

7th lesson : ICT (information and communications technology)

1. DEFINITION OF ICT (information and communications technology)

- ICT is technology that supports activities involving information. Such activities include gathering, processing, storing and presenting data. Increasingly these activities also involve collaboration and communication. Hence IT has become ICT: information and communication technology.
- ICT covers any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital form. For example, personal computers, digital television, email, robots.¹
- In keeping with their complex nature and multiple applications, information and communication technologies (ICTs) may be viewed in different ways. The World Bank defines ICTs as “the set of activities which facilitate by electronic means the processing, transmission and display of information” (Rodriguez and Wilson, 2000).
- ICTs “refer to technologies people use to share, distribute, gather information and to communicate, through computers and computer networks” (ESCAP, 2001).
- “ICTs are a complex and varied set of goods, applications and services used for producing, distributing, processing, transforming information – [including] telecoms, TV and radio broadcasting, hardware and software, computer services and electronic media” (Marcelle, 2000).
- ICTs represent a cluster of associated technologies defined by their functional usage in information access and communication, of which one embodiment is the Internet. Hargittai (1999) defines the Internet technically and functionally as follows: “the Internet is a worldwide network of computers, but sociologically it is also important to consider it as a network

¹ Information and Communication Technology, Concept of ICT, p1

of people using computers that make vast amounts of information available. the multitude of services allowed...is unprecedented". ICTs, represented by the Internet, deliver "at once a worldwide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, a medium for interaction between individuals and a marketplace for goods and services" (Kiiski and Pohjola, 2001)².

2. ICT (information and communications technology) characteristics:

ICT has many characteristics, including:

- Facilitating and developing the education system, and also contributed to the access of educational means even to remote areas, which led to the spread of education among children and adults around the world.
- Helping people obtain their rights and taking all legal measures.
- Facilitating and accelerating the work mechanism in the judicial authority and administrative services.
- Arrest criminals through the use of technological techniques.
- Encourage public involvement in policy making and governance.
- Increasing prosperity and happiness among members of society.
- Expanding the framework for the spread of electronic governance.
- Accelerating economic development.
- Development of remote areas.

² UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT , INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT INDICES United Nations New York and Geneva, 2003, ICT Development Indices , https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/iteipc20031_en.pdf
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