

# Computer Technologies: Accessibility Issues

*Anyone who is denied access to technology use is at a disadvantage.*

ICT forms the infrastructure of today's society (agriculture, education, health etc); therefore we are not wrong to assume that anyone being denied access to technology is totally disadvantaged.

There are groups of people who find accessibility as difficult

- The poor
- Illiterate
- People with disabilities
- Lack of Technical infrastructure

This brings fourth the gap of those with IT access and those without; Digital Divide  
Digital Divide is both a social issue, a legal issue and professional issue

- Social issue as it is all about the socio-economic status of the populace
- Legal issue as it denies groups entitled to equal opportunities e.g people with disabilities
- A professional issue as it is limited in design aspects. For example, depiction of content in a small font size can be disadvantageous to people with poor eyesight.

There is an utopian vision of the universe and equal access to the internet. There are a number of obstacles that prevent this vision

## **Principle of equal access**

- ❑ This states that equal access to ICT is based on the claim that all people have a right to access technology. It is assumed that people without access are disadvantaged because
  - Their access to knowledge is significantly limited
  - Their ability to fully participate in the political process and to receive important information is greatly diminished
  - Their economic prospects are severely hindered.
- ❑ Honestly we are either in or moving towards a society of technology being a fundamental prerequisite for one to fully participate in a society. COVID-19 has awaken most of us from a nontechnology slumber.
  - Online banking
  - Online voting
  - E-learning
- ❑ Countries such as China have adopted a social credit score picked up from habits conducted online. Follow link for detailed explanation  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWwzDnq7poQ>

## **Obstacles to access for individuals**

- ❑ Access to ICT needs one to have financial means to
  - Purchase the equipment
  - Pay for the connection
- ❑ The alternative is to gain access of connection through publicly connected spaces such as cafes, school grounds, workplaces etc
- ❑ Other obstacles may include language (mostly in English yet not all are conversant with it) and the motivation to use ICT
- ❑ The groups that are unlikely to have equal access to technology may include
  - Under-educated
  - Poor
  - Disabled
  - Elderly

## Question;

- What kind of enabling technology would you implement for the disadvantaged groups mentioned above?
- Are there legislative clauses protecting these disadvantaged groups?

# Professional Responsibility

- ❑ Professionals, as experts in their field, have an obligation to consider the impact of their activities on those who are affected by their decisions.
  
- ❑ The professional has a responsibility to:
  - Uphold the values of the society in which he/she operates
  - Recognize and abide by the relevant legislation
  - Promote the good for the public at large, and vulnerable groups in particular.
  
- ❑ Remember the code of ethics? Code of conduct takes into account the right to equal treatment. The relevant clauses include;
  - ❖ You shall have regard to the legitimate rights of third parties
  - ❖ You shall ensure that within your professional field(s) you have knowledge and understanding of relevant legislation, regulations and standards, and that you comply with such requirements
  - ❖ You shall conduct your professional activities without discrimination against clients or colleagues.