PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION & ICTs
PHASE II REPORT

ECUADOR

Prepared for the University of Washington,
Center for Information & Society.

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1 Extended Executive Summary

1.1 Research Project Overview

This research focuses on the public access to information and communication landscapes in 24 countries, with specific focus on public libraries, to understand the information needs of underserved communities, public access to information and communication venues, and the role of ICT.

Through field research in 24 countries conducted by local research partners, and cross-country comparative analyses based on common research design elements (see list of countries and research design overview in Appendix), the project aims to contribute to the knowledge in the field of information and ICT for development. Of particular interest and value are: the comparative look at key venues (libraries and other), and the mix of depth of in-country knowledge with breadth of global comparison to elicit success factors and scenarios to understand how diverse populations can and do access and use ICT to improve their lives. All outputs of this research will be broadly disseminated to interested stakeholders and placed in the public domain.

1.2 Introduction

This document presents the results of the research on public access to information and communication in Ecuador. Through the research we identified main venues used by the population to access information and communication and could characterized why, how and by whom they are used.

This section presents a summary of research results. Following subsection includes general information on the country and about access to information and ICT in Ecuador. Then methodology of this research is explained. After that it introduces aspects of information needs of underserved communities and venues characteristics. Finally, it brings salient findings and key recommendations.

1.3 Country Overview

Ecuador is in western South America. It is bordered on the north by Colombia, by Peru on the east and south, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. The country also includes the Galapagos Islands in the Pacific.

Ecuador covers an area of 256,371 km^2. Ecuador has three main geographic regions, plus an insular region in the Pacific Ocean: Coast (Costa), comprises the low-lying land in the western part of the country. Highlands (Sierra) is the high-altitude belt running north to south along the center of the country, its mountainous terrain dominated by the Andes mountain range. The third region is Oriente (the east), comprises the Amazon rainforest areas in the eastern part of the country, accounting for just under half of the country's total surface area, though populated by under 5 percent of the population. The Region Insular is the region comprising the Galapagos, some 1,000 kilometers west of the mainland in the Pacific Ocean. Although the country is not particularly large there is great variety in the climate, largely determined by altitude; the Pacific coastal area has a tropical climate, with a severe rainy season; the climate in the Andean highlands is temperate and relatively dry; and the Amazon basin on the eastern side of the mountains shares the climate of other rain

forest zones. Varied geography and climate produce a high biodiversity; Ecuador is one of 17 mega diverse countries in the world.

Ecuador is a presidential republic. The executive branch includes 25 ministries. Provincial governors and councilors (mayors, aldermen, and parish boards) are directly elected. The president, elected for a four-year term, appoints the cabinet and provincial governors. Rafael Correa took office on January 15th 2007 after defeating Álvaro Noboa in the second round of the presidential election in November 2006. On September 30, 2007 Ecuador elected a constituent assembly, dominated by President Rafael Correa's PAIS Alliance, charged with rewriting the new Constitution of Ecuador.

Ecuador is divided into 24 provinces (*provincias*), each with its own administrative capital; the provinces are divided into cantons, and further subdivided into parishes (*parroquias*). Its capital city is Quito.

Ecuador has substantial petroleum resources and rich agricultural areas. Because the country exports primary products such as oil, bananas, flowers and shrimp, fluctuations in world market prices can have a substantial domestic impact.

Deteriorating economic performance in 1997-98 culminated in a severe economic and financial crisis in 1999 that resulted in a 7.3 percent contraction of GDP, annual year-on-year inflation of 52.2 percent, and a 65 percent devaluation of the national currency, the Sucre. On September 2000, President Jamil Mahuad adopts the U.S. dollar as the official currency of Ecuador to address the ongoing economic crisis. Buoyed by high oil prices, the Ecuadorian economy experiences a recovery, its GDP over the last several years, from 28.6 US$ billion in 2003 to its current GDP of 42.9 US$ billion.

Ecuador has around 13'800,000 inhabitants. Ecuador's population is ethnically diverse. The largest ethnic group is the Mestizos, who are the mixed descendants of Spanish colonists and indigenous Indians and who constitute 65% of the population. Amerindians account for around 25% of the current population. Whites, mainly criollos, the unmixed descendants of early Spanish colonists, as well as immigrants from other European countries, account for about 7 percent; the small Afro-Ecuadorian minority, largely based in Esmeraldas and Imbabura provinces, make up 3 %.

There are sizable expatriate Ecuadorian communities in Spain, the United Kingdom, and Italy, as well across Europe, the United States, Canada, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico and Japan. It is estimated that 700,000 people emigrated from Ecuador following the 1999 economic crisis, and that the expatriate Ecuadorian population totals 2.5 million.

Spanish is the primary language of the country (first language of 94.4% of Ecuadorians in 2001). It coexists with several indigenous languages, the most important of which is Quechua.

Literacy was estimated at 90.9% in 2006. The public education system is free at the point of delivery, and attendance is mandatory from ages five to 14. Provision of public schools falls far below needed levels, and class sizes are often very large, and families of limited means often find it necessary to pay for education. However, the Ministry of Education

reports that only 76 percent of children finish six years of schooling. In rural areas, only 10 percent of the children go on to high school. Ministry statistics give the mean number of years completed as 6.7.

Gender marks significant differences in the country: men have major participation in economically active population –EAP- (70%); women's income is less than men's income; illiteracy percentages are higher in women (12.30%) than in men (10.59%).

Population characteristics as language, education level, gender, location (rural/urban) are especially relevant in access and use to information and ICT in Ecuador.

Availability of relevant and appropriate local information is limited in Ecuador. Marginalized groups get information mainly from their social network, because formal information services do not offer services appropriated to their capacities and needs.

Information services as public libraries are used by young students as a source of information to carry out their educational activities, but other sectors from population do not find at libraries information or services that help them to resolve their needs.

Points of Internet access are been increased despite of high Internet connection costs in Ecuador. Internet is been used for communication purposes as an extension of social networks; Internet is also helping to access information.

Internet is mostly accessed through cybercafés which allow people to access the Internet without computer or internet connection at home, work or study places. Access to Internet and the capacity to enjoy its benefits are strongly affected by inequity variables, and young people are who can get more benefits.

By other side, cell phone access had been growing tremendously specially in rural areas. However, more Internet access and cell phones would help social networks to circulate information more efficiently, but will not help in getting new and appropriable information.

1.4 Research Rationale, Sample, and Methods

Research started with an extensive literature review that included academic documents about ICT, inequity in Ecuador, and venues selected; statistic information about population, inequity, ICT, and venues selected; and reports about specific projects related with each venue. In a second phase, primary information was directly collected to characterize each venue and their use.

Venues considered for this research are: public libraries, cybercafés and telecenters. Public libraries and cybercafés were selected because they are distributed along the country; telecenters were considered, despite of they are not so many, for their orientation to provide access to ICT and information to underserved groups. Other venues as university and municipal libraries were not considered because they are located only in urban areas, and there is not enough information especially on municipal libraries.

Access to information and ICT through venues studied is analyzed considering different inequity variables. Socio-economic status affects the access to ICT because there are few

free ICT services; by other side, poor people can not dedicate time to look for information; socio-economic status is directly related with other variables as education level, gender and cultural issues. People with low education level do not have the capacities required to use information and have more difficulties to appropriate new technologies, lower level of education is more common in women; gender considerations are important also in level of technology access because women has less access to new technologies. Location (rural/urban) is an important variable: information services and ICT deployment are concentrated in Quito, Guayaquil and some other cities, the rest of the country is now getting connected –especially by cell phones- but there is still a big gap between those cities and the rest of the country, urban areas and rural areas. Finally age is a variable to consider when thinking on providing digital services because older people feel left out by new technology and that is clearly producing a divide.

For data collection we used: individual interviews to experts and key informants in each venue; surveys (114) applied to users and operators in venues studied, distributed in 14 sites visited (6 rural and 8 urban). In order to identify and determinate quantity of venues in telecenters, we have to perform an exhaustive search of them by Web browsing.

1.5 Information Needs of Underserved Communities

Information needs are different to different groups and between people inside those groups; they are also related to gender and age interests, to cultural factors, to occupation and so on.

In rural areas of Ecuador where agriculture is the main economic activity, farmers need technical information to improve their production, information about prices and new market opportunities, information about environmental preservation to perform their activities; rural women need information about their rights, health and childcare; young people need information to support their education activities, and job opportunities. In urban areas, small entrepreneurs need information to improve their production and to have a better participation on markets, specific needs depend on which business or industry they are involved with; young people need information about education opportunities, job seeking, leisure. Non Spanish speakers are specially underserved because there is not relevant information available in their own language. Everyone needs information about regulations, government services, rights, and migration issues.

The most important source of information for underserved communities is their social networks because formal channels are not accessible or not appropriate for most of them. Nevertheless some information is accessed through formal channels as libraries, and Internet access points. People seek information needed for education activities at libraries, through cybercafés and telecenters they access to information available in Internet.

Some information needed by underserved communities is available. Information related with economic activities is available in different governmental and non-governmental organization, but their contents are not appropriated (understandable) for underserved communities with low education level; telecenters have small and located experiences making appropriate information for these groups. Information about regulation and

government services is been more available thanks to policies about transparency in public information, but this information is offered through Web pages and information desk services from each institution. Information on health, rights, job opportunities, immigration issues, is partially covered by the media.

Main barrier to access information for underserved communities is that contents are not in a comprehensive language and adequate format for most of them. Available information needs to be compiled and rewritten according with skills and capacities of most of the population. Location is an important barrier too; points to access information are concentrated in urban areas while points to access available in rural areas are nor necessary near to all population. Some information is available in Internet, but Internet access points are not affordable for everyone; high Internet cost in Ecuador is a barrier to the increment of access points as cybercafés and telecenters.

1.6 Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities in Key Public Access Venues

Public libraries are the second in number of the venues studied, but which is more accesible in rural and deprived urban areas. Public libraries studied depend from the national library system (SINAB) which is part of the Education Department. Public libraries would serve different segments of population under their jurisdiction, but they are mostly oriented to school students. Focus of services and contents in this target group is supported by public perception that libraries are just to attend students.

Libraries are not adequately staffed with professional librarians. Books are provided by SINAB, collections are adequate for students but not for general use. Some libraries provide other cultural services together with access to information.

Public libraries do not count with specific policies that facilitate its development, in this sense political support to this venue is low.

Public libraries would be important in solving information needs of underserved communities, specially because most of their services are free or have a low cost, being affordable for everyone. It would be possible if they develop staff capacities and collections going forward from just serving school students. ICT could be an important tool, but their efficacy to improve services depends on solving staff capacities issue at first.

Cybercafés are the main point to access ICT and information in urban areas, their expansion to small towns is increasing. Cybercafés offer just connectivity; they do not develop contents, and do not offer ICT training.

Cybercafés use is cheap but not completely affordable for everyone. Users are mainly young people and people with middle income. Adults, older people and people with lower income do not use this venue in a significant proportion because they did not develop skills using computers, and do not consider useful this tool to solve their particular needs of information and communication. Cybercafés' owners do not consider older people as part of their target group.

Where cybercafés are available, their use is completely integrated to people routines, especially for young people that look for information related with education and perform entertainment activities. Older people are minority among users. Despite of that adults are not common user's, they consider cybercafés have a great value because the technology is valuable by itself and because the benefits for their child education.

Connectivity costs fall would allow cybercafés to make their fees lower. It is expectable that more cybercafés get installed in urban places as in small towns, making ICT more available. It will be an opportunity for young people; to include older people other activities are needed. Having more prepared personnel, cybercafés would receive a varied public as some do.

Telecenters are public internet access points with a development purpose. Most of telecenters in Ecuador are in rural zones or deprived places where it was not expected to have private installation of Internet, before large installation governmental projects that are now being carried out. Telecenters are not significant in gross numbers and at national level, they are undoubtedly less significant in the quantity of people served than the other two venues presented in this research. However, the importance of telecenters experience as a whole goes far away the services provided by each one to specific people because of the influence they have had in policy makers.

Telecenters are promoted by local CBOs, NGOs or governments. Lot of them has been produced after community needs assessments, which provide them an important tool to develop adequate services and contents; they are also capable to perform capacity building activities on issues important to the community by using ICTs. By doing so they are contributing with social appropriation of technology.

Most of telecenters face financial sustainability problems. Telecenters face technological and organizational sustainability problems too; they can not keep external technical staff for long time.

Operators need training in much more than technology issues, including trainer capacities, book keeping and development issues. That is needed to meliorate social inclusion from telecenters by training groups that are not using them (the less educated, adults or women) and invite them to use telecenters.

Telecenters can try to become e-government services facilitators; they would also provide micro-financial services in their localities which normally lack of a bank office, in order to do so they need to get associated to local or national financial institutions. They may become a tool to enhance social networks contact with migrants –in some cases they already did.

1.7 Salient Findings

- High Internet connection costs had been a barrier to increase access to Internet to wide sectors of population. This barrier is being overcome but prices for final users are still high.

- There is a governmental program for libraries which is trying to enlarge the access to them in the country. However, libraries are targeted just to school students.
- Cybercafés are the main point of access to Internet in urban areas.
- Cybercafés offer connectivity but they do not produce contents or develop capacities.
- Access to Internet in rural areas is scarce. There are some telecenters in certain places; they are integrated with communities and help them to appropriate technologies.
- There are not appropriate contents for underserved communities with low education level, illiterates and/or native language speakers.

1.8 Key Recommendations

1. Reduce connection costs.
2. Research on ways to use migration phenomena to accelerate ICT use between underserved communities: social networking facilitated by ICTs, remittances to rural areas through telecenters or libraries, etc.
3. Provide small funds to local CBOs or NGOs to set up telecenters in rural zones or deprived areas.
4. Research on telecenters sustainability key factors; analyze success and failures in order to provide recommendations.
5. Develop training programs on ICT use addressing special groups, as women, illiterates, non-Spanish speakers and older people.
6. Develop information systems for underserved groups.
7. Public libraries should be reoriented in order to become more than big school libraries and solve needs of population in general.
8. Asses and improve information systems usability.
9. Continue with programs that enlarge rural access to Internet.
10. Research on how to engage cybercafés into programs of provision and facilitation of useful and appropriate information in collaboration with other venues.

2 Methodology

2.1 Venue Selection

2 paragraphs

Brief description of the selection process: how you selected the types of venues to be studied, why they were included, why others were left out.

Note: this data collection template is designed to capture info about 4 venue types. If you study in detail more than 4 venue types in the country, include a full description of the 5th one as an appendix, using the same set of questions.

At first we identified all information sources used by people, then we select what are venues (according with research definition) and open to everyone, and finally what have major distribution. Public libraries and cybercafés are distributed in all country; telecenters were considered because they are oriented to underserved communities.

We left out municipal libraries because they are located only in urban areas and there is not enough information about them; university libraries were not considered because they are located only in urban areas and their use is not common for population in general.

2.1.1 Venues studied

Enter the details to complete the table based on the venues studied in this country (more details will be filled in other sections):

	Public Libraries	Telecenters	Cybercafes	
Total number in country	557	45	1,392	
A. # in urban location	213	15	N.A.	
% offering ICT	4%	100%	N.A.	
Total # of people served (annual)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	
B. # in non-urban location	244	30	N.A.	
% offering ICT	1%	100%	N.A.	
Total # of people served (annual)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	

Comments (comment especially on definition of urban/non urban in the country):

We take into account the INEC (national institute for statistics) definition of urban and rural. This definition consider as urban any settlement with more than 5000 inhabitants concentrated, while rural are any non-urban area, including urban peripheries.

Public libraries are those considered as that by the SINAB (national libraries system).

Telecenters number provided is not considering those installed by PROMEC project (530 telecenters) because the contract with the provider have been cancelled considering it did not accomplish its compromises; then, there is no certainty about the operability and sustainability of such telecenters.

The number of cybercafés just includes those registered in SUPERTEL (Ecuadorian telecommunication superintendence) in 2005; however, it should be said that most of cybercafés are not registered, but there is not information about them. The rural/urban distribution couldn't been determined because SUPERTEL does not consider such variable, but according to consulted experts more than 90% of cybercafés are in urban areas.

No one venue register users, then there is not information on how much they attend yearly.

2.1.1 Other experiences of public access to information that are not quite "venues"

Basic information about other experiences with potential to make a difference to the public access landscape (tea rooms, Wi-Fi hotspots, coffee houses, web information portals) although they are not quite a "public information venue" in the sense defined for this study (see research design document for definition).

Other public access experience #1: Name of Experience

Description :

Total number in country:

% offering ICT access:

% in urban location:

Comments on how it is influencing public access venues in the country:

Other public access experience #2: Name of Experience

Description :

Total number in country:

% offering ICT access:

% in urban location:

Comments on how it is influencing public access venues in the country:

2.1.2 Other existing public access venues, not included in this study

Basic information about other public access venues **not** included in the study (e-tuktuk, school or other private libraries not open to the public, health centers, etc), although they could play a role in public access information in the country. Indicate rationale for NOT including them in the study.

Other venue not studied #1: Municipal Libraries

Total number in country: 220

% offering ICT access: 5%

% in urban location: 100%

Description of the Venue:

Those libraries depend on local governments. Its function is to attend all the population, by they are mostly oriented to serve school students.

Reason why it was not included in the study:

They were not included because they attend exclusively in urban areas and because there is no primary information or bibliography about them.

Other public access experience #2: University Libraries

Total number in country: 74

% offering ICT access:

% in urban location: 100%

Description :

University libraries objective is to offer information to their university students and support research activities. Most of them are also oppened for the public but with restrictions.

Reason why it was not included in the study:

They were not included they are used by elites and are not reachable by most of the population because the kind of information they have (academical) and because they are just in urban areas.

Other venue not studied#2: Type of Venue (if needed)

Total number in country:

% offering ICT access:

% in urban location:

Description of the Venue:

Reason why it was not included in the study:

2.2 Inequity Variables

1-2 paragraphs each.

Describe how each variable affects equitable public access to information and ICT in this country, and what you did in this study to make sure each one was addressed (for example, if you visited venues in both urban and non-urban locations).

Also include additional variables of local relevance to your country, as you listed in Form 1, section 1a.

2.2.1 Socio-economic status

There are not a significative number of venues providing free access to information, especially together with ICT services; then, poor population is not able to access information. Middle class people spent on accessing information after solving basic needs (food, dress, housing) because access to information is not considered a basic need neither by the user nor the government. Highest income people had more access to information as well as computers and Internet conection at home.

This variable was considered when visiting venues located in places with low income, and venues, as telecenters, oriented to this type of users

2.2.2 Educational level

There is a strong direct correlation between educative level and income. The

educative level define the kind of contents that people may use: low educated people needs of information in simple language. Then, technical and scientific information should be reformated to be useful for those with low education level. Higher educative levels are also associated with more ICT training.

This variable was considered in the analysis of user's type in all venues studied.

2.2.3 Age

Age determines access to ICTs because EAP has more resources to pay for accessing.

Age also influence the kind of use of ICTs (entertainment, communication or informative). Young people are those who more use ICTs and they use them mostly for communication and entertainment. EAP uses ICTs with other purposes too.

This variable was considered in the analysis of user's type in all venues studied. Venues were visited at different time to guarantee a sample including young and adult people with different time available.

2.2.4 Gender

There are not recent studies which allow us to know about gender differences in possibilities, needs or desires to access information through ICTs. A research conducted in 2003 found that 39% on Internet users of Ecuador are women.

From this research, considering observation, interviews and surveys conducted, it would be said that access to ICTs is determined by age, socioeconomic status and geographic location. However, when combined with age, gender becomes an interesting variable to consider: it would be said that women had more interest for ICTs between young people while the contrary is true for adults.

This variable was considered in the analysis of user's type in all venues studied

2.2.5 Location

This is a good place to offer further details on the urban/peri-urban/non-urban definitions and relevance in your country, among other location variables.

Rural zones had less access to ICTs. Big telecommunications services providers do not cover rural zones because they are not profitable: access cost is higher and people purchasing power is low.

In regional terms, the East of the country (jungle) is the space with less ICT access. It would also said that the coast has less access than the highlands.

Location was considered visiting venues in urban and rural locations

2.2.6 Other inequity variables

Other Inequity Variable 1: Inequity Variable (if needed)

Other Inequity Variable 2: Inequity Variable (if needed)

Other Inequity Variable 3: Inequity Variable (if needed)

2.3 Data Gathering Techniques

Describe the different data gathering techniques you used to conduct this study. Provide specific examples and sample selection criteria.

2.3.1 Literature review

Describe the type and approximate number of documents reviewed. Include detailed references of the most useful ones. Include valid links for all online sources.

60 number of documents reviewed.

Literature review include academic documents about ICT, inequity in Ecuador, and venues selected; statistical information about population, inequity, ICT, and venues selected; and reports about specific projects related with each venue.

2.3.1.1 Most useful bibliography:

Acevedo, Manuel (2006) Assessment of a policy advocacy network in Ecuador [on line]. Available in: www.bcoalliance.org

Banco Mundial (2005). Pueblos indígenas, pobreza y desarrollo humano en América Latina: 1994-2004. Washington: Banco Mundial

Carrión Gordón, Hugo (2006). Mercado de Internet: Ecuador 2006. Quito: Imaginar.

Chisaguano, Silverio (2006). La población indígena en el Ecuador: análisis de estadísticas socio-demográficas. Quito: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos.

CONATEL (2006). Libro Blanco: Estrategia para el desarrollo de la sociedad de la información en el Ecuador [on line]. Available in: http://www.aeprovi.org.ec/index.php?option=com_remository&Itemid=75&func=fileinfo&id=11

Fundación José Peralta (2007). Ecuador: su realidad. Quito: Fundación José Peralta.

Fundación Regional de Asesoría en Derechos Humanos (2007). Informe sobre la libertad de expresión en el Ecuador. Quito: INREDH. Available in: http://www.voxpublica.org/derechos/archives/005312.html

INEC (2007). Condiciones de vida de los ecuatorianos: resultado de la encuesta de condiciones de vida ECV Quinta Ronda. Quito: INEC

Infodesarrollo (2007). Historias TIC: tecnologías de información y comunicación para el desarrollo, experiencias en el sector rural. Quito: Infodesarrollo.

Jurado Vargas, Romel (2006). Diagnóstico de políticas TIC en el Ecuador. Quito: FLACSO.

Maeso, Oscar (2006) Centros de acceso público a las tecnologías de información y comunicación en America Latina: características y desafios. Santiago de Chile: CEPAL

PNUD (2001). Informe sobre desarrollo humano Ecuador 2001: las tecnologías de información y comunicación para el desarrollo humano. Quito: 2001.

SENATEL (2007). Plan Nacional de desarrollo de las telecomunicaciones 2007-2012. Quito: Secretaria Nacional de Telecomunicaciones.

UNESCO (2007). Informe situacional de privacidad y accesso a la información en América Latina. Lima: ONG Alfa Redi.

Viteri Díaz, G.(2007). Situación de la salud en el Ecuador. In: Observatorio de la Economía Latinoamericana, Número 77, 2007. Available in: http://www.eumed.net/cursecon/ecolat/index.htm

Viteri Díaz, G.(2007). Empleo, Salarios, Pobreza y Desigualdad en el Ecuador. In Observatorio de la Economía Latinoamericana, Número 87, 2007. Available in: http://www.eumed.net/cursecon/ecolat/index.htm

2.3.2 Individual interviews

Describe the type and approximate number of individuals you interviewed. Include detailed contact information for the most useful ones (indicate for which topic, if appropriate). Discuss how representative is this sample of people you interviewed in relation to different opinions and perspectives in the country.

20 number of individuals interviewed.

Interviews were focused in getting an overall view about each venue selected and about situation of ICT in Ecuador.

Ana Vargas de Vela

President , Colegio de Bibliotecarios de Pichincha cobipquito@yahoo.es

Topic: Public libraries

Paula Carrión

Information Officer, Infodesarrollo pcarrion@infodesarrollo.ec

Topic: Telecenters, ICT for development in Ecuador

Eduardo Pichilingue

International Relations Director, ASETA (Asociación de Empresas de Telecomunicaciones de la Comunidad Andina) epp@aseta.org

Topic: situation of ICT in Ecuador

Viktor Ulises Aguila

ICT's advisor, Presidencia de la República del Ecuador Fondo de Solidaridad aguilav@fondodesolidaridad.gov.ec

Topic: Public policies and projects in ICT and information access

Fabián Sáenz

General Director, FODETEL fsaenz@conatel.gov.ec

Topic: governamental project in ICT for underserved communities.

Valeria Betancourt

Project coordinator "Monitor de Políticas TIC en América Latina y el Caribe" APC, valeriabet@gmail.com

Topic: ICT policies

Marcelo Galarza

Chasquinet, marcelo@chasquinet.org

Topic: Telecenters

Jose Luis Barzallo

Lawyer specialist in ICT, joseluis@*barzallo*.com

Topic: Regulation in ICT

2.3.3 Group interviews and focus groups

Describe the type and number of group interviews or focus groups you conducted. If available, include detailed contact information for the most useful informants (indicate for which topic, if appropriate).

0 number of group interviews or focus groups.

2.3.4 Site visits

Describe the number and location of site visits you conducted. If available, include detailed contact information for the most useful informants (indicate for which topic, if appropriate).

14 number of site visits.

We visited 6 rural and 8 urban sites

Parroquia		**Province**
Alangasí	Rural	Pichincha
Aloág / Machachi	Rural	Pichincha
Sangolquí	Rural	Pichincha
Vilcabamba	Rural	Loja
Tumbaco	Rural	Chimborazo
La Magdalena	Rural	Pichincha
El Sagrario	Urban	Loja
Huachi chico	Urban	Tungurahua
Mariscal Sucre	Urban	Pichincha
Iñaquito	Urban	Pichincha
Gil Ramirez Davalos	Urban	Azuay
San Antonio	Urban	Pichincha
Chillogallo	Urban	Pichincha
Jipijapa	Urban	Manabi

2.3.5 Surveys

Describe the location and number of respondents to surveys you conducted for this study. Indicate their relative distribution across venues (for example, 30% in telecentres, 20% in cybercafés, 50% in public libraries), and how they were selected.

Describe the venues, their locations and the sample size for each:

	Public Libraries	Telecenter	Cybercafe
# of **urban** venues surveyed	7	3	4
# of **non-urban** venues surveyed	1	1	4
# of respondents in **urban** venues	45	9	29
# of respondents in **non-urban** venues	8	6	17

Survey description and comments:

We applied two different surveys to operators and users of each type of venue. 46% of surveys were applied in public libraries, 13% in telecenters, and 40% in cybercafés. Unfortunately, we had problems to contract local research teams, then we could not get as much as responses as we expected.

2.3.6 Other data gathering techniques

Other Data Gathering Technique 1: Web browsing

In order to identify and determinate quantity of venues in telecenters, we have to perform an exhaustive search of them by Web.

Other Data Gathering Technique 2: Data Gathering Technique

Other Data Gathering Technique 3: Data Gathering Technique

2.3.7 Most useful contacts

List here some of the most knowledgeable and useful contacts that can provide additional information and insight, in case someone else wants to gather additional information about this topic in the country.

Ana Vargas de Vela

President , Colegio de Bibliotecarios de Pichincha cobipquito@yahoo.es

Area of expertice: Public libraries

Paula Carrión

Information Officer, Infodesarrollo pcarrion@infodesarrollo.ec

Area of expertice: Telecenters, ICT for development in Ecuador

Eduardo Pichilingue

International Relations Director, ASETA (Asociación de Empresas de Telecomunicaciones de la Comunidad Andina) epp@aseta.org

Area of expertice: situation of ICT in Ecuador

Valeria Betancourt

Project coordinator "Monitor de Políticas TIC en América Latina y el Caribe" APC, valeriabet@gmail.com

Area of expertice: ICT policies

Karin Delgadillo

Directora Ejecutiva Fundación Chasquinet karin@chasquinet.org

Area of expertice: Telecenters, ICT for development

Jose Luis Barzallo

Lawyer specialist in ICT, joseluis@*barzallo*.com

Area of expertice: Regulation in ICT

Hugo Vinicio Carrión Gordón

Engineer, Imaginar hcarrion@imaginar.org

Area of expertice: Develop of ICT in Ecuador

2.4 Research Trustworthiness and Credibility

2-3 paragraphs

Describe any steps you took to minimize your own bias in conducting this study, and to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the results you are presenting.

We had interviewed experts with different opinions about each topic or venue, having the possibility to judge their and our positions.

We make our best effort to have a varied and representative selection of sites to conduct surveys. We also instruct our assistants to make a non biased selection of survey respondents and they followed such instructions as long it was possible.

We also contrasted our results from surveys with other studies in the few cases that some is available.

2.4.1 Research limitations

Describe important limitations you encountered in conducting this research, and limitations in drawing generalizations or broader conclusions based on the findings you report.
This research faced limitations because there is not statistic information about venues as cybercafés, and use of public libraries. By other side, financial information about venues is not available. Surveys applied to get information are not representative in statistical terms, but we tried to select a sample considering variety of the universe. We could not contract research teams at all the different locations that we wanted, which finally meant that we have a limited quantity of surveys results.
2.4.2 Team qualifications
Katia Sotomayor and Juan Bossio had several years of experience as researchers, including research on ICT for development issues. Assistants that applied surveys in public libraries, cybercafes and telecenters had university degrees.

3 Country Assessment

3.1 Overall Country Assessment

Provide a broad picture of the public access information landscape in the country, informed by the results of this research. In 2-3 paragraphs, what is your overall assessment of public access information venues in this country?

In Ecuador the access to appropriate information –relevant, opportune, understandable, and usable- is limited. Marginalized groups rely in social networks to access information, but quality and amplitude of information accessible through that channel is not adequate. Public information services –public libraries, information services and so- are almost not integrated by social networks as information sources. There is a national library system (SINAB) working on enlarging access to libraries, but its policies and libraries services are targeted to school students and not all the population.

Internet is being used to access information, at first as an extension of social networks richness, amplifying them and helping nodes or points of them to be connected more easily. Internet connection costs in Ecuador are higher than in the rest of the region, they are getting lower but are still high. Internet is accessed through cybercafés by people without having computer or internet connection at home, work or study places, but this service is not affordable for everyone. There are free or cheap access in some libraries and telecenters, but they are scarce. Access to Internet and the capacity to enjoy its benefits are strongly affected by inequity variables.

People need information on technical or productive issues in relation with their small business, on health and care, on migration procedures and opportunities, on their rights, on commercial or work opportunities, on form-filling or transactions with government and other subjects. They need such information in a particular moment, expressed in their language and using words they would understand, and in adequate format. Information on the issues and with the characteristics above mentioned is scarce. Public information services –especially public libraries- should be the source for such information. Finally, it is needed to develop capacities of staff at public information access venues so they would improve their services.

3.2 Real Access Framework

Summarize the key findings and your assessment of each dimension in the Real Access framework used in this study. You will provide more details later.

3.2.1 Access

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of ACCESS ecosystem in the country (physical access, appropriate technology, affordability)?

Lack of access to information and ICTs in the country is motivated by geographical, technical and economic constraints. Geography determines a difficult landscape to provide information and ICTs services. Technology to provide telecommunications to far away places is expensive. However, the State is developing projects or programs to meliorate this situation. By one hand, there is a national library system (called SINAB) which is creating new libraries or enhancing those already existent. By the other side, there are projects to provide Internet access to rural zones and deprived areas in urban areas.

Rural areas are mostly deprived of access to information and ICTs, they are surely the preferred area for SINAB's libraries and telecenters, but rural population continues being as a whole less served than urban population. At urban places there are not as much libraries or telecenters, but there are cybercafés. Whereas there have been a reduction on fees paid at cybercafés, they are still not affordable for people with lowest income. Cybercafés are small businesses so they can not lower prices because connectivity is expensive and they are not willing to extend their services to rural areas because there is not a business on doing so. By their side, telecenters and libraries do not charge fees for most of their services. Connection costs are getting reduced and it will mean more access in the country.

Young people are using the technology, but the rest of the population is not and it should be considered.

3.2.2 Capacity

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of CAPACITY ecosystem in the country (human capacity, locally relevant content, integration into daily routines, socio-cultural factors, trust in technology, social appropriation of technology)?

Capacity is a key issue to understand and process information as for using ICTs, there are also capacities needed in order to facilitate such process. Venues studied are not staffed in the best way. Most of the libraries have the staff they need for providing services to students, but they would need different professionals to enlarge their public. Cybercafés also lack of staff able to introduce aged people to technology use. While telecenters staff has the capacities needed from community or social side, they had not the necessary technical training. By the other side, educational level is associated with economic status, location, age and gender as is with capacity to use new ICTs; illiteracy is higher between women, rural population, natives and people with lower income in general. Then, concrete actions are needed to incorporate underserved groups to the use of ICTs.

Local and relevant content is limited and hard to find. Venues studied have different perspectives to local content. Provided their close relation with communities, telecenters are really interested in collecting, translating and/or developing relevant content to solve concrete information needs with appropriate information; but they do not have the resources to do it. Because its orientation to students, libraries are not realizing the importance of local content. Cybercafés are business and do not find profit in local content development.

Venues are integrated to their public daily routines, but it does not mean that they are integrated to all the community daily routines. Libraries are appropriated, trusted and

integrated by students which use them; the rest of the community positively value their service but do not use it. Cybercafés are integrated by their users to their daily routine being appropriated for uses as communication, information search and entertainment, but cybercafés are basically used by young people and middleclass people. There are few telecenters; most of them were integrated by their communities, becoming part of its functioning.

3.2.3 Environment

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of the ENVIRONMENT ecosystem in the country (local economy, national economy, legal and regulatory framework, political will and public support, regional and international context)?

There is an economic growth in Ecuador, but it is not reducing inequality. The increase of petroleum international price generated an economic growth allowing a major expend from the government. There had been an increase on investment related to educative and telecommunications infrastructure including programs to enlarge provision of library services and ICT connectivity in rural areas.

There has been progress in regulations about access to public information. By the other side, there are some limitations to the use of VoIP and Wireless technology to increase access and communication. The government, together with stakeholders developed a connectivity agenda considering the following areas: connectivity infrastructure, e-education, e-health, e-government and e-commerce.

Venues studied lack of policies that promote them. There is a governmental office in charge of public libraries (SINAB) but other policies are needed to bring other actors to enhance information provision through public libraries. Cybercafés needs of policies that promote them; regulation in place is forcing most of them to be out of law or close because high costs of registering.

3.3 Information Needs of Underserved Communities

Describe the specific information needs experienced by underserved populations, based on the results of your research. Who could benefit from better public access to information? This could relate to e-government services, health or agriculture information, job training, employment search, among many others. Include reference to the key inequity variables in your country.

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

(ii) Indicate the sources of data for this assessment

Information needs are different to different groups and between people inside those groups; they are also related to gender and age interests, to cultural factors, to occupation and so on.

In rural areas, where agriculture is the main economic activity, farmers need technical information to improve their production, information about prices and new market opportunities, information about environmental preservation to carry out their activities; rural women need information about their rights, health and childcare; young people need information to support their education activities, and job opportunities.

In urban areas, small entrepreneurs need information to improve their production and to have a better participation on markets, specific needs depend on which business or industry they are involved with; young people need information about education opportunities, job seeking, leisure.

Non Spanish speakers need information in their own language; appropriate contents should be translated or developed. Everyone needs information about regulations, government services, rights, and migration issues.

Each group or specific community would benefit from better public access to information, but such information should be appropriate, it means relevant, opportune, understandable, and usable.

***Source**: Referred literature, interviews to key informants.*

3.3.1 Information sources

4.2b) What are the current sources for this kind of information in the country? Are these sources adequate (current, appropriate to the population, etc.) In sum, does the locally-relevant content exist?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

(ii) Indicate the sources of data for this assessment

The most important source of information for underserved communities are their social networks because formal channels are not accessible or not appropriate for most of them.

Nevertheless some information is accessed through formal channels as libraries, and Internet access points. People seek information needed for education activities at libraries, through cybercafés and telecenters they access to information available in Internet.

Information related with economic activities is available in different governmental and non-governmental organization, but their contents are not appropriated (understandable) for underserved communities with low education level; telecenters have small and located experiences making information appropriate for these groups.

Information about regulation and government services is becoming more available thanks to policies about transparency in public information, but this information is offered through Web pages and in information desk services from each institution.

Information on health, rights, job opportunities, immigration issues, is covered partially by the media.

***Source**: Literature, interviews to key informants, users survey*

3.3.2 Key barriers to accessing the information that underserved communities need

Are the people who could benefit from this information getting access to it? Why or why not (e.g. content exists but not in the right language, print media exists but has not been distributed appropriately, digital media is available but people do not have access points, etc.)?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Main barrier to access information for underserved communities is that contents are not in a comprehensive language and adequate format for most of them. Information available needs been compiled and rewritten according with skills and capacities of most of population.

Next barrier in importance is location because points to access information are concentrated in urban areas; points to access available in rural areas are not necessarily near to all population because they are not concentrated.

Some information is available in Internet, but there are not enough internet access points. High Internet cost in Ecuador is a barrier to the increment of access points as cybercafés and telecenters.

***Source**: Literature, interviews to key informants, users survey*

3.3.3 Ways users experience different types of public access venues

Based on responses to the open question in user surveys, how do users experience different types of public access venues? Are there any trends or preferences for kinds of information, services or activities in one type of venue over another?

Most of users prefer to use cybercafés and telecenters because they can access to Internet to perform communication activities and to get information; libraries constituted only sources of information because they lack of ICT services.

Users consider that there are not enough telecenters, that they have few computers to offer a high quality service; telecenters offer a low quality Internet connection in comparison with cybercafés, nevertheless low cost of its services does that users with low income prefer them. The cybercafés offer major and better ICT services, but their cost is high for population with low income.

Public libraries users consider that they need to offer ICT services, nevertheless they are an alternative to obtain information for those who do not have access to a nearby telecenter or can not afford cybercafés costs.

3.3.4 Inequity environment in the country

2-3 paragraphs

What does inequity look like in the country? Using the inequity variables described in section **2.2**, provide a short overview of the main underserved groups, regions and/or other locally-appropriate segments of the population.

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The levels of inequality in Ecuador have increased; the GINI was 0.43 in 1995, but 0.46 in 2006. Considering basic needs, 45.8 % of the population was poor in 2006. Location is an important variable to consider: there is more poverty between rural populations (82.2 %) than to the urban one (24.8 %), as it happens in the Amazonia (71 %) versus the coast (51.4 %) and the highlands (36.9 %). The provinces with lower levels of poverty are Pichincha, Azuay and El Oro and those who have major levels of poverty are Bolivar, Amazonia, and Los Ríos. According to the World Bank (2005), natives in Ecuador are the poorest segment, 87 % of the Ecuadorian natives is poor, a percentage bigger than that of the not indigenous population (61 %).

At 2001, illiteracy was of 11.46% and it was also unequally distributed. Illiteracy is bigger between women (12.3%) than men (10.59%); and between rural population (16.85%) than urban one (8.13%), being rural women the segment with bigger percentage (18.69). Native population that just speak their language is 43% illiterate, while 24% of those being bilingual (native language and Spanish) are illiterate. Access to formal education is also unequal; Ecuadorians attend 5.98 years to school in average, urban people 6.97 years while rural people 4.37, being rural women the less educated segment with just 4.29 years in average.

Health indicators also show inequality. In 2004 the chronic malnutrition reaches 17.4 % of less than 5 years children in Ecuador; the rural area has 26.6 % of the children in malnutrition condition, while urban areas had 12 %; the indigenous children have the highest malnutrition (43.7 %) opposite to 15.1 % between not indigenous children. The poorest have major risk of suffering malnutrition, 28.2 % of the poorest 10 % of the population suffer chronic malnutrition whereas 6 % of the richer 10%.

3.3.5 Freedom of press and expression and the right to information

What is the overall perception of freedom of press, censorship and right to information in this country?

The mass media in Ecuador belongs to different economic groups often in confrontation; this situation has prevented that they could associate in one union; the radio television and written press associations also respond to economic particular groups.

The big economic power groups express themselves through the main political parties and in the bigger national communication networks. This scheme repeats itself to regional and local level, since the principal political leaders are owners of regional communication networks and simultaneously they are local businessmen. INREDH's research in 2000 identified that 87 % of the grants of frequencies from the radio-electric spectrum for radio, television and information transmission was related to political movements; this situation has not changed, on the contrary, the trend was deepened of awarding frequencies as a form of political negotiation.

The current government has questioned the relation of the mass media with financial and political interests; this attitude has generated a confrontation between the government and the mass media. The media have accepted publicly by the first time that they belong to big economic groups, and have overcome their differences to join and to respond in a joint way to the government. This government had committed to respect freedom of expression as non-disputable

civil right.

On the other hand, the freedom of access to the public information in Ecuador was the topic of a specific law given in 2004 (Ley Orgánica de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública); the different governmental organisms are getting adapted to this law to offer information to every citizen who needs it.

3.4 Charts: Information Needs, Users, and Uses

Based on the results of your research (especially user surveys and interviews with librarians and operators), complete the required data to chart the information needs of underserved communities using the following examples. Provide any explanatory comments as needed.

3.4.1.1 Users, by type of venue

Users profile (estimated proportion of users in each category, %)		Public Libraries				Telecenters				Cybercafes							
		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
		General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	ICT use	General use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
Gender	Male	42%		50%			60%	50%			59%		36%				
	Female	58%		50%			40%	50%			41%		64%				
Age	14 and under	11%					13%	50%			3%		36%				
	15-35	79%		83%			87%	17%			84%		57%				
	36-60	7%		17%				33%			7%		7%				
	61 and over	3%									3%						
Education level	No formal education						2%	7%									
	Only elementary	19%		19%			23%	66%			7%		42%				
	Up to high school	67%		73%			57%	17%			23%		21%				
	College or university	14%		8%			18%	10%			70%		37%				
Income bracket (approx)	High	7%									15%		7%				
	Medium	57%		67%			31%	27%			62%		29%				
	Low	36%		33%			69%	73%			23%		63%				
Social status (approx)	High	7%									23%		7%				
	Medium	78%		67%			71%	17%			74%		50%				
	Low	15%		33%			29%	83%			3%		43%				
Caste	Dominant																

(if appropriate)	other								
	other								
	other								
Ethnicity (if appropriate)	Dominant								
	other								
	other								
	other								

***Source**: Operator's survey, users survey*

Comments

ICT uses have not significance in public libraries just 11 libraries offer ICT services.

3.4.1.2 Information People Seek, by type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries				Telecenters				Cybercafes							
	Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	ICT use	General use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
Education	71%		95%			71%	50%			52%		50%				
Health	29%		4%				17%			11%		7%				
Agriculture												14%				
Government services	3%						17%			7%		14%				
Entertainment	42%		13%			14%	50%			48%		64%				
News	29%		4%			14%				15%		7%				
Personal	46%		37%			14%	33%			70%		71%				
Other																

***Source**: Operator's survey, users survey*

Comments:

ICT uses have not significance in public libraries just 11 libraries offer ICT services.

3.4.1.3 Uses of ICT, by type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries				Telecenters				Cybercafes							
	Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	ICT use	General use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
Email						100%	33%		75%			50%				
Chat						85%	50%		58%			43%				
Web browsing							50%		45%			57%				
Blogs & social networking						85%	33%		51%			64%				
Commerce & business						29%	17%		14%			14%				
Phone or webcam							67%		10%			57%				
Games							17%		20%			36%				
Other																

***Source**: Operator's survey, users survey*

Comments:

ICT uses have not significance in public libraries just 11 libraries offer ICT services.

3.4.1.4 Frequency of Use for each type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries				Telecenters				Cybercafes							
	Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	ICT use	General use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
First visit	4%				8%				11%		7%					
Rarely (less than monthly)	10%				12%		16%		22%		7%					
Occasional (about once a month)	26%		16%		5%		32%		22%		22%					
Regular (about 2-3 per month)	32%		52%		14%		16%		11%		21%					
Frequent (about once a week)	21%		16%		36%		32%		19%		29%					
Daily (about every day)	7%		16%		25%				15%		14%					

***Source**: Operator's survey, users survey*

Comments:

ICT uses have not significance in public libraries just 11 libraries offer ICT services.

3.4.1.5 Barriers to use for each type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries				Telecenters				Cybercafes							
	Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	ICT use	General use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
Location, distance	14%		16%			10%		30%		10%		21%				
Hours of Operation	36%		33%			10%				14%		29%				
Cost	17%					15%		10%		10%		21%				
Lack of skills/training	21%							15%		27%		21%				
Not enough services	36%					35%				14%		29%				
Not in right language	7%							15%				7%				
Not enough content	25%		50%			10%		10%		10%		21%				
Other																

***Source**: Operator's survey, users survey*

Comments:

ICT uses have not significance in public libraries just 11 libraries offer ICT services.

3.4.2 Salient initiatives to help meet critical information needs by underserved communities

What are the most salient initiatives in the country (past, ongoing, or planned) that aim to meet the information needs of underserved communities in the country? How important are they? In what ways are they successful or not? Where can more information about them be found?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

3.4.2.1 Past initiatives:

The major national initiative to provide information to underserved communities was the Telecentros PROMEC project. The project objective was to install 1120 polyvalent telecenters in rural zones and underserved urban marginal areas, which were offering the service of Internet access and telephony. The project was funded by the State trough a World bank loan of US$ 4'150,000 and private investment from Globalnet of 7'423,478.

The project was implemented by CONATEL-SENATEL (national telecommunications council - national telecommunications secretary); the company Globalnet earned the bidding for equipment, installation, operation and maintenance of the telecenters. Every telecenter would have a local manager that obtained 25 % of the sales in exchange for covering the costs of administration, rent of place, water and light.

The project had many delays, in 2002 the financing contract with the World Bank was signed; but just in 2006 the project is bid and contract is signed by Globalnet. Globalnet had to finish the installation of the telecenters in October 2007, date in which they had installed less than the half. In 2008, one process of inspection of the project determined that there were just 530 telecentros installed, some without respecting the specifications of the contract (in equipment); as consequence of the breach of Globalnet, FODETEL (universal access fund of Ecuador) finished the contract on June 27, 2008.

The project was orientated to the most disadvantaged groups (rural zone and urban marginal). However, it had not a clear strategy of telecenters sustainability; neither has it had a strategy of capacity and content development.

***More information**:*

http://www.infodesarrollo.net/content/view/526/326/

http://www.conatel.gov.ec/site_conatel/index.php/marco-legal/resoluciones/134-resoluciones-2008/302-resoluciones-junio-julio-2008

3.4.2.2 Ongoing initiatives:

Ll@kt@Net: it is a project of access and use of ICT for the development of the indigenous rural communities of the province of El Chimborazo. The project is developed by the foundation ERPE (Radio Popular Schools of the Ecuador) and COPROBICH (corporation of organic producers "Bio Taita Chimborazo "). The project aims to install a network of 50 community telecenters to support production and marketing of organic products, basic

rural education, health promotion, and community strengthening in the use of the ICT for diverse community projects. The project began in April 2008, it has a budget of US$574,000 subsidized by FODETEL and SENATEL.

Programa Quito Digital (digital Quito program): initiated in March, 2003, it aims to integrate the metropolitan district as a modern, democratic and equitable society; as an effective and transparent Local Government (LG) that could interact with the citizens and, hereby, provide quality services by means of the ICT. This program have 5 components: E-GOBIERNO that looks to universalizes the use of ICTs in the services that the LG offers to the citizens, and in the systems and internal processes, establishing an integrated system of on-line management; EDUCANET that looks for the ICTs incorporation in public, public-religious and municipal schools and colleges in the Metropolitan District of Quito; INTERNET PARA TODOS that consists of the massive donation of PCs (including maintenance and technical support) and of the access to Internet to homes and small business; CYBERNARIOS that installs public Internet access and training centers; and PRESERVACIÓN DE LA MEMORIA DIGITAL (digital preservation of the memory) which aims to safeguard the documentary array that exists in Quito.

Programa Más Tecnología, Educación de Calidad para Guayaquil (more technology, quality education for Guayaquil): Program developed by Educate foundation by a commission of Guayaquil Municipality. It aims to deploy equipment and give access to Internet to 300 schools in Guayaquil (50% of public schools), train teachers and develop a learning platform.

Programa Edufuturo: Program developed by the Pichincha Prefectura (Provincial government), it aims to meliorate educative process quality by extending access to ICTs en Pichincha province. The project began in 2006. Its activities include teachers' training, infrastructure and connectivity installation, content development and learning software.

***More information**:*

Ll@kt@Net http://www.erpe.org.ec/erpe/index1.php

Quito Digital http://www.quito.gov.ec/main.htm
http://www.infodesarrollo.net/content/view/589/267/

Más Tecnología http://www.mastecnologia.net/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/

Edufuturo http://www.edufuturo.com/educacion.php?c=4016

3.4.2.3 Historical trends and opportunities to serve information needs

Based on the above, what is the general trend in the country in relation to provision of public access information services? Are there any important upcoming opportunities (for example, upcoming regulatory changes, infrastructure enhancements, etc) that can impact public access information (include services through libraries and other public information venues)?

i. If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Biggest public access to information initiatives focused in formal education or connectivity, but not in content development or local capacity building. The advances in provision of information services in the productive area and health have been small, and the experiences have limited themselves to reduced areas mainly carried out by NGO across pilot projects.

***Source**: interviews, news*

3.4.2.4 Planned initiatives:

Program EUROSOLAR: Connectivity Network and development of telecommunications services in rural localities without basic services of electricity and telecommunications: it aims to provide with Internet and public telephony to 91 rural localities of Ecuador.

Proyecto de Conectividad para personas con capacidades especiales (Connectivity project for persons with special capacities): To implement a network of telecenters with provision of Internet service in every province of the Ecuador in order to provide access ICT services to people with disabilities.

Proyecto de telemedicina para los sectores aislados (telemedicine project for ailed sectors) del Ecuador-Pastaza/Morona Santiago: To support the implementation of a telemedicine public network articulated to the National plan on telemedicine of the Department of Public Health of the Ecuador, that will be executed in the Provinces of Pastaza and Morona Santiago.

Conectividad y desarrollo de los servicios de Telemedicina en localidades rurales (connectivity and development of services in telemedicine in rural localities) del Ecuador – Provincias de Sucumbíos, Orellana, Napo, Zamora Chichipe y Galápagos: To provide connectivity to health units that form part of the project initiatives on telemedicine of the National plan on telemedicine of the Department of Public Health of the Ecuador. It is part of the improvement of health offices services being implemented by some universities, as UTE, UTPL y UA.

FODETEL is defining several projects in order to provide infrastructure, equipment and training on ICT in different provinces and cantons of Ecuador.

More information:

http://www.conatel.gov.ec/site_conatel/index.php/fodetel/proyectos/18-proyectos

3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment

3.5.1 National and local economic environment

Describe the national and local economic environment and how it affects public access to information and communication in the country.

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Ecuadorian economy depends strongly on petroleum related income; which worth for 60% of its exportation in 2007. The increase of the international price of the oil generates a growth of the economy that allows a major expense from the government.

The investment in access to information in the country has been basically orientated to the education sector. In 2006, education expense share of central government budget was of 9 % (923.2 million dollars), which for 2007 increased to 11 % (1190.8 million dollars). This increase brought a bigger investment in educative infrastructure that, in terms of information access, has been basically oriented to connectivity provision and educative content platform development.

Trends:

The intensive growth of the telecommunications sector and the renegotiation of contracts with service providers, guarantees an increase in the next years in the collection for the FODETEL that is equivalent to 1 % of the telecommunications companies invoicing. The increase of this fund might increase the investment to offer access to ICT to less attended sectors and to generate contents adapted to their specific needs in the established lines of actions: e- education, e-health, e-government, and economic local development.

Internet connection costs have diminished from 2007 due to the fact that Ecuador possesses since then a direct exit to the Pan-American Cable; this reduction might be major once finished the negotiations in process to extend this connectivity in 23 times.

The bigger telecommunication services providers (Andinatel and Pacifitel) plan to expand their services by using electrical wires, it constitutes a good opportunity for isolated places.

***Source**: Interviews*

3.5.2 National and local policy (legal and regulatory) environment

Describe salient features of the policy and regulatory framework in the country (and if applicable, locally) that affect delivery and access to information (e.g. censorship, Wi-Fi bandwidth regulation, etc). What is your assessment of the general trend on this matter?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The "Ley Orgánica de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública" (Law of Transparency and Access to the Public Information) signed in 2004 constitutes a great step in the access to information for the civil participation, nevertheless the application of this law is not yet generalized in all the instances of the public administration (national or locale level)

The regulation on public Internet access centers and Cybercafes (Resolution Not. 073-02-CONATEL-2005) establishes that they would offer VoIP exclusively for international salient traffic, but not for local, regional or national calls, cellular services or mobile advanced services. According the same regulation, those services should register themselves in SENATEL and renew such registration annually; the registration service cost 4 hundred

dollars.

Wireless users –including cybercafés- do not require an authorization if their equipment power is less than 300 mW without exterior antennas. In the contrary, they should follow the radio communication regulation (Resolución 556-21-CONATEL-2000) that establishes the need of a SUPTEL authorization after a technical study.

Trends:

The Asamblea Constituyente (constitutional assembly) is discussing a project of law of broadcasting and telecommunications that promotes to the State as guarantor of the spaces of communication, public and private, alternative and community; the radio electric spectrum will have to be distributed equitably between these options; the project of law also proposes to avoid the concentration of the licenses and to guarantee the universal access to the media, without discrimination. If the project is approved and the constitution ratified, a more equitable distribution of the radio electric spectrum will introduce changes that would benefit community initiatives that now should compete with commercial media for frequencies.

***Source**: News, CONATEL Web Site, APC*

3.5.3 Regional and international policy (legal and regulatory) environment

Describe salient features of policy and regulatory framework in the region and internationally that affect the delivery of public access to information and communication in the country. What is your assessment of the general trend on this matter?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) and its preparation was a motive to produce la Agenda de Conectividad en Ecuador. After meetings and enquiries with different actors (NGOs, universities, telecoms), the commission related to connectivity presented in 2003 the connectivity agenda which came to be public policy. The agenda proposed a diagnosis and intervention lines on 5 priority areas: connectivity infrastructure, e-education, e-health, e-government and e-commerce.

Principles to be considered in national plans in the region were set in 2003 at Bavaro's Declaration. Since then Latin American governments set common goals that form part of eLAC 2007 (Plan de Acción Regional sobre la Sociedad de la Información para América Latina y el Caribe) that defined 5 thematic areas of intervention: Access and digital inclusion, development of capacities and knowledge, transparency and public efficiency, political instruments, and environment. Motivated by eLAC 2007, Ecuadorian government meet to elaborate new strategies for the development of the information society based on 3 axes: infrastructure, universal access and service; socialization, appropriation and environment; and local applications and contents, and innovation. This work produced a white book on the information society that proposes the strategy for its development.

Trends:

In February 2008 at El Salvador eLAC 2007 plan was revised and a new plan was presented eLAC 2010. This new plan gives more importance to goals about education and health that include development of contents and access to them. This plan will guide futures policies in Ecuador about Information Society.

CAATEL (Andean Committee of telecommunications authorities) created an Ad Hoc group on information society development in the Andean community that will coordinate national actions in order to meet eLAC2010 goals as other regional and world objectives of country members. Ecuador was designated to coordinate this group work for 2008-2010.

***Source**: Libro Blanco de la Sociedad de la Información; Diagnóstico de Políticas TIC en el Ecuador; APC web site*

3.6 Collaboration Practices and Opportunities Across Venues

Linkages and collaboration between different types of venues was identified as a **strong emerging theme in the preliminary analysis**. Please provide as much detail as possible to help understand existing and potential collaboration opportunities and linkages among and between public access venues, and how they can improve the quality and relevance of information access to underserved communities.

i. Include reference to existing as well as potential collaboration opportunities.

ii. If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

There is not collaboration practices between venues, nevertheless there are opportunities that could be developed.

Cybercafés face problems for high Internet connection cost having problems to reach lower income population. Their operational costs (rent, electricity) would be reduced if they share a space inside public libraries while getting more clients (library users). By their side, libraries would have a needed service by their current users and would also enlarge their public with cybercafés clients, including non students.

Telecenters had similar problems with financial sustainability, in that sense alliances between telecenters and libraries would be a good idea for both of them.

3.7 Buzz Factor: Public and Government Perceptions About What is "Cool"

The "buzz factor", i.e., public and government perceptions about what is "cool" in relation to public access venues, where to invest resources, what places to hang out in, was identified as a **strong emerging theme in the preliminary analysis**. Please provide as much detail as possible to help understand how these perceptions about what is "cool" offer new opportunities or obstacles to strengthening public access information venues in the country.

The use of new ICT like Internet to access information has turned into a paradigm for governmental policies and public perception. Following this perception, the big projects of investment related to access to information have a strong technological component.

There are not projects of investment aimed to enlarge coverage of libraries services. By other side, there are small initiatives to provide of connectivity to the existing libraries.

The high valuation of the technological component is the reason for which many projects of access to information left aside the component of capacity and content development, prioritizing connectivity. However, connectivity continues being low for most of the population in spite investment on it continues increasing. On the other side, new projects specially connected to education, health and e-government are constructing platforms with local contents.

3.8 Legitimate Uses

The difference between "legitimate" or "non-trivial" uses of information in public access venues was identified as a **strong emerging theme in the preliminary analysis**. For example, uses of social networking spaces (Facebook and similar), blogs, chat, video games, as well as opportunities to download, install and run open source software applications in public access computers poses new challenges to traditional notions of "legitimate" information needs for development, and "trivial" uses of information for development… Please provide as much detail as possible to help understand how local definitions and restrictions based on what is "legitimate" or "non-trivial" information or communication practices offer new opportunities or barriers to public access information venues in the country.

What is legitimate use depends on the service provider. Access points financed with governmental (libraries) or community (telecenters) funds find it legitimate to give access to information on health, education or with developmental purposes. Uses related to entertainment, participation at social networks or chat are usually banned or restricted at libraries that offer free access to Internet. By their side, telecenters are more opened to above mentioned uses, some of them promote the usage of social networks, the creation of blogs as a way to express community affairs; however, recreational uses as video games, music or movies download are usually restricted because of the low connection power they usually have.

There is not restriction at access points were the user pay to access as cybercafés. Some providers restrict some services because of band usage (music or movies download), but it is not related with legitimacy.

3.9 Shifting Media Landscape

The ever-changing media landscape and the new opportunities brought about by new media such as mobile phones, SMS, GPS, and even renewed roles for community radio open, was a **strong emerging theme in the preliminary analysis**. Please provide as much detail as possible to help understand how these new technologies and media offer new opportunities or barriers to public access information venues in the country.

3.9.1 Mobile phones

If appropriate, describe salient uses of mobile phones, text messaging, SMS and similar technologies, in relation to public access information venues and information needs of underserved communities.

3.9.2 Web 2.0 tools and use

If appropriate, describe any salient uses of Web 2.0 tools among users of ICT in public access venues. (Web 2.0 refers to evolution of web-based communities and hosted services, such as social-networking sites, wikis, blogs and others. Wikipedia).

3.9.3 Combination of different media

If appropriate, describe creative ways in which different media are being combined to meet information needs of underserved communities, and the ways they affect public access venues. Different media include community radio and TV, other print media, street theatre, songs, etc.

3.9.4 Other shifting media landscape examples

If appropriate, describe other new features and practices in the media landscape that affect public information venues and information needs of underserved communities.

This would be a good place to discuss innovative practices on content creation and production of new messages, media, information and knowledge that are not described elsewhere in this report.

3.10 Health Information Needs

This is an extra contribution to other research on health information needs going on at the University of Washington, based on willing respondents to last two questions on user surveys at the public access venues.

3.10.1 Sources of health information

Where are people most successful at locating useful health information for themselves or their family (% of respondents across all venues):

26% clinic/hospital	45% friend	34% health worker	45% public access venue (library, community center, etc)

Comments:

3.10.2 Types of health information

What types of health information do they have the most difficulty finding (% of respondents across all venues)?

37% disease prevention	24% how to locate healthcare	10% child health information	33% remedies/drugs	Other

Comments:

4 Venue-Specific Assessments

4.1 Venue 1: Public Libraries

4.1.1 Overall venue assessment

Provide a broad picture of the public access information landscape in this venue, informed by the results of this research.

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of public access information in this type of venue?

Ecuador has 557 public libraries members of SINAB (national library system) which depends from the Education department. Libraries are distributed all over the country, rural zones and deprived urban neighborhoods are prioritized as places to set libraries.

Library services are oriented to students. They do not offer services or contents appropriated for the population in general.

Libraries lack of ICT services.

Public libraries do not count with specific policies that facilitate its development, in this sense political support to this venue is low.

4.1.2 Access

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of ACCESS ecosystem in this type of venue (physical access, appropriate technology, affordability)?

Public libraries had a large coverage of the country as would be found above; they are placed in rural zones or deprived urban neighborhoods. However, its number (587) is far from being enough.

Libraries lack of ICTs and just 11 provided ICTs services to its public. Most of the services offered by libraries are free of charge, while some are charge –especially some of the services related to ICTs as photocopy or scanning.

4.1.2.1 Physical access

Describe how accessible this venue is to various population segments, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c), especially the differences between urban and non-urban settings.

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

SINAB's libraries have a wide coverage; they are present in 80 % of the country's cantons, covering 100 % of the cantons of 7 of the 24 provinces. Most of libraries are in rural areas (57 %), 5 % in periurban zones and 38 % in urban zones, mainly in places with low income level.

4.1.2.2 Appropriate technology and services

Describe how appropriate the technologies, services and information offered in this venue are to the population, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Public libraries are oriented to attend school students and some also to university students; they do not offer services for the public in general. Most of libraries lack of ICT services, 11 libraries offer access to Internet, of which only 2 are in rural zones. Though some libraries organize cultural activities, most of them are far from becoming cultural centers.

4.1.2.3 Affordability

Describe how affordable the technologies and services offered in this venue are to the population, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The libraries do not charge for collections access or training they offer. Services associate to ICTs, as Internet access, CDs copies, photocopies or scanning, but the cost for these services is low and usually below market price, then, services at this venue are affordable.

4.1.2.4 Fees for services

What fees or other requirements exist in order to access and use the information in the venues? (registration, user fees, restrictions to certain populations)

If there are fees: What do these fees buy?

Photocopies for one page

Indicate amount in local currency 0.02

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.02

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

Printing for a page

Indicate amount in local currency 0.05

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.05

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

Internet access for one hour

Indicate amount in local currency 0.5

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.5

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Explain any salient differences in the services offered in different regions, sizes or other variables of significance:

Services cost is similar in all the libraries because all of them depend on the SINAB as coordinating institution.

4.1.2.5 Geographic distribution

What is the distribution of the venues in terms of their geographic location?

Complement any details not already included in section 2.1: Venue Selection.

The following chart presents the provincial distribution of libraries. 48% of the libraries are in the highlands, 18% in the jungle and 34% in the coast.

Provinces	Number
AZUAY	26
BOLIVAR	23
CAÑAR	21
CARCHI	21
COTOPAXI	20
CHIMBORAZO	38
EL ORO	55
ESMERALDAS	17
GALÁPAGOS	3
GUAYAS	30
IMBABURA	19
LOJA	39
LOS RIOS	28
MANABI	49
MORONA	22
NAPO	16

ORELLANA	4
PASTAZA	16
PICHINCHA	35
SANTA ELENA	7
SANTO DOMINGO	2
SUCUMBIOS	22
TUNGURAHUA	24
ZAMORA	20
TOTAL	**557**

4.1.2.5.1 Map

If available, insert a map that displays the geographic distribution of this type of venue in the country (expand to the size you need).

Description of map:

4.1.2.6 Other factors affecting access

Other factors that affect equitable access to public information in this type of venue, not covered above?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Opening hours would be a barrier for adult people because libraries just attend at normal working time (9am to 5 pm Monday to Friday), then people with normal jobs can not use libraries.

4.1.3 Capacity and relevance

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of CAPACITY ecosystem in this type of venue (human capacity, locally relevant content, integration into daily routines, socio-cultural factors, trust in technology, social appropriation of technology)?

Public libraries do not have professional librarian staff. This situation does not allow to design and develop services more adequate to serve a wide range of population.

Their contents are oriented to serve students, so students are the mainly users. Focus of services and contents in this target group is supported by public perception that libraries are to attend just students. Library use is integrated into students' routine. However, the population at large does not access libraries because they do not find information or services appropriate for their needs.

4.1.3.1 Staff size

How many people work in a typical facility for this type of venue? (full time-equivalent employees or contractors; describe any significant variations; i.e., large, medium and small libraries in the country)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Libraries have 3 workers in average. Smaller libraries ("Centros Populares de Lectura": "popular reading centers") normally had one or two workers; medium size libraries have 4 workers and the bigger ones ("Centro Cultural Comunitario": community cultural center) have 5 or more workers.

4.1.3.2 Staff training

What is the overall capacity of the staff (i.e., librarians, telecentres operators) to help users access and use public access to information and communication services offered in this venue? Differentiate by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

(ii) For Public Libraries, indicate if Library School training is available and/or required for librarians.

Few libraries have professional librarians; they normally have teachers working in reading and cultural activities promotion. Nevertheless, library staff have the capacity to assist students (the main users) to search and access information.

Lack of professional librarians is one of the factors that influence in low coverage of library services for the population at large.

4.1.3.3 Services offered

What kind of services does this type of venue offer to the public? (i.e., access to books, magazines; meeting and conference rooms; audio/video programs, computers, Internet, other). Include Digital ICT services if offered.

	Services Offered	*Comments*
1.	Acces to books	In 62% of libraries books can be borrow at home.
2.	Reference	Available in 90%
3.	Courses	Available in 68%
4.	Children's Library	Available in 21%
5.	Conferences	Available in 48%
6.	Audio/video programs	Available in 32%
7.	Tell Story	Available in 30%

8.	Game's Collection	Available in 12%
9.	Reading Promotion	Available in 8%
10.	Internet Access	Available in 2%

Explain any salient differences in the services offered in different regions, sizes or other variables of significance:

Rural libraries have 7 services in average while urban ones have 8. Average of number of books in rural libraries collections' is of 1560 items, while it is of 2085 items in urban places. Bigger libraries with more services are called "libraries", while the smaller ones are called

"Centros Populares de Lectura" (people reading centers).

4.1.3.4 Programs for underserved communities

Describe if this venue has programs specifically intended to reach underserved communities, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

SINAB objective is to satisfy lack of library services and cultural centers in rural and deprived urban areas, so it has a wide coverage. There are a considerable number of libraries (84) near the frontiers, spaces whit population usually underserved. Moreover, there are 24 libraries in centers of social rehabilitation to attend to the prison population.

4.1.3.5 Relevant content

What type of locally relevant content is available? What else is needed? Who is doing it?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Available Content:

Available content is focused in education issues, thematic and needs, giving support to school students at different levels.

Other Content Needed:

It is necessary to develop appropriate contents for a wide range of population, not only for kids; library can offer information in health, productive activities relevant for each zone, job opportunities, etc.

Local Initiatives to build needed content:

SINAB literature production is very small; there are not so much initiatives to produce contents locally.

***Source**: Interviews*

4.1.3.6 Services and information available in local languages

Describe the availability of services and contents relevant to human development that are available in **local languages** in this type of venue? (i.e., info on health, education, government services, etc)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

In spite of significance of native population and that they have the right to receive bilingual education; there are not bibliographic materials in native languages.

4.1.3.7 Types of uses

What do people USE the venues for (most frequent kinds of information and services people seek in them, activities they carry out in them)?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Refer to section 3.4 Charts: Information Needs and complement here as needed.

Education is the main information required in public libraries (in urban areas 71%, 95% in rural), followed by entertainment (42% urban, 13% rural), health information (29% urban, 4% rural), and news (29% urban, 4% rural).

Libraries are used mainly to access their bibliographical collections, and also to participate in courses and cultural activities (conferences, tell story, etc.). In few libraries which provide ICT services, they are used for communication activities (email 97%, chat 63%), and for web browsing.

4.1.3.8 Number, type, and frequency of users

Refer to section 3.4 Charts: Information Needs. Complement here as needed.

Libraries have not a user register that allows estimating number of user they serve. From our survey, library user are more female (58% in urban areas) than male; they are mainly young students (around 70% with level education up to high school), between 15-35 years old (79% urban, 83% rural). Most users are from medium social class.

4.1.3.9 Users Capacity to use information and services offered

What is the overall capacity of the users to take advantage of public access to information and communication resources, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c)?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Students, as main users of services in libraries, have the capacity to use services and information provided by libraries.

4.1.3.10 Training courses for users

Describe training courses offered to the public at this venue, and if they offer some kind of testing and certification.

Training courses:

Libraries offer courses aimed to help students with courses at schools; during school vacations they offer courses on arts, handicraft, etc.

ICT specific training courses: Few public libraries that offer ICT services provided training courses in Office software (Word, Excel) and use of Internet.

4.1.3.11 Integration into daily routines

How easy is it for users to integrate the information and services offered in this type of venue into their daily lives? (offer concrete solutions to their needs and problems, make it easier to solve them at this venue than in other places)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Libraries are integrated to the students' routine; they come in search of information to solve their tasks at the school, since they do not have sufficient bibliography in at home. The service of "directed homework" by a teacher in the library strongly influences this process of integration.

4.1.3.12 Users perceptions about the venue

What is the general perception or opinion of the population about the venue (not necessarily its specific services, but the venue itself: i.e., what do people generally think about libraries? Are they places that are "cool" or "only for elites" etc?), differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c)? This includes perception by people who do not use the venue…

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The general perception is that public libraries are for students, they are not conceived as a place where normal people would find useful and practical information for daily activities. Libraries are considered 'cultural spaces' –good for conferences, talks, movies, etc- by communities that had a library promoting such kind of activities in a regular basis, but those are minority cases.

4.1.3.13 Social appropriation of information and generation of new knowledge

What activities, products and services are users undertaking that exhibit new levels of social appropriation of technologies and generation of knowledge? For example, how are users generating and disseminating new knowledge, products and services through their use of this venue? (see category 13 in Real Access Framework for Social Appropriation of Technology).

If relevant, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

There are few libraries that offer ICT services. There are not big levels of appropriation in those that offer such services; technology is just used for accessing to the information.

4.1.3.14 Trust, safety, and privacy

What is the general perception or opinion of the population about the safety, security and privacy (TRUST) of the information and services offered in this venue?

Libraries are perceived as trustable and secure places, especially for kids which are the majority of their users.

4.1.3.15 Gaps and opportunities in information and services offered

What other information gaps and opportunities exist, which are not being met? (other information/services people need that are not being met there and could be offered, especially through Digital ICT services)

Public libraries are mostly oriented to serve school students information needs. Then, most of libraries are not developing services or collections to address information needs of the rest of the population.

Libraries could develop services for adults focused in their information needs that are related basically with their economic activities, health care, job seek, etc.

4.1.4 Enabling environment

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of the ENVIRONMENT ecosystem in this type of venue (local economy, national economy, legal and regulatory framework, political will and public support, regional and international context)?

Public libraries do not count with specific policies that facilitate its development, in this sense political support to this venue is low.

Libraries depends completely from a fund assigned by Education Department, this situation make them sensitive to budget assignments to such department; while national economy registered expansion as last years, their funds are secure.

4.1.4.1 Local and national economy

Describe the local and national economic environment and how it affects public access to information and communication in this type of venue (refer to and complement economic summary in country assessment, section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

As long as SINAB depends from the Education Department (Ministerio de Educación), it is completely sensible to budget assignments to such department. The economical grown experienced in last years permitted bigger spent in different sectors, including education. The portion of the general budget dedicated to education has risen to 11% in 2007. Such increment had permitted to extend the libraries network through the country.

4.1.4.2 Legal and regulatory framework

Describe the legal and regulatory framework and how it affects public access to information and communication in this type of venue (refer to and complement economic summary in country assessment, section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

There are not significant legal and regulatory issues that affect libraries as public access to information and communication.

4.1.4.3 Political will and public support

What is the level of political will and public support for this type of venue? (refer to and complement section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Public libraries receive political support in the context of education policies. Since SINAB was created in 1987 as part of Education Department, there are not specific policies oriented to public libraries.

4.1.4.4 Organization and networking

Describe if the facilities in this type of venue organized in any network, association or other collective body? (i.e., national public library system, telecentre franchise or network, etc)?

Libraries are part of SINAB (national libraries system) that establishes their policies, provide training to their staff and books. SINAB also centralize technical processing of books and other materials. SINAB was created as a decentralized unit of the education department which objective is to develop process of cultural community participation and to develop the reading habits of the population.

4.1.4.5 Partnerships

Describe notable public-private partnerships in support of this type of venue.

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

There is not any notable case of such kind of support; libraries are maintained by SINAB with public funds.

4.1.4.6 Other environment factors

Other factors in the environment that affect access and use of information in this kind of venue, not covered above?

4.1.5 For publicly funded venues only: Revenue streams

This section is meant specifically for publicly-funded venues (public libraries, national connectivity programs, etc).

4.1.5.1 Budget

What is the total budget for this public access venue system (applies especially for libraries, answer for other venues if applicable and if available)?

Total Budget for Fiscal Year 2006

Local currency name US Dollar amount (local currency) 1'826,945

Approx. equivalent in USD 1'826,945 based on exchange rate of on date .

4.1.5.2 Relative size of budget

How large (or small) is this budget in relation to other funding streams? (this is a way to show, in financial terms, how much the government cares about information and public access as compared to a variety of other issues in the country).

Relative Size of Budget for same year	Total budget (local currency)	Comments
Total national budget	10359 millions	
Education	923.2 millions	
Tourism	4.4 millions	
Public libraries	1'826,945	

Other Comments:

Public libraries are funded with Education Department budget.

4.1.5.3 Sources of funding

What are the sources of funding for this public access venue system?

Sources of funding:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Government sources:	100%	
International donors:		
National donors:		
User fees/services:		
Other (name)		
Other (name)		
Other (name)		

Other Comments:

4.1.5.4 Paths and flows of resources

How do resources get allocated and disbursed to the actual venues? For the principal funders, and especially for the public sources, what is the flow of funds? How are the funds raised (what tax stream), what path do the tax streams flow before they get to the specific venues? Who makes decisions about this funding?

SINAB received an annual disbursement from Education Department budget. SINAB centralized all payments related with libraries maintenance as far as all decisions about allocation of resources.

4.1.5.5 Fees and cost recovery

Describe if there are user fees or any other type of cost recovery. How does it affect service delivery and usage?

Funds obtained by fees are used to replace inputs consumed in offering the service as paper and ink for photocopies, toner of printer, etc. Other expenses like equipment renovation are not considered in services fees, for which the libraries depend completely on the central administration of the SINAB.

4.1.5.6 Cost categories

What are the main cost categories in the operation of this kind of venue? (% of total annual budget)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cost Categories for Operation:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Staff (salaries, benefits)	20%	
Building infrastructure	20%	
Utilities	45%	Includes furniture and bibliographic materials
Staff Training	5%	
Computers/technology	10%	More related to audiovisuals equipments than to computers
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
Total	100%	

Other Comments:

4.1.5.7 Recent changes and future trends

Describe any recent changes and anticipated future trends in the funding and revenue streams for this type of venue in the country. Have funding levels risen or decreased dramatically over the past few years? What is the outlook for the foreseeable future?

The budget for libraries had grown in the last years and it is expectable that it will continue growing. SINAB has plans to increase the number of libraries in the country and to transform small libraries in community cultural centers.

4.1.6 Case example for public libraries

Provide a short descriptions and commentary for each type of venue, offering a realistic sense of what the venue looks and feels like in its day to day operation, the kind of people who visit, and the kind of services they receive. Also, the case example indicates what makes the case unique or what features are commonly shared with other venues. A photo and short quotes will make it even more real.

Insert Case Example and Photo here.

Biblioteca Pablo Palacio: Biblioteca Modelo SINAB

The library Pablo Palacio was inaugurated in 2004. Initial collection was formed unifying 3 libraries that were working in Education Department, and compiling the dispersed material from different offices.

The nearness to a university and the specialization of its collection in educational topics is the reason for their main users are university students. This library is different from the majority of the libraries of the SINAB that attend mainly to school students. The library is very crowded, they have around 60 users every day. The library attends from 8:15 to 16:15.

Its collection is registered in a database (ISIS) that can be consulted locally. They have implemented a service of reference, photocopy service, a child room with books and games, and a computer room with 4 computers with Internet connection. Users have free Internet for half an hour; Internet use is restricted to search academic information, is prohibited to use computer to access e-mail, chat, etc.

The library, besides attending users, is in charge to technical processing (cataloguing and classification) of bibliographical material that is distributed in all SINAB's libraries.

As every other libraries, the library Pablo Palacio suggest the acquisition of bibliographical material to the SINAB headquarters which is in charge of the acquisition and distribution of the material. In addition, it gets local individual donations to increase its bibliographical fund.

The library staff includes 7 full-timers: a manager of the Internet room and the photocopies, two at technical processes, two in public attention, a librarian and a watchman.

5 Venue-Specific Assessments

5.2 Venue 2: Telecenters

5.2.1 Overall venue assessment

Provide a broad picture of the public access information landscape in this venue, informed by the results of this research.

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of public access information in this type of venue?

There are not a lot of telecentres in place in Ecuador and their service is restricted to the population at the localities where they are. Most of telecenters are in rural zones or deprived places where private investments are not interested in provide Internet and other associated services. High connection costs produce that most of telecenters face financial sustainability problems, most of the time they do not have al sustainability strategy and when external funding ends telecenters may close.

Telecenters are not significant in gross numbers and at national level, they are undoubtedly less significant in the quantity of people served than the other two venues presented in this research. However, the importance of telecenters experience as a whole goes far away the services provided by each one to specific people. The strategy of telecenters implementation has had a considerable influence in policy makers because their experience shows the usefulness of Internet for rural people and some factors of failure and success. That had contributed to shape policies and projects as PROMEC project, whereas it may be argued that lack of consideration of important factors had led this project to failure.

Telecenters are promoted by local CBOs, NGOs or governments. Lot of them has been nurtured on community needs assessments, which provide them an important tool to develop adequate services and contents; they are also capable to perform capacity building activities on issues important to the community by using ICTs. By doing so they are contributing with social appropriation of technology.

5.2.2 Access

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of ACCESS ecosystem in this type of venue (physical access, appropriate technology, affordability)?

There are not a lot of telecenters but they are normally located at rural zones or poor urban place; at those places they are in most of the cases the only source of information or provider The Provinces with more telecenters are Azuay, Chimborazo, Guayas y Pichincha.

The technology used by telecenters is more appropriated for young people with developed

computer skills; however, telecenters are known by the programs or actions they develop in order to include all people sectors in ICT usage.

Few telecenters offer free charge services (usually promoted for local governments). But all have low prices, affordable for most of the people.

Connection costs are high for telecenters and it becomes a barrier to them in order to accomplish their social aims.

5.2.2.1 Physical access

Describe how accessible this venue is to various population segments, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c), especially the differences between urban and non-urban settings.

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Telecenters are not numerous, we have identified 45 telecentros that depend on different institutions and 530 telecentros installed on the project PROMEC, on which there are doubts with regard to their current operability and sustainability. In spite of the small number, the telecenters are very close to the population where they exist. Telecenters are located preferably in rural zones and poor urban neighborhoods, all the telecentros of the PROMEC are in this type of localities, as well as 40 telecenters from other institutions.

5.2.2.2 Appropriate technology and services

Describe how appropriate the technologies, services and information offered in this venue are to the population, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The technology that the telecenters offer is more adapted for young people with previous training in its use. Nevertheless, telecenters produce and offer appropriate information (relevant, opportune) for its target population, which, added to the programs of training that offer, allows a process of appropriation of technology by the population that they attend.

5.2.2.3 Affordability

Describe how affordable the technologies and services offered in this venue are to the population, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

A group of telecenters offer free services, especially those dependent from local governments. Telecenters that charge for services have very low prices which are accessible for their target population. Furthermore, telecenters usually have specific groups which receive free services (farmers or students or women, depending on the telecenter orientation).

5.2.2.4 Fees for services

What fees or other requirements exist in order to access and use the information in the venues? (registration, user fees, restrictions to certain populations)

If there are fees: What do these fees buy?

Access to Internet for one hour

Indicate amount in local currency 0.50

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.50

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

Print a page

Indicate amount in local currency 0.10

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.10

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

CD burning

Indicate amount in local currency 0.25

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.25

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Explain any salient differences in the services offered in different regions, sizes or other variables of significance:

Fees difference is produced by difference in telecenter funding. When the telecenter is supported by the local government their fees are lower because the telecenter does not need to collect money from fees in order to survive.

5.2.2.5 Geographic distribution

What is the distribution of the venues in terms of their geographic location?

Complement any details not already included in section 2.1: Venue Selection.

The following chart shows the telecenter distribution by provinces, being Azuay, Chimborazo, Guayas and Pichincha the provinces with more telecenters.

Provinces	**Number of telecenters**
Azuay	7
Cotopaxi	4
Chimborazo	6
Esmeraldas	1
Galápagos	3
Guayas	5

Imbabura	3
Loja	2
Manabi	1
Napo	3
Pichincha	7
Santo Domingo	1
Sucumbios	1
Tungurahua	1
Total	**45**

5.2.2.5.1 Map

If available, insert a map that displays the geographic distribution of this type of venue in the country (expand to the size you need).

Description of map:

5.2.2.6 Other factors affecting access

Other factors that affect equitable access to public information in this type of venue, not covered above?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Telecenters normally have a low quality connection to the Internet and not enough computers. Low Internet service coverage produces high connectivity costs for far away places. Because of this reason, financial sustainability is a problem that most of the telecenters had not solved yet, relying in external funds.

5.2.3 Capacity and relevance

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of CAPACITY ecosystem in this type of venue (human capacity, locally relevant content, integration into daily routines, socio-cultural factors, trust in technology, social appropriation of technology)?

The telecenters are very close to the population to whom they attend, in many cases they are community projects, which allows them to know about the needs and capacities of the population. This empathy with the community allows telecenters to design and to offer locally appropriate services, besides participating in processes of community creation of contents.

The capacities in the use of the ICT, as much of operators as users, are not high; however, this tool

is used for the solution of concrete problems. This allows developing confidence in the population who perceives the telecenter as a space to solve part of their needs.

5.2.3.1 Staff size

How many people work in a typical facility for this type of venue? (full time-equivalent employees or contractors; describe any significant variations, i.e., large, medium and small libraries in the country)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Telecenters use to have 2 employees. Telecenters that offer other services to the community (training, childcare, etc) normally have 3 to 4 people working. In telecenters administered by local communities personnel use to be volunteering.

5.2.3.2 Staff training

What is the overall capacity of the staff (i.e., librarians, telecentres operators) to help users access and use public access to information and communication services offered in this venue? Differentiate by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

(iii) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

(iv) For Public Libraries, indicate if Library School training is available and/or required for librarians.

Most of the operators had not any formal training on ICT before getting to work at telecenters; they are usually trained by working by the institution that promotes the telecenter. Operators are normally members of the attended communities, so they know about community information needs as far of lacks in terms of capacities to use ICTs. They have empathy with community issues and members, and that helps them to work with different kind of users aiding them to get benefits from using the infrastructure.

5.2.3.3 Services offered

What kind of services does this type of venue offer to the public? (i.e., access to books, magazines; meeting and conference rooms; audio/video programs, computers, Internet, other). Include Digital ICT services if offered.

	Services Offered	*Comments*
11.	Internet Access	Is provided by all of them
12.	Printing	Most of telecenters provide this service
13.	Computer training	Some telecenters offer a formal training, but most of them help users to acquired basic computer skills
14.	Access to books, magazines and manuals	
15.	Meeting room	some telecenter are point of meetings for their communities

16.	Support for local projects	Related with education, productive activities, etc.
17.	Phone calls	
18.		
19.		
20.		

Explain any salient differences in the services offered in different regions, sizes or other variables of significance:

Differences regarding services provided depend on objectives and orientation of each telecenter. There are telecenters which prioritize services related to education, productive activities as agriculture or tourism, capacity building, etc.

5.2.3.4 Programs for underserved communities

Describe if this venue has programs specifically intended to reach underserved communities, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

All the telecenters attend underserved communities. Some attend young people helping them to get appropriate jobs by developing their capacities; others are spaces for community development and provide services addressing community needs, childcare for example; local governments' telecenters try to increase citizen participation by using ICTs, which supposes capacity building and web systems development; other telecenters develop information systems for the groups they are serving as farmers, small entrepreneurs, etc.

5.2.3.5 Relevant content

What type of locally relevant content is available? What else is needed? Who is doing it?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Available Content:

Telecentros have few contents available, but they constitute a way to access available contents in Internet. There are telecenters that produce information about agriculture, education, markets for producers, sanitation, etc.

Other Content Needed:

The needed contents are vast; every telecenter should develop contents adapted to the specific needs of the community to which they attend. In general terms, it is needed to develop local contents in health, education, conservation of the environment, relevant productive activities for every place, and human, civil and social rights.

Much of those contents exist, but it is needed to collect, organize and reformat them in order to make them appropriate for communities.

Local Initiatives to build needed content:

Telecenters promoted by the Coordinadora Ecuatoriana Agroecológica are producing information on agro-ecology production; a telecenter promoted by ACT (Ayllacunapc Causamaimanta Tandari) produce information on agricultural products prices and access to fair markets; telecenters of the Asociación Cristiana de Jovenes (YMCA) produce information on young employment.

***Source**: Telecenters' Web pages, interviews*

5.2.3.6 Services and information available in local languages

Describe the availability of services and contents relevant to human development that are available in **local languages** in this type of venue? (i.e., info on health, education, government services, etc)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Identified telecenters do not have contents or offer services in local languages.

5.2.3.7 Types of uses

What do people USE the venues for (most frequent kinds of information and services people seek in them, activities they carry out in them)?

(ii) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Refer to section 3.4 Charts: Information Needs and complement here as needed.

Main use of telecenters is communication activities; email use is the principal activity perform by users (100% in urban areas, and 33% in rural), followed by chat (85% urban, 50% rural) and blogs and social networking (85% urban, and 33% rural); in rural areas phone use is high too (67%). Web browsing is the next category of more common use (50% rural), followed by commerce and business (29% urban, and 17% rural), and finally games (17% rural).

Most of users in telecenters look for information in education (71% urban, 50% rural); entertainment information is more sought in rural areas (14% urban, 50% rural). Information requirements related with health, agriculture and government services are not significant.

5.2.3.8 Number, type, and frequency of users

Refer to section 3.4 Charts: Information Needs. Complement here as needed.

Telecenters' users in urban areas are mainly men (60%), whilst in rural areas, women users' rise 50%; there are not significant differences by gender in ICT uses through telecenters.

Young people between 15-35 years old are most of the users of telecenters in urban areas (87%), whilst in rural places user are more distributed by age (50% under 14, 17% 15-35, and 33% older 35); people older than 61 are not telecenters users.

People with low income are majority of users in telecenters (69% urban, 73% rural); this is

related with their education level, in urban places 57% of user ended high school, but in rural areas 66% of user rise only elementary level.

5.2.3.9 Users capacity to use information and services offered

What is the overall capacity of the users to take advantage of public access to information and communication resources, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c)?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Young people have more capacities to use the services that the telecentros offer, because they are more acquainted with the use of the technology. Adults have major difficulties; nevertheless the training that telecenters offer (in formal way and with continuous assistance from the operators) allows them to acquire new skills.

Considering low levels of most of users of telecenters –especially in rural zones, telecenters promote the development of appropriate contents to the needs and capacities of the people that they attend.

5.2.3.10 Training courses for users

Describe training courses offered to the public at this venue, and if they offer some kind of testing and certification.

Training courses: Courses to improve productive activities as agriculture or tourism.

ICT specific training courses: Telecenter offer basic training courses in Office software (Word, Excel) and use of Internet, but they do not offer certification..

5.2.3.11 Integration into daily routines

How easy is it for users to integrate the information and services offered in this type of venue into their daily lives? (offer concrete solutions to their needs and problems, make it easier to solve them at this venue than in other places)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Telecenters are created to attend determined groups and their specific needs. In that sense, telecenters offer solutions to population concrete needs; in general, they solve communication needs, depending on the objectives of each telecenter they solve specific information needs (for farmers, students, etc) and other needs not directly related to ICTs, as childcare, community organization, job seeking training, etc.

This especially designed offer would be integrated by the users to their routine: the telecenters provide means of communication with migrant relatives, take care of children while they work, provide space for community meetings, give information on market prices of their products and so on.

5.2.3.12 Users perceptions about the venue

What is the general perception or opinion of the population about the venue (not necessarily its specific services, but the venue itself: i.e., what do people generally think about libraries? Are they places that are "cool" or "only for elites" etc?), differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c)? This includes perception by people who do not use the venue…

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Telecenters are positively valued by the attended population. They perceive them as places for young people because of the technology and as cheaper internet access points. Each telecenter is also perceived considering the specific services or objectives it has.

5.2.3.13 Social appropriation of information and generation of new knowledge

What activities, products and services are users undertaking that exhibit new levels of social appropriation of technologies and generation of knowledge? For example, how are users generating and disseminating new knowledge, products and services through their use of this venue? (see category 13 in Real Access Framework for Social Appropriation of Technology).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Telecenters have had different experiences of social appropriation of technology. The more successful are those associated with productive activities improvement.

For example, the community telecenter of Guamote of the Fundación ACT produce information on agricultural products prices which is send to CAMARI (a solidarity trading system) to look for fair markets. Those prices are also broadcasted weekly by the radio "la Voz de Guamote" to the rest of rural settlements of the jurisdiction, then farmers have information that help them to decide when and where to sell their products.

5.2.3.14 Trust, safety, and privacy

What is the general perception or opinion of the population about the safety, security and privacy (TRUST) of the information and services offered in this venue?

Telecenters are trusted by their communities; they are also considered safe places, especially in poor communities with security and delinquency problems.

5.2.3.15 Gaps and opportunities in information and services offered

What other information gaps and opportunities exist, which are not being met? (other information/services people need that are not being met there and could be offered, especially through Digital ICT services)

High rates of migration in Ecuador constitute an opportunity to telecenters to develop services oriented to migrants and their families. Not only communication services but financial ones.

5.2.4 Enabling environment

2 – 3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of the ENVIRONMENT ecosystem in this type of venue (local economy, national economy, legal and regulatory framework, political will and public support, regional and international context)?

The development of a telecommunication strategy in Ecuador provides a favorable environment for the creation of new telecenters to provide connectivity to underserved communities. However, the failure of the huge project "Telecentros PROMEC" generated a focus change that prioritizes public schools as Internet access points. In spite this situation, the increment on the collection of FODETEL –as a product of contracts renegotiation and the telecommunications market grown- provides an opportunity to finance telecenter creation by CBOs, local governments and NGOs.

5.2.4.1 Local and national economy

Describe the local and national economic environment and how it affects public access to information and communication in this type of venue (refer to and complement economic summary in country assessment, section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The intensive growth of the telecommunications sector and the renegotiation of contracts with service providers, guarantees an increase in the next years in the collection for the FODETEL that is equivalent to 1 % of the telecommunications companies invoicing. This fund would finance the creation of more telecenters; however, the trend seems to be the provision of connectivity to public schools.

5.2.4.2 Legal and regulatory framework

Describe the legal and regulatory framework and how it affects public access to information and communication in this type of venue (refer to and complement economic summary in country assessment, section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Regulation on public Internet access centers and Cybercafés (Resolution Not. 073-02-CONATEL-2005) put barriers to offer services using VoIP; telecenters as public Internet access centers can offer VoIP exclusively for international salient traffic, but not for local, regional or national calls, and cellular; in some place where there is not developed telephony services, this regulation do not have sense, because no one more is offering that service.

5.2.4.3 Political will and public support

What is the level of political will and public support for this type of venue? (refer to and complement section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The national plan for telecommunications development 2007-2012 constitutes the framework for governmental policies of connectivity provision. The creation of telecenters is part of this policy

and is being executed with FODETEL funds.

5.2.4.4 Organization and networking

Describe if the facilities in this type of venue organized in any network, association or other collective body? (i.e., national public library system, telecentre franchise or network, etc)?

There are small networks of telecenters which were promoted by the same institution. There is an email list of Ecuadorian telecenters, but there is not one association that joints all telecenters.

5.2.4.5 Partnerships

Describe notable public-private partnerships in support of this type of venue.

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

PROMEC project was the most notable public-private partnerships related with telecenters and with public access to information or ICT in general. But the experience was a failure.

FODETEL is funding different projects of telecenter creation or installment, those projects are being executed by local governments or NGOs. The most important of such projects is one of the Fundacion ERPE which aims to install a network of 50 community telecenters to support production and marketing of organic products, basic rural education, and health promotion, in Chimborazo Province.

5.2.4.6 Other environment factors

Other factors in the environment that affect access and use of information in this kind of venue, not covered above?

In general terms, telecenters face financial sustainability problems. They initially rely in external funding and when it comes to its end they are normally not prepared to cover their operative costs. Another problem is the technical capacity of the staff which makes them dependents from the technical support of the institutions that have promoted them, which normally cause service restrictions.

5.2.5 For publicly funded venues only: Revenue streams

This section is meant specifically for publicly-funded venues (public libraries, national connectivity programs, etc).

5.2.5.1 Budget

What is the total budget for this public access venue system (applies especially for libraries, answer for other venues if applicable and if available)?

Total Budget for Fiscal Year fiscal year

Local currency name amount (local currency)

Approx. equivalent in USD based on exchange rate of on date .

5.2.5.2 Relative size of budget

How large (or small) is this budget in relation to other funding streams? (this is a way to show, in financial terms, how much the government cares about information and public access as compared to a variety of other issues in the country).

Relative Size of Budget for same year	Total budget (local currency)	Comments
Total national budget		
Education		
Other (name)		
Public libraries		

Other Comments:

5.2.5.3 Sources of funding

What are the sources of funding for this public access venue system?

Sources of funding:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Government sources:		
International donors:		
National donors:		
User fees/services:		
Other (name)		
Other (name)		
Other (name)		

Other Comments:

5.2.5.4 Paths and flows of resources

How do resources get allocated and disbursed to the actual venues? For the principal funders, and especially for the public sources, what is the flow of funds? How are the funds raised (what tax stream), what path do the tax streams flow before they get to the specific venues? Who makes decisions about this funding?

5.2.5.5 Fees and cost recovery

Describe if there are user fees or any other type of cost recovery. How does it affect service delivery and usage?

5.2.5.6 Cost categories

What are the main cost categories in the operation of this kind of venue? (% of total annual budget)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cost Categories for Operation:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Staff (salaries, benefits)		
Building infrastructure		
Utilities		
Staff Training		
Computers/technology		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
Total	100%	

Other Comments:

5.2.5.7 Recent changes and future trends

Describe any recent changes and anticipated future trends in the funding and revenue streams for this type of venue in the country. Have funding levels risen or decreased dramatically over the past few years? What is the outlook for the foreseeable future?

5.2.6 Case example for venue 2: Telecenter

Provide a short descriptions and commentary for each type of venue, offering a realistic sense of what the venue looks and feels like in its day to day operation, the kind of people who visit, and the kind of services they receive. Also, the case example indicates what makes the case unique or what features are commonly shared with other venues. A photo and short quotes will make it even more real.

Insert Case Example and Photo here.

Colinas del Norte Telecenter:

The telecenter is on the community house at the Vista Hermosa sector of the Barrio de Colinas del Norte, in Quito. The telecenter is managed by the community. Its objective is to attend people of the neighborhood. Specially relatives of migrants. The telecenter is promoted by Fundación ChaquiNet

The telecenter provide the following services:

Access to computers and the Internet with 4 computers bought by the community. They have not permanent connection, so clients should buy a card. It also provide printing services at the same cost of cybercafés-

Childcare and after school tutoring for working mothers.

Library, games room (ludoteca), video collection, Audio y video room.

Technical training programs coordinated by other national institution (Professional training center – SECAP). It also offers workshops on English and informatics conducted by Chasquinet to groups of 15 to 18 children, young people or adults.

One member of the staff works at computer service, two at childcare (one with the babies), and one or two at training activities.

Most of telecenter users' are students to make their homework. Mothers that work go for childcare service.

The telecenter helps to solve community needs because it was designed after community need identification. Closeness to the community allows the telecenter to become a space appropriated by the community.

The Colinas del Norte telecenter experience is interesting because it is the community which manages the telecenter, identify needs and design services appropriate to them.

6 Venue-Specific Assessments (cont.)

6.3 Venue 3: Cybercafés

6.3.1 Overall venue assessment

Provide a broad picture of the public access information landscape in this venue, informed by the results of this research.

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of public access information in this type of venue?

Cybercafés were opened since 1998 oriented to serve tourists; through these years they turn into the main point to access Internet for population in Ecuador. For people without internet connection at home or without computer, cybercafés solve their requirement to access ICT services.

Cybercafés are more concentrated in urban areas (especially in big cities as Quito y Guayaquil); cybercafés users are mainly young people; they go there to solve necessities of communication, information and entertainment, and in some cases they become in spaces of socialization for young people. Adults and older people do not use this venue in a significant proportion, because they did not develop computer skills, and cybercafés do not offer training.

Cybercafés offer just connectivity, they do not develop contents; however, people give them a great value.

6.3.2 Access

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of ACCESS ecosystem in this type of venue (physical access, appropriate technology, affordability)?

For people without internet connection at home or without computer (the most of the population), cybercafés solve their requirement to access ICT services. But not all people have same possibilities to use cybercafés, they are more concentrated in urban that in rural areas.

When firsts cybercafés opened fees were 10 times higher than today; fees prices was going down because connection cost was going down too, and because more cybercafés was opened; however Ecuador has the highest cost for internet connection in Latin America, so fees in cybercafés are affordable for few people with low income.

Technology is appropriate for young people with computer skills developed; cybercafés do not offer training courses in order to incorporate adults and older people as users.

6.3.2.1 Physical access

Describe how accessible this venue is to various population segments, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c), especially the differences between urban and non-urban settings.

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

There are more cybercafés in urban areas; then, rural population is less attended by these services, but there are not statistics about that. Considering chart presented under geographic distribution, it would be said that provinces with more rural population have proportionally less cybercafés.

6.3.2.2 Appropriate technology and services

Describe how appropriate the technologies, services and information offered in this venue are to the population, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The technology is more appropriate for young people; the people over 30-year-old are a small percentage of the users. The rural population has minor access to Internet through cybercafés, principally for lack of infrastructure of access, but with a strong association to the lack of capacities developed to use technologies.

6.3.2.3 Affordability

Describe how affordable the technologies and services offered in this venue are to the population, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

People with medium or high income are those who can pay the service without major restrictions. Considering that the basic salary is 200 $, the population with minor income has difficulty to access this service regularly. People over 15 years have more possibility to use the service because part of them generate their own income, minors have less possibility as long they depend on family economy.

6.3.2.4 Fees for services

What fees or other requirements exist in order to access and use the information in the venues? (registration, user fees, restrictions to certain populations)

If there are fees: What do these fees buy?

One hour of internet connection and/or use of computer

Indicate amount in local currency 0.70

Equivalent in US Dollars: 0.70

Date of estimate

and local currency name US Dollar

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Explain any salient differences in the services offered in different regions, sizes or other variables of significance:

Cybercafés in tourist zones in Quito and other touristy places (as Galápagos) use to be a little more expensive (US$ 1 per hour).

6.3.2.5 Geographic distribution

What is the distribution of the venues in terms of their geographic location?

Complement any details not already included in section 2.1: Venue Selection.

There is no accurate information with regard to the number and distribution of cybercafés in Ecuador. The Superintendence of Telecommunications has 316 registered, nevertheless this number corresponds only to those that are currently registered; however, most of cybercafés are not registered, in spite that this is a legal exigency. In 2005 the number of registered cybercafés were higher (1392), that information gives us a better idea of their distribution in the country; since most of Internet user make it by cybercafés, the proportion of Internet users by province would give a better idea of the dimension of this phenomena.

Pichincha province, including Quito, the capital and 2nd more populated city, concentrates 58% of Internet users of the country, 41% of cybercafés while 21% of the population has access to Internet. Guayas province, including Guayaquil, the most populated city, concentrates 22% of Internet users and 23% of cybercafés while 5.5% of its population has access to Internet. In Azuay & Galápagos provinces more than 5% of the population has access to internet; in Galápagos Internet offer had been stimulated by tourism industry. In the other 18 provinces the access to Internet is less than 3%.

	Cybercafés registered at SUPERTEL			Distribution of Internet users by provinces (June 2008)		Population by province with access to Internet	Rural population by province (Census 2001)
	2008	2005		Total	%		Rural
AZUAY	49	77	5.5%	78285	7.63%	5.07%	47.86%
BOLÍVAR	4	12	0.9%	1052	0.10%	0.57%	74.45%
CAÑAR	20	19	1.4%	5363	0.52%	1.05%	63.47%
CARCHI	0	3	0.2%	2103	0.21%	1.29%	52.82%
CHIMBORAZO	40	68	4.9%	6719	0.66%	1.69%	73.23%
COTOPAXI	5	21	1.5%	4798	0.47%	1.25%	60.91%
EL ORO	5	32	2.3%	8617	0.84%	0.93%	23.55%
ESMERALDAS	2	8	0.6%	7700	0.75%	1.78%	59.35%
GALÁPAGOS	4	9	0.6%	2460	0.24%	5.60%	18.18%
GUAYAS	18	325	23.3%	230305	22.46%	5.52%	49.94%
IMBABURA	13	28	2.0%	8929	0.87%	2.25%	54.72%
LOJA	35	69	5.0%	14591	1.42%	0.82%	49.84%
LOS RÍOS	2	8	0.6%	9914	0.97%	0.14%	48.10%
MANABÍ	14	38	2.7%	20217	1.97%	0.82%	66.67%
MORONA SANTIAGO	3	4	0.3%	2772	0.27%	0.58%	67.45%
NAPO	0	4	0.3%	1086	0.11%	1.12%	56.47%

ORELLANA	2	0		514	0.05%	0.56%	28.24%
PASTAZA	0	9	0.6%	1128	0.11%	1.46%	57.30%
PICHINCHA	57	576	41.4%	592405	57.77%	21.77%	64.42%
SANTO DOMINGO	3			5360	0.52%	1.10%	30.95%
SANTA ELENA	7			3224	0.31%	1.47%	44.01%
SUCUMBÍOS	1	3	0.2%	1994	0.19%	1.16%	14.65%
TUNGURAHUA	27	74	5.3%	15132	1.48%	2.96%	61.09%
ZAMORA CHINCHIPE	5	5	0.4%	866	0.08%	0.38%	69.72%
TOTAL	316	1392		1025534			

6.3.2.5.1 Map

If available, insert a map that displays the geographic distribution of this type of venue in the country (expand to the size you need).

Description of map:

6.3.2.6 Other factors affecting access

Other factors that affect equitable access to public information in this type of venue, not covered above?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The Internet access cost in Ecuador is one of the highest of Latin America, in spite of the recent direct connection of Ecuador to the Pan-American backbone, the price for the service has not diminished significantly. If this component of the cost of operation of the cybercafés does not go down, it is hard to imagine an expansion of cybercafés to zones with less concentrated (rural) population or with less income (peri-urban).

6.3.3 Capacity and relevance

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of CAPACITY ecosystem in this type of venue (human capacity, locally relevant content, integration into daily routines, socio-cultural factors, trust in technology, social appropriation of technology)?

Cybercafés usage is completely integrated to people routines; especially by young people that look for information related with education and perform entertainment and communication activities. Older people are minority among users because they did not develop abilities using computers and do not consider useful this tool to solve their particular information needs.

Cybercafés offer just connectivity, they do not offer training, and not develop contents; however people give them a great value. Despite of adults are not common user's, they consider cybercafés a great value because the technology is valuable by itself; some cybercafés became in spaces of

socialization for young people that attribute them a great value.

6.3.3.1 Staff size

How many people work in a typical facility for this type of venue? (full time-equivalent employees or contractors; describe any significant variations, i.e., large, medium and small libraries in the country)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

In most of the cybercafés work two employees, in the small ones just one, and in the biggest 3 to more.

6.3.3.2 Staff training

What is the overall capacity of the staff (i.e., librarians, telecentres operators) to help users access and use public access to information and communication services offered in this venue? Differentiate by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

(v) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

(vi) For Public Libraries, indicate if Library School training is available and/or required for librarians.

Staffs of cybercafés are young men that just get paid for services and solve minor problems. They would give some assistance to customers in downloading archives or opening e-mail accounts, but their administrative functions do not allow them to provide more assistance. Staff in urban areas usually university students with some computer knowledge. In rural areas, staff members just have secondary studies.

6.3.3.3 Services offered

What kind of services does this type of venue offer to the public? (i.e., access to books, magazines; meeting and conference rooms; audio/video programs, computers, Internet, other). Include Digital ICT services if offered.

Services Offered	*Comments*
21. Internet access	
22. Phone calls	
23. Printing	
24. Scanning	
25. Computer Games	
26. Typing	
27. Coffee and snacks	

28. Fax

29. Photocopies

30.

Explain any salient differences in the services offered in different regions, sizes or other variables of significance:

Bigger cybercafés offer more services related to cafeteria; depending on the zone where they are, those services would provide more income than Internet access. Smaller cybercafés just offer connectivity and related services.

6.3.3.4 Programs for underserved communities

Describe if this venue has programs specifically intended to reach underserved communities, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cybercafés are businesses, so they do not have interest in develop services for underserved communities.

6.3.3.5 Relevant content

What type of locally relevant content is available? What else is needed? Who is doing it?

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Available Content:

Cybercafés do not offer contents; they just offer access to Internet.

Other Content Needed:

Local Initiatives to build needed content:

Source:

6.3.3.6 Services and information available in local languages

Describe the availability of services and contents relevant to human development that are available in **local languages** in this type of venue? (i.e., info on health, education, government services, etc)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cybercafés do not develop contents; they offer connection to Internet and user browse for contents, but there are not significant information in local languages available in Internet.

6.3.3.7 Types of uses

What do people USE the venues for (most frequent kinds of information and services people seek in them, activities they carry out in them)?

(iii) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Refer to section 3.4 Charts: Information Needs and complement here as needed.

Main use of Cybercafés is communication activities; email use is the principal activity perform for users (75% in urban areas, and 50% in rural), followed by chat (58% urban, 43% rural) and blogs and social networking (51% urban, and 64% rural); in rural areas phone use is hide too (57%). Web browsing is the next category of use more common (45% urban, 57% rural), followed by games (20% urban, and 36% rural), and finally commerce and business (14%).

Around 50% of user in cybercafés look for information in education; entertainment information is the most required (48% urban, 64% rural). Information requirements related with health, agriculture and government services are not significant.

6.3.3.8 Number, type, and frequency of users

Refer to section 3.4 Charts: Information Needs. Complement here as needed.

According expert's estimations a cybercafé in a big city of Ecuador has around 100 constant users per month, in a medium city 50 users, and 30 in the small ones.

Cybercafés users in urban areas are mainly men (59%) , whilst in rural areas, women users rise 64%; this difference can be explain for different reasons, but one of them is communication needs unsatisfied at home in rural areas, that incorporate women in ICT uses through cybercafés.

Young people between 15-35 years old use cybercafés (84% urban, 57% rural); this segment usually are incorporated to labor market, so they can afford cost of services; people older 35 are not significant user (7%) because do not have needed ICT skills; in rural areas 36% of users are under 15 years old, and their use of cybercafés is mainly for education purposes because they usually do not have other source of information.

In urban areas hide educated population (70% with university degree) is main users of cybercafés; in rural areas user are more distributed according with their education level (42% elementary, 21% high school, and 37% with university or college degree).

In urban areas majority of users have medium income (62%) and are part of medium class (74%); in rural areas majority of users have a low income (63%).

6.3.3.9 Users capacity to use information and services offered

What is the overall capacity of the users to take advantage of public access to information and communication resources, differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c)?

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cybercafés users are mainly young people with capacity to get information and communicate using the access provided. Adults and older people with a low education level had not developed

computer skills, and cybercafés do not offer training for them, so they are excluded to use this resources.

6.3.3.10 Training Courses for Users

Describe training courses offered to the public at this venue, and if they offer some kind of testing and certification.

Training courses: Cybercafés do not offer training courses.

ICT specific training courses:

6.3.3.11 Integration into daily routines

How easy is it for users to integrate the information and services offered in this type of venue into their daily lives? (offer concrete solutions to their needs and problems, make it easier to solve them at this venue than in other places)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

The cybercafés are used as a priority by communicative purposes and of entertainment and in minor measure informative. The use of the cybercafés like way of communication (be for e-mail or telephonic calls) this one completely integrated to the routine of the users who have one accessible (both in distance and in cost); the migration, especially international, in Ecuador has generated a frequent use of these services.

6.3.3.12 Users perceptions about the venue

What is the general perception or opinion of the population about the venue (not necessarily its specific services, but the venue itself: i.e., what do people generally think about libraries? Are they places that are "cool" or "only for elites" etc?), differentiating by applicable Equity of Service variables (Form 1c)? This includes perception by people who do not use the venue.

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cybercafés are considered good and modern because of the technology they offer, they are definitely "cool". They are spaces that had permitted better communication and information access by young people. Lot of cybercafés had become social places where young people meet and socialize, especially those near urban downtowns.

6.3.3.13 Social appropriation of information and generation of new knowledge

What activities, products and services are users undertaking that exhibit new levels of social appropriation of technologies and generation of knowledge? For example, how are users generating and disseminating new knowledge, products and services through their use of this venue? (see category 13 in Real Access Framework for Social Appropriation of Technology).

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

We have not identified new levels of appropriation of technologies and generation of knowledge at cybercafés; this venue is mainly used for communication and recreation, and less for access in information. Students access to information by using cybercafés more often than the rest of the public, but they do not develop new knowledge or uses of technology, they just acquired more skills in using technology.

6.3.3.14 Trust, safety, and privacy

What is the general perception or opinion of the population about the safety, security and privacy (TRUST) of the information and services offered in this venue?

Cybercafés are perceived as safe places. In contrast with other places to access Internet, as work places, people feel that they have privacy for communication and information search.

6.3.3.15 Gaps and opportunities in information and services offered

What other information gaps and opportunities exist, which are not being met? (other information/services people need that are not being met there and could be offered, especially through Digital ICT services)

Cybercafés might turn into means of diffusion and access to governmental information. The advances of the government agencies in offering access to information and providing services across its portals in web might be of utility for major quantity of population if an agreement or alliance was established with cybercafés to provide these services.

6.3.4 Enabling environment

2–3 Paragraphs:
What is your overall assessment of the ENVIRONMENT ecosystem in this type of venue (local economy, national economy, legal and regulatory framework, political will and public support, regional and international context)?

There are not public policies that affect directly cybercafés, however progressive reduction of Internet cost, and expansion plans of operator enterprises draw a favorable environment for cybercafés, they would be establish in places where they weren't before, as rural areas because costs of connection (satellite) are expensive.

The other side, regulation about registration (with annual fees) and services offered for cybercafés, constituted a barrier to formalization of majority of cybercafés, and is perceived as negative for cybercafés owners.

6.3.4.1 Local and national economy

Describe the local and national economic environment and how it affects public access to information and communication in this type of venue (refer to and complement economic summary in country assessment, section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cybercafés are unstable businesses, there are cybercafés getting closed all the time while other are opening. However, the total amount of cybercafés is increasing, especially because of the progressive reduction of connection costs. Negotiations to amplify connectivity capacity to the Pan-American backbone and the extension in the coverage of services offered by providers will positively influence in the establishment of cybercafés in places where they weren't before, as rural places.

6.3.4.2 Legal and regulatory framework

Describe the legal and regulatory framework and how it affects public access to information and communication in this type of venue (refer to and complement economic summary in country assessment, section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

There is a regulation on cybercafés since (Resolución No. 073-02-CONATEL-2005), it ask them to be registered at the Superintendencia Nacional de Telecomunicaciones. The registration cost (US$400) is a barrier for most of cybercafés, which should operate illegally. Lack of formality of most of cybercafés prevents service quality control as connection velocity). This regulation determines certain restrictions on VoIP services that just would be offered for salient international traffic, being prohibited its use for any communication inside the country.

6.3.4.3 Political will and public support

What is the level of political will and public support for this type of venue? (refer to and complement section 3.5 Economic, Policy, and Regulatory Environment, calling out what is specific to this venue)

(i) If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cybercafés do not have support of public policies, big governmental projects prioritize schools as internet access points. Cybercafés owners consider above described regulatory framework as the expression of a policy against the development of cybercafés in Ecuador.

6.3.4.4 Organization and networking

Describe if the facilities in this type of venue organized in any network, association or other collective body? (i.e., national public library system, telecentre franchise or network, etc)?

There are several associations as the Asociación Ecuatoriana de Cibercafés or the Asociación de Cibercafés de Guayas, however, the number of associates is not significant. It would be explained because this business is extremely competitive making it hard to develop networks.

6.3.4.5 Partnerships

Describe notable public-private partnerships in support of this type of venue.

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

In 2005, the government initiated the " Plan Internet Para Todos ", it offered the cybercafés the possibility of being freed from the payment of the annual registration (US$400) in exchange for allowing 40 % of the use of the terminals for free navigation and e-mail for 4 daily hours to the members of unions, associations, foundations or institutions designated by the CONATEL as beneficiaries of the plan. By June, 2008 there are 300 cybercafés participating at this program.

6.3.4.6 Other environment factors

Other factors in the environment that affect access and use of information in this kind of venue, not covered above?

The lack of training of the population in the use of the tools that Internet offers and the computer supports they constitute a strong barrier in order that the set of the population uses these services. Only young people who grew using computers have developed the necessary skills, nevertheless there does not exist a plan of digital education for all the population.

6.3.5 For publicly funded venues only: Revenue streams

This section is meant specifically for publicly-funded venues (public libraries, national connectivity programs, etc).

6.3.5.1 Budget

What is the total budget for this public access venue system (applies especially for libraries, answer for other venues if applicable and if available)?

Total Budget for Fiscal Year

Local currency name amount (local currency)

Approx. equivalent in USD based on exchange rate of on date .

6.3.5.2 Relative size of budget

How large (or small) is this budget in relation to other funding streams? (this is a way to show, in financial terms, how much the government cares about information and public access as compared to a variety of other issues in the country).

Relative Size of Budget for same year	Total budget (local currency)	Comments
Total national budget		
Education		
Other (name)		
Public libraries		

Other Comments:

6.3.5.3 Sources of funding

What are the sources of funding for this public access venue system?

Sources of funding:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Government sources:		
International donors:		

National donors:
User fees/services:
Other (name)
Other (name)
Other (name)

Other Comments:

6.3.5.4 Paths and flows of resources

How do resources get allocated and disbursed to the actual venues? For the principal funders, and especially for the public sources, what is the flow of funds? How are the funds raised (what tax stream), what path do the tax streams flow before they get to the specific venues? Who makes decisions about this funding?

6.3.5.5 Fees and cost recovery

Describe if there are user fees or any other type of cost recovery. How does it affect service delivery and usage?

6.3.5.6 Cost categories

What are the main cost categories in the operation of this kind of venue? (% of total annual budget)

If appropriate, indicate any specifics that apply to Digital ICT services alone.

Cost Categories for Operation:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Staff (salaries, benefits)		
Building infrastructure		
Utilities		
Staff Training		
Computers/technology		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		
other (name)		

other (name)	
other (name)	
Total	100%

Other Comments:

6.3.5.7 Recent changes and future trends

Describe any recent changes and anticipated future trends in the funding and revenue streams for this type of venue in the country. Have funding levels risen or decreased dramatically over the past few years? What is the outlook for the foreseeable future?

6.3.6 Case example for venue 3: Cybercafés

Provide a short descriptions and commentary for each type of venue, offering a realistic sense of what the venue looks and feels like in its day to day operation, the kind of people who visit, and the kind of services they receive. Also, the case example indicates what makes the case unique or what features are commonly shared with other venues. A photo and short quotes will make it even more real.

Insert Case Example and Photo here.

PapayaNet

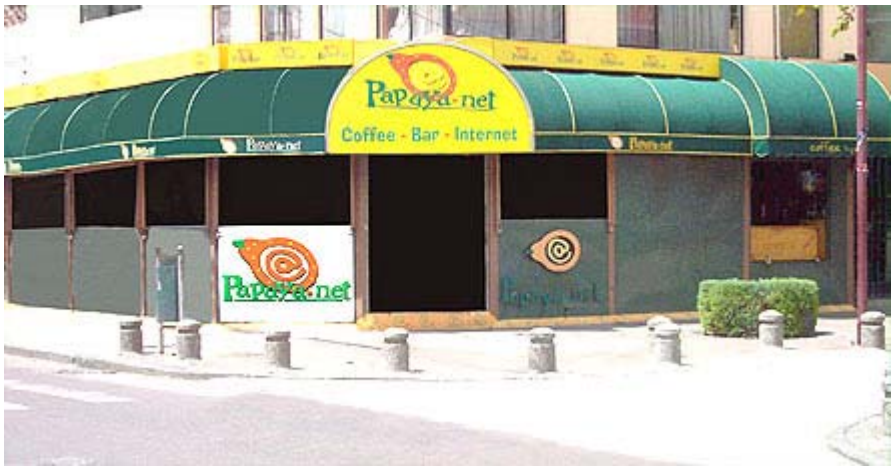
PapayaNet is a chain of cybercafés in the city of Quito. The first cybercafé was opened in 1998 to attend to the tourists who concentrated in the Mariscala neighborhood. The vision of the business was to provide the tourist of an environment who was offering the Internet service, telephony and food.

PapayaNet possesses 3 branches: the first one in the Mariscala, other in the Historical Center of Quito and the third one in the north of the city in the Shopping Center Condado. The branch have turned into a point of meeting both for tourists and young people of Quito.

The service of cafeteria is more profitable than the service of access to Internet, nevertheless they are strongly dependent, one could not exist without the other one. PapayaNet constitute a consolidated cybercafé that now offers also wireless connection.

The users are young people: high school or university students, professionals and tourists who use the access to Internet basically for communications and entertainment. Members of the staff are young people too; most of them are university students who work part-time. During the morning, when there is less public, just one person attends, but they are two in the evenings.

PapayaNet peculiarity is that it continues having its initial public objective: tourist; but it has also amplified its vision to convert itself in an interaction point which has Internet as an excuse.


Papaya-net
Coffee - Bar - Internet
Papaya-net

7 Success Factors and Strategic Recommendations

7.1 Summary of Lessons in Country

7.1.1 Information needs

What are the most critical information needs by underserved communities that are currently not being adequately met by public access to information and communication venues?

Information needs are precise and timely dependent. But in general it would be said that people need information on:

- Migration related information as migration procedures, remittance alternative systems, etc.
- Small business and jobs opportunity, it is provided by certain NGOs and governmental offices, but it needs better diffusion and usability.
- Community development opportunities: fair markets, tourism, environment.
- Health, the media make some diffusion, but people still need accessible, understandable, opportune and precise information on health issues.
- Agricultural issues as market prices, sowing intentions, weather forecasts, business opportunities, technical issues and so. There are some local or thematic agricultural information systems and services from non-governmental organizations.

7.1.2 Where people go

Where do people go for public access to information and communication in the country, especially underserved communities?

People go to libraries and telecenters when there is one near their place of residence. Cybercafés are also visited in order to communicate and also to get information and for entertainment. Its cost is a barrier for frequent use of certain users which can not afford it. Then cybercafés are more used by middleclass people.

7.1.3 How access, capacity, and environment affects public access

How do access, capacity and environment affect public access to information and communication venues in the country? (Refer to details under access, capacity and environment in research design document).

Public access to the above defined information and communication venues is affected by access, capacity and environment in different ways according to the type of venue. In general,

it would be said that location is the most relevant variable of access issues, being people living in rural areas the group with less access to any venue. Political environment seems to be supportive for telecenters, but it should go beyond of infrastructure deployment and invest more in appropriation of technology.

From these 3 groups of factors, we consider capacity issues, including content issues, as the most relevant and the most affecting one. Capacity issues marginalize important groups of people from enjoying new ICTs at newest venues. There is a lot of useful information in different repositories but it needs of reformatting or translation to simple terms.

7.1.4 Role of ICT

What is the role of ICT in public access to information and communication? What untapped opportunities exist?

ICT –especially the Internet- had become the preferred way to access information in the country for young people, mostly in urban but also in rural areas. Those that do not use ICT continue using traditional ways to access information not integrated to other public venues. The Internet is being used to enrich such traditional ways –social networks- because some of its members use it. However, some groups are marginalized; the older people, non-Spanish speakers or readers, the illiterate, rural inhabitants and -especially when combined with just mentioned variables- women and disabled people.

The above mentioned groups would enjoy information services through public venues if specific policies and actions are carried out related to capacity building and content development, but also with access for the disabled.

7.2 Success Factors and Recommendations

7.2.1 Where to invest resources

How could additional resources (money, people, time, knowledge) be best used to strengthen public access to information and communication venues and practices in the country? (i.e., solutions that would make it more accessible, affordable, appropriate?)

Underserved sectors would get benefits by accessing appropriate (opportune, relevant, usable and trustable) information through Internet, but it is needed:

- To produce, collect and organize such information.
- To connect sources having such information with social networks.
- To develop appropriate web information services.
- To train special groups in ICT usage.
- To reorient public libraries making them useful for everyone and not just students.

Additionally, it would be important to:

- Continue investing in public libraries and cultural centers, making them available for more people.
- Look for ways of collaboration between telecenters and libraries.

7.2.2 Key success factors

What are the key success factors for public access to information and communication to meet information needs of the population, especially underserved communities, and especially through digital ICT?

Information should be reformatted, translated, organized and diffused in appropriate ways in order to meet information needs of the population. Such information should reach social networks by being accessible through web information services, or at public libraries and other venues. Success factors to connect information sources with social networks are social participation, closeness to community and design of services considering community needs, CBOs engagement and appropriate diffusion. Underserved communities should develop capacities to use gotten information. Success factors on capacity development are purpose-oriented training, segregation of groups of interests and trainers' compromise.

Considering the venue functioning, it would be mentioned the following success factors: trained staff; motivation and compromise of staff and empathy with users; understanding of local needs and reality; raise local participation and/or support; capacity to demonstrate – through statistics or story telling- the impacts of the service; having a business plan, specially for those that are business; determination of core business or public (small entrepreneurs, kids that play certain kind of games or other special groups of clients); marketing.

7.2.3 Role of ICT

How can public access to information and communication venues in the country be strengthened to offer more meaningful and equitable access to information, especially using digital ICT?

Public libraries have not ICT integrated as their main tool to offer information and communication services. There is not doubt that ICT could be a strong tool to improve services, but if they do not reorient their target group to population in general, and develop staff capacities and contents, ICT as tool would not relevant.

7.2.4 Top ten recommendations

What are the Top Ten recommendations for public access to information and communication venues in your country? Make sure you include policy recommendations as part of them.

1. Reduce connection costs.
2. Research on ways to use migration phenomena to accelerate ICT use between underserved communities: social networking facilitated by ICTs, remittances to rural areas through telecenters or libraries, etc.
3. Provide small funds to local CBOs or NGOs to set up telecenters in rural zones or

deprived areas.

4. Research on telecenters sustainability key factors, analyze success and failures in order to provide recommendations.
5. Develop training programs on ICT use addressing special groups, as women, illiterates, non-Spanish speakers and older people.
6. Develop information systems for underserved groups.
7. Public libraries should be reoriented in order to become more than big school libraries and solve needs of population in general.
8. Asses and improve information systems usability.
9. Continue with programs that enlarge rural access to Internet.
10. Research on how to engage cybercafés into programs of provision and facilitation of useful and appropriate information in collaboration with other venues.

8 Appendices

Please attach on the next pages any other relevant information, resources or materials that can help understand public access information venues in the country.

8.1 List of Countries Included in the Research

Algeria
Argentina
Bangladesh
Brazil
Colombia
Costa Rica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
Georgia
Honduras
Indonesia
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Malaysia
Moldova
Mongolia
Namibia
Nepal
Peru
Philippines
South Africa
Sri Lanka
Turkey
Uganda

8.2 Overview of Research Design

The Center for Information & Society (CIS), in partnership with the Information School of the University of Washington, has as part of its core mission the investigation of how inequities in our global society can be reduced through improved access to information and communication technologies (ICT). As part of its research activities, CIS has brought together interdisciplinary teams of researchers to examine the needs, readiness and success factors for public access to information and communication venues through digital ICTs in 24 countries around the world.

Project Goal:

- Understand information needs, and opportunities to strengthen institutions that offer public access to information and communication, especially to underserved communities, and especially through the use of digital ICT: What are the needs, barriers, opportunities and success factors for public access to information and communication to help human development in countries around the world? For the purpose of this study, research is primarily focused on Libraries and Other institutional venues for which access to information has a significant role. This research includes understanding venues where digital ICT is currently offered, *and* also where ICT is not currently offered but there is potential and strong institutional support to include ICT (for example, some public libraries where digital ICT services are currently not offered, but there would be strong interest in offering them).

  Libraries include public libraries and other types of libraries that are open to the public. **Other venues** include national initiatives that offer public access to information, either with ICTs (telecentres, cybercafés and the like) or without ICTs (post offices, community centers and similar) and are of significant importance in local contexts.

Project Purpose:

- Inform policy and funding decisions: Inform funders and government decision makers about future program direction and funding allocations

- Contribute to public knowledge: Disseminate results of in-depth country and comparative analyses, including research design and analytical models

To inform project design, CIS adapted the Real Access framework (Bridges.org), analyzing public access to information and communication through a total of 14 research categories grouped under the dimensions of **Access**, **Capacity & Relevance** and **Enabling Environments**. Adaptation was done in consultation with research partners around the world for the purposes of this study.

The implementation of this project is organized as a two-phase process:

Phase 1: Nov 07 – Feb 15, 2008

During Phase 1, a **Draft Country Report** will be prepared by local research teams in each country. The Draft Country Report includes a Country Profile, a Country Assessment and an early draft of Lessons & Recommendations.

The *Country Profile* is a collection of 50 general descriptive data points drawn from readily accessible sources; CIS pre-populates the reports for each country, and offers them for validation and comments by local teams. Country Profiles provide primarily statistical data that is intended to offer a quick snapshot of each country, including geography, political environment, demographics, economy, education and ICT infrastructure.

Using a common approach to define research processes, local teams will conduct initial fieldwork to inform a *Country Assessment*. The Country Assessment includes both a scan of information needs, especially for underserved communities; and an assessment of public access to information and

communication venues (with or without digital ICT services) and their environment, resulting in a better understanding of gaps, opportunities, and readiness of public access to information initiatives in each country.

During Phase 1, each country team will also complete an early draft of *Success Factors and Recommendations* focused on strengthening public access to information in the country, and identify potential themes and issues for further study in Phase 2.

Phase 1b: Feb 15-Mar 15, 2008

During this period, CIS will conduct a preliminary comparative analysis based on the Draft Country Reports from all participating countries, and suggest feedback and guidance for Phase 2 of the study. The comparative analysis will look for salient trends, emergent themes, patterns, and threads across regions. During this period, next steps will be determined for in-depth country research for Phase 2.

Phase 2: March 2008 – August 15, 2008

Phase 2 will involve a deeper assessment of public access to information and ICTs across all 24 countries. In particular, CIS is interested in deeper probing of the emerging themes and scenarios identified in Phase 1. A **Final Country Report** will include high level analysis, success factors and recommendations to strengthen public access to information and ICTs in each country. Final comparative analysis across countries, with analytical models and scenarios, will be completed by CIS after receiving the Final Country Reports.

Findings will be disseminated publically through reports, academic publications, conferences and consortiums. Each country team is expected to produce at least one publishable paper on their research and findings, plus additional papers emerging out of the comparative analysis and global findings. Publications will be part of the public domain, with the CIS web site, partners' sites, and other publication channels to be identified.

8.3 Annotated Country Profile (Form 2)

Attach here an updated copy of the annotated Country Profile (Form 2).

8.4 Other Appendices

- Ecuador public libraries list (attached)
- Ecuador telecenters list (attached)
- Ecuador users' survey (attached)
- Ecuador operator's survey (attached)
- Ecuador users and operators survey results (attached)
- Ecuador Cybercafés Registered (attached)