information that can enable them to understand the policies which guide technology and how they can make use of ICT components for their enhancement.

The handbook will be essential reading for professionals, governmental and nongovernmental officials involved in ICT matters; teachers/academics in the field of information science, technology and management; students, scholars and researchers in the field of information science, technology and management; ICT users; library and information service users, etc. The publication will provide the audience access to information that will advance research in ICT policies. It will enable individuals to become acquainted with ICT policy processes, which will then assist those concerned to formulate and implement appropriate policies. This book will provide teachers, students, scholars and researchers in the field of information science, education, technology and management with useful material on curricular offering. It will enable different ICT users to apply ICTs for the advancement of different areas of their lives. The handbook contains fifty chapters arranged alphabetically.

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REFERENCE