



**KARATINA UNIVERSITY**

**KAHENI PETER**

**P101/1740G/21**

**COURSE CODE: COM 421**

**COURSE TITLE: ICT & SOCIETY**

**ASSIGNMENT TWO**

**Q. Download the National ICT policy in Kenya, go through it, Identify its purpose; (i.e imperatives, key components, & a critique in issues it should be responding to)**

The National Information, Communications, and Technology (ICT) Policy of Kenya, updated in 2019 and further refined through the 2020 Policy Guidelines, serves as a strategic framework to harness ICT for national development. It aims to position Kenya as a regional leader in digital innovation, economic growth, and public service delivery.

### **Purpose of the National ICT Policy**

The policy's overarching goal is to integrate ICT into all sectors of the economy to drive sustainable development and improve the quality of life for all Kenyans. It aligns with Kenya's Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on:

- A. **Infrastructure Development:** Ensuring nationwide access to high-speed, reliable, and affordable internet.
- B. **Economic Growth:** Increasing ICT's contribution to the GDP to 10% by 2030.
- C. **Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Fostering a vibrant digital economy through support for startups and innovation hubs.
- D. **Public Service Delivery:** Enhancing efficiency and transparency in government services through digitization.
- E. **Digital Literacy:** Promoting ICT skills across all demographics to bridge the digital divide.

## **Key Components**

### **1. Infrastructure Enhancement**

- **Broadband Expansion:** Developing a comprehensive broadband strategy to provide high-speed internet across the country.
- **Digital Superhighway:** Implementing projects like laying 100,000 km of fiber optic cable and establishing 25,000 public Wi-Fi spots to improve connectivity.

### **2. Market Development**

- **Innovation Hubs:** Establishing centers in various constituencies to nurture local tech solutions.
- **Venture Capital Fund:** Creating a fund to provide catalytic capital to promising Kenyan startups.
- **Local Content Promotion:** Encouraging the development and use of Kenyan-built ICT solutions, especially in public tenders.

### **3. Skills and Innovation**

- **National ICT Research Laboratory (NIRL):** Establishing a public research organization to develop technology solutions tailored for Kenya.
- **Digital Literacy Programs:** Implementing initiatives to enhance ICT skills among youth, women, and people with special needs.

### **4. Public Service Delivery**

- **E-Government Services:** Digitizing government services to ensure quick, secure, and efficient delivery to citizens.

- **Cybersecurity Measures:** Implementing robust frameworks to protect critical infrastructure and personal data.

## **Critique of Kenya's National ICT Policy**

While the National ICT Policy outlines a bold vision for Kenya's digital transformation, several critical gaps and challenges remain:

### **1. Implementation Challenges**

Despite massive investments, there is a notable disconnect between ICT infrastructure rollout and tangible economic impact. A lack of digital skills, especially in the private sector and rural areas, hinders effective utilization.

### **2. Digital Divide**

Access to ICT services is still uneven, with rural and underserved regions lagging significantly behind urban centers. This inequality limits opportunities for inclusive growth and social development.

### **3. Regulatory Instability**

The policy initially imposed a 30% local ownership rule for ICT service providers, only to reverse it in 2023. This inconsistency risks deterring both local and foreign investors due to policy unpredictability.

### **4. Institutional Fragmentation**

Multiple government agencies with overlapping mandates create inefficiencies and slow decision-making. A more streamlined and coordinated implementation structure is needed.

### **5. Cybersecurity Gaps**

Cybersecurity and data protection efforts remain insufficient, with inadequate enforcement of the Data Protection Act and limited investment in national cybersecurity infrastructure and awareness.

## **6. Sustainability of Innovation Hubs**

While the policy promotes creation of digital innovation hubs, many such initiatives have historically lacked sustainable funding, local engagement, or impact measurement — especially in rural areas.

## **7. Exclusion of Marginalized Groups**

Digital inclusion for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and remote communities remains underdeveloped. More targeted programs and funding are required to bridge this socio-digital divide.

## **8. Limited Private Sector Involvement**

Policy-making has been largely government-driven, with minimal structured input from startups, innovators, or tech businesses who could offer agile, real-world solutions.

## **9. Weak Monitoring and Evaluation**

There is no clearly defined M&E framework with key performance indicators or timelines to track progress or ensure accountability in policy delivery.

## **10. Privacy and Trust Concerns**

Initiatives like digital IDs and e-government platforms raise concerns about data misuse and surveillance, in the absence of strong data governance and citizen protection mechanisms.