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ICT PENETRATION RATES

In researching ICT penetration rates of a country, it is necessary to look at the target population demographic characteristics that facilitate use, access and ownership of the ICT facilities and equipments. As such, ICT surveys should seek information on the general characteristics of the sampled population, including composition by age and sex, household size, education, employment, literacy, disability and source of electricity to households.

Employment and household size in many cases determine the household disposable income which in turn determines whether individuals in households can afford radios, TVs, computers, the internet and other ICTs equipments and facilities. Education contributes to the development of human capacity building for effective use of the ICT facilities, especially the internet. For the development and maintenance of ICT infrastructure it is important to have other infrastructure like electricity, water, road, rail, and air transport systems in place. In particular, electricity is a key driver of ICTs and therefore the survey sought to establish to what extent it affects penetration rates of ICT in the country. Other characteristics like age, sex and disability are important in informing if certain sections of the society are disadvantaged and therefore putting the necessary policies in place to alleviate any social inequalities.

ACCESS, USAGE AND OWNERSHIP OF ICT FACILITIES BY HOUSEHOLDS AND INDIVIDUALS

For many years, ICT has been at the centre stage of economic development, notably through rapid technological advancement, facilitating speedy access of ideas and experiences, and prompt exchange of information. In today's world, access, usage and ownership of ICT are fundamental in linking communities, facilitating businesses and empowering communities socially and economically. Enhancement of access to information and communications services in rural, remote and underserved areas is therefore crucial to accelerating development.

The results of the survey conducted in Kenya recently show that in most cases there is correlation between access and usage on one hand and sex, education, and age on the other.

Among the salient features of the findings is that use and access of ICT equipments and facilities was more widespread among the youth (20 – 34 years).

ICT in Education

Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) - which include radio and television as well as newer digital technologies such as computers and the internet – have been touted as potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. The positive impact of education on use of electricity is more visible at the attainment of secondary or higher education levels. This leads to better use of the ICT services.

Rogers Mumo Munywoki

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics