Chapter 8
Delivering Equitable and Quality Education to Remote Kenya Using ICT

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ABSTRACT
Education has been pointed out as the single most fundamental pillar in driving development. However, this may not be possible unless if quality and equitable education are not offered. Quality education must be able to meet the diverse needs of learners, such as cultural way of life (for instance, pastoralist and nomadic), poverty levels, and others. How would a poor child living in the remote Kenya whose parents survive entirely on pastoralism be able to get an equitable and quality education similar to a student in a boarding school in the city? This chapter illustrates the need for ICT adoption to bridge the education gap in rural and urban settings. Specific focus is on bridging the digital divide, developing digital content, and adopting cloud computing.

INTRODUCTION
According to (Batchelor, 2003), education is the process through which knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are imparted in a person for the purpose of integrating individuals in society. This implies that society’s perception on some cultural values and activities will be transformed as people get a wide view of issues pertaining social and private life. People tend to get a wide scope of reasoning that will enable them to be confident and specific particularly in decision making.

Considering this positive impact of education on a person, there is a need of sensitizing Kenyan communities especially (in rural and remote parts Kenya) to give education a priority so as to join DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-6296-4.ch008
in building and developing the national. According to (Wallace, 2008), teaching and learning are pivotal to development. This is an indication that education is a very vital ingredient in national development and it is among the key factors that can be used to gauge the country’s development rate. This is because when people attain education, they get skills that activate innovation which turns the nation into an innovative nation and therefore experience a rapid national development.

In the same way, some of the cultural values that violate children’s rights especially pertaining gender discrimination can be addressed well only if education can penetrate to the interior parts of Kenya. This is a matter of concern because some of the cultures in give preference to male children and all resources tend to be invested in them with a perception that they will take care of their parents at old age while female children are neglected for a reason that they would get married and therefore relocate to their husbands places therein abandoning their parents. This perception is so pronounced in some Kenyan communities that a girl child is viewed in terms of wealth. Wealth here basically refers the herds of cattle that the girl’s father would receive as dowry when the girl gets married off. As a result, the girl is forced to get married at tender age to older men who can afford to pay the dowry. In fact, these men are never acquaintances to the girl. Therefore, girl child misses opportunity of getting education, creating an academic gap between men and women.

Similarly, in some communities, the sensitization of girl child education has been so high to the level that a boy child is being neglected. This has been evident in some schools where the number of boys has gone down since parents prefer keeping girls in schools to boys. For instance, a parent would ask the boy child to go herd while asking the girl child to get back to school in event both the children were sent home for school fee. In fact, in most cases parents make sure a girl child has all she needs in school for proper learning but a boy is left to hustle for almost the entire term (lacking basic needs like soap, towel among others). This scenario denies equitable education to children (Levis, 2007).

Therefore if ICT is integrated in the Kenyan education system and provide the appropriate infrastructure which will allow a learner access education from the remote part of the country using the simple and affordable mobile device like an internet enabled phone, the digital divide can be bridged and equitable education can be attained by all citizens regardless of their location (Sharma, 2009).

Whereas the impact of ICT on the education goals is still inconclusive, reported observations include rapid expansion of knowledge, improved examination outcomes, enhanced communication and technical efficiency, as well as greater decentralization in the delivery of education services. It is not in doubt, however, that ICT has the potential to play a more powerful role in increasing resources and improving the environment for learning. ICT can also play a role in preparing students to acquire skills, competencies and socio skills that are fundamental for competing in the emerging global “knowledge” economy (Nabutola, 2011).

This chapter therefore explores the possible ways of availing equitable education to all children regardless of their gender, economic status and location in the country. The need for ICT adoption to bridge the education gap in rural and urban setting is also illustrated in this chapter. This chapter also highlights the need to incorporate e-gender in such a framework to meet the robust needs of the society.

**HOW ICT TOOLS HAVE ENSURED ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

ICT enabled education optimizes student centered pedagogical approach, which fundamentally changes the way education is conceived and delivered. Learners are no longer perceived as passive receivers of knowledge but rather as active