
PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION & ICTs
PHASE II REPORT

South Africa

Prepared for the University of Washington,
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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 25 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 25 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

South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world and the legacy of apartheid is still very much in evidence. The poorest 40% of the population spend less than 3% of national consumption, while the richest 10% have a 46% share of national consumption leading to the highest differences between rich and poor in the world. In a country where more than 80% of the population is African Black, 93% of the unemployed poor are Africans, 56% are female, and 70% are below the age of 35.

South Africa however has one of the most robust and well-developed media and information sectors in Africa. Constitutional provisions around media freedom and the right to access public information means that it offers a relatively stable institutional framework in which to develop sustainable and meaningful public information strategies. Given the socio-economic conditions of the majority of the population, practical public service information is a priority for disadvantaged communities.

Both the government and the non-profit sectors are leaders in the provision of public service information, and different media platforms are leveraged for these, including TV, radio, the Internet, mobile phones, outdoor marketing and print. While the government has embarked on numerous online content initiatives that offer useful information, such as government contacts, insight into strategies, and tender opportunities, a large portion of the intended beneficiaries of this information typically do not have Internet access. The fact that information intermediaries are often needed to bridge the gap between platforms such as the Internet and disadvantaged communities is suggestive. In this respect, while there has been some progress, the potential for using mobile technology to share public service information is relatively under-explored. Besides selecting the appropriate medium for information dissemination, the accessibility of the information when it is available remains

a problem (e.g. regarding language and clarity). Despite these challenges, information initiatives in the HIV/AIDS sector stand out, and appear to have had some impact. The sector has shown itself willing to experiment using multi-media platforms and creative messaging, amongst other innovative content development ideas, including developing TV dramas.

1.3 Country Overview

Five types of public access points were selected for inclusion in this study - public libraries, telecenters (which are mainly the government-funded, multi-purpose community centers with Internet access), HIV support centers, phone shops, and self-assisted ICT access points (kiosks, public internet terminals, digital doorways).

Public Libraries

There are more than 1537 libraries in South Africa (including about 79 mobile libraries), characterized by relatively few well resourced libraries in the old 'white' municipal areas and many under-resourced libraries in the remaining centers. However a heightened level of interest in support for the library sector has been recently demonstrated at central government level, as evidenced by the special allocation of ZAR 1bn¹ rand over 3 years for upgrading and expanding libraries in last year's national budget (2007). There is also an increased emphasis on establishing libraries in underserved areas.

This has translated into a higher priority for libraries for the agency that is responsible for the sector at the national level, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC). Following the announcement, DAC commissioned KPMG to carry out assessments of needs and began distribution of the funds to the provincial governments which are responsible for libraries in partnership with municipalities.

While provincial governments are ultimately responsible for libraries, constitutional change has left them somewhat in limbo in terms of the split in financing responsibilities with the municipalities. Studies of alternative revenue models have taken place and it is expected that this issue will be resolved shortly.

Some provinces have more advanced strategies for improving libraries and equipping them with ICTs, (most notably the Western Cape, the Free State, Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal), while other provinces have lagged behind and so far have done little to improve the sector. Access to Digital ICT services varies from high in the Western Cape (43% of public libraries, most of which are in the Cape Town area) to almost non-existent in other provinces and in smaller centers, where few if any PCs can be found for public use.

1 Equivalent at the time of the announcement in Feb 2007 to about USD\$ 137.4 million. Conversion rates:

1USD = ZAR 7.6 @ 20/07/08; 1USD=ZAR6.8 @ 01/01/2008; 1USD=ZAR7.1 @ 01/01/2007;
1USD=ZAR6.3 @ 01/01/2006

Some of the programs are part of more general efforts to improve public access to ICTs, which is also a high priority at national level. This ranges from establishing open access national and international fiber backbones, to support for telecenters and kiosks, ICT training centers, and ICT access in schools.

Aside from the DAC, and the Presidency², the two other wings of government that play the largest roles in this area are the Department of Communications (DOC) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The DOC is responsible for the regulation of the ICT sector, as well as for the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) which administers the Universal Service and Access Fund. The DOC has also been responsible for establishing information and internet access kiosks around the country, mainly in post offices.

Telecenters

The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) is mandated by the South African government to ensure that everyone, be it citizen or business, has equal access to ICTs. USAASA seeks to provide universal service, which is defined as “a reliable connection to the communication network that enables any form of communication to and from any part of South Africa”, and to provide universal access, defined as “the ability to use the communication network at a reasonable distance and affordable price which provides relevant information and has the necessary capacity - in under-serviced areas”. Numerous types of telecenters have been set up through USAASA.³ They can be found in the government multipurpose community centers (now called the Thusong Service Centers), prisons, as stand-alone telecenters, in containers, women’s organizations, churches, community radio stations, health care centers, homes for the disabled, youth centers, HIV/AIDs centers, ex-combatant centers, rural development centers and homeless shelters among others. USAASA has, since 1997, rolled out 154 telecenters.⁴ The reality is that many of the existing telecenters have not been operational due to high costs of connectivity, inadequate support and training, and lack of appropriate content and applications. A recently unveiled USAASA strategy document (December 2007) does recognize the problems that have been encountered and now intends to focus on the rehabilitation of existing telecenters, and a renewed focus on (non-fee) schools, Further Education Training (FET) Institutions, libraries, stand-alone access points and Thusong Centers (government multipurpose community Centers). USAASA is also supporting the development of Community Digital Hubs, community centers deployed in presidential nodal areas for rural development.

² President Mbeki has long supported the increased use of ICTs, and his Presidential International Advisory Council (PIAC) on the Information Society and Development continues to meet regularly, having recently conducted its seventh session.

³<http://www.usaasa.org.za>

⁴ USAASA press conference presentation, 4 December 2007. Provided by USAASA.

HIV/AIDS Support Centers

Three programs were included in the present study, all geared towards supporting Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), Child-Headed Households (CCH) and young people in combating HIV/AIDS, primarily in disadvantaged communities: loveLife, a 75% government-sponsored program that looks to empower young people with life skills, and offer youth-friendly clinic and counseling services to help them deal with HIV/AIDS and other social issues they confront in their lives and their communities; Nurturing Orphans of AIDS for Humanity (Noah), which focuses on building capacity in communities to enable them to care for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC); and Starfish, which focuses on building capacity in non-profit organizations (NPOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in responding to the needs of OVCs. Besides the 16 multi-purpose loveLife Y-Centers referred to in this report, the HIV/AIDS support centers come in various shapes and sizes, are conceptualized and implemented differently by the three programs, and have different institutional capacities. They range from 'arks' set up by Noah, only some of which are resource centers (i.e. physical venues), to loveLife clinics (which might be no more than a room in a clinic), to fully operational centers, functioning as training grounds for volunteers, administrative hubs for outreach programs, an ICT resource for beneficiaries and the immediate community, and offering after-school educational care. In total, loveLife 'centers' are a mixture of Y-centers (16),⁵ clinics (335), partnership schools (approx. 3000), franchises (124), and outlets (217).⁶ Noah has established a total of 112 arks, including 33 resource centers.⁷ Starfish works with 81 NGOs and CBOs. 57 CBO groups are beneficiaries of Starfish's Mentoring and Training program⁸ in 2008 and 2009.

Phone Shops

Phone shops were established in response to the Community Services Obligations attached to the license conditions of South Africa's three mobile operators: Vodacom, MTN and Cell-C. Vodacom was tasked with established 22 000 community service lines (or subsidized lines), MTN 7 500, and Cell-C, the latecomer to the mobile market, 42 000. These were to be established in under-served areas. The solution adopted by the service providers was a

⁵ 2006 data.

⁶ Y-Centers are described as "multi-purpose recreational venues for young people" (Annual report, 2006 – see case example below); loveLife's presence at clinics varies, but often is little more than a room where the program offers youth-friendly counseling; partnering schools are schools that allow loveLife to implement its program at the school at specific times; franchises are community organizations involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and youth activities that have become part of the loveLife network; outlets are partnerships with the Department of Social Development aimed at reaching rural and marginalized communities. (ibid.)

⁷ The number of resource centers is according to website data (www.noahorphans.org.za). Noah's arks are established in stages, with the first being getting community leaders to take responsibility for the OVCs in the community. Stage 3 is the establishment of the resource center, which accommodates OVCs on a daily basis, offering them meals, homework supervision, access to counseling, and various life skills and educational programs.

⁸ The Starfish Mentoring and Training Program capacitates CBOs to deliver a range of basic services to OVCs.

'phone shop', which allowed entrepreneurs in disadvantaged communities to on-sell subsidized call time to consumers using a revenue-split business model. The phone shops could be located at an entrepreneur's own premises, or in a branded shipping container, which was provided by the mobile operator. The entrepreneur would then buy handsets, various units to measure and determine call duration, as well as airtime from the operator. These would be set up in the container or on the premises and attached to a mast connected to the GSM network. By the end of 2007, Vodacom had established nearly 134000 lines, and MTN nearly 15 000. Cell-C had met its CSO obligations (there appear to be unresolved issues around its obligations, which are more severe compared to the other operators and no up-to-date number was immediately available). Recently the operators began experimenting with expanding the services to include telecenter-like services such as Internet access. MTN has also piloted internet access at several sites.

Self-assisted ICT access points

Three types of self-assisted ICT access points were included in the South African analysis. These are: 1) Public Internet Terminals (PITs) provided through the South African Post Office (SAPO), of which more than 825 have been placed in Post Offices; 2) Digital Doorways, e-learning kiosks developed by the Meraka Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), with funding from the Dept of Science and Technology. More than 200 Digital Doorways have been placed, mostly in rural and deep rural villages, and all in public spaces with 24 hour free access; and 3) the planned 15 Vuvuzela pilot kiosks for which USAASA has just awarded a tender. These will enable various office applications to be accessed as well as emails, internet access and surveying, among others.

Other Relevant Venues in South Africa

There are numerous smaller projects and initiatives that are being undertaken by NGOs, government departments, research institutions, the private sector through corporate responsibility programs, and international donors. These include various school ICT access projects (including some of which provide community access); enterprise information centers; youth ICT centers and community phone shops. There are very few privately run cybercafés in South Africa outside of the major urban centers, so the potential demand for affordable access to computers and the Internet is relatively high. Few NGOs have been active in supporting public access to ICTs and even fewer have focused on this in the library sector. Of note here is the Carnegie Corporation's International Development Program (IDP) library subprogram which focuses on the development of national and public libraries in South Africa. The private sector has perhaps been more active in supporting public access to ICT through the activities of Microsoft, HP, Cisco, Intel to give a few examples.

1.4 Research Rationale, Sample, and Methods

The present research study was initiated in early 2008 and consisted of two phases – Phase I combined desktop research, telephonic and face-to-face interviews with key decision makers and experts, and selected site visits to readily accessible venues in Gauteng. Additional information was gleaned from published and unpublished research reports to

which the research team had access due to their recent participation in these projects. Some confidential reports were also provided to the team but these could not be quoted. The results of a recent 2007 audit of telecenters in Kwazulu Natal also provided useful insights.

Phase II included a field survey which was undertaken during June and July 2008. Three types of venues were researched – public libraries, telecenters and MPCCs, and HIV/AIDS Support Centers. Venues were chosen based on accessibility and to ensure that they reflected, as far as possible, the variations in location (urban/non-urban), user types and services offered.

Public libraries: Surveys were conducted in 10 public libraries in Gauteng (3), Western Cape (4), Eastern Cape (1), Limpopo (1) and Northern Cape (1) provinces.⁹ Since Gauteng and Western Cape are the most advanced in terms of ICTs in libraries, most of the library surveys were undertaken in these two provinces. The other venues were all in small, non-urban environments and were selected in each of the other provinces to provide some insights into how these operate in more difficult environments.

Telecenters and MPCCs: Surveys were conducted in the following six locations – Western Cape (1); Eastern Cape (1), Gauteng (1), Limpopo (2) and Northern Cape (1). All the telecenters were in non-urban underserved areas, thus reflecting the strong emphasis in the telecenter rollout of targeting underserved, previously disadvantaged areas.

HIV/AIDS Support Centers: Seven centers were surveyed, six in Gauteng and one in Limpopo. The centers in the Greater Johannesburg area were selected since there was a greater likelihood of finding ICTs in these locations. The seventh center in Limpopo formed part of a complex which included a library, telecenter and loveLife Center and was therefore included. A total of 305 users were surveyed, in addition to the operators of these seven centers.

Two questionnaires were used, one for users and one for operators. The questionnaires were customized for local conditions. Due to the size of the country, and the sensitivity of the public to participating in surveys, particularly in rural areas, a team of locally-based researchers was deployed and coordinated by the project leader.

Data capturing and analysis was done centrally by the research team.

1.5 Information Needs of Underserved Communities

Given the socio-economic conditions of the majority of the population – including the impact of HIV/AIDS and unemployment - practical public service information is a priority for disadvantaged communities. This includes information on how to apply for grants and ID books, access government information on HIV/AIDS or TB, training and employment opportunities, to knowing where to get information on the latest local government tender.

⁹ Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Northern Cape survey is not yet included in this draft report – the local researcher was hospitalised during the final stages of the survey.

While there are numerous information gaps, South Africa is relatively information rich as far as public information goes – evidenced by extensive print, broadcast and online commercial media sectors and the dozens of information campaigns and programs in the public and non-profit sectors, as well as the work-place public information drives in major corporations, such as the mines. As in the case of the nationwide loveLife HIV/AIDS campaign, which has in the past received significant funding, concerns relate more to the *kinds* of information produced rather than the budget to produce that information, as well as the practical reach and appropriateness of that information.¹⁰ Public information campaigns such as Soul City or loveLife are reaching the communities they intend to (and the campaigns conduct various impact evaluations to confirm this). It is, however, fair to say that due to the high cost of Internet access or bandwidth, lack of a pervasive broadband infrastructure and the low level of awareness generally, online information drives do not reach their intended communities effectively. In many cases, information intermediaries are necessary to download the information and explain it to beneficiaries (the government-driven MPCCs recognize this gap).

Public information drives have used most available media in their efforts to reach disadvantaged communities, including radio, TV, print media, internet, posters and pamphlets. Information drives have also been word-of-mouth, with, for example, community workers discussing important issues in community fora. Whether or not the content can be said to be locally relevant will depend on the nature of the information campaign. Key challenges include using appropriate media for the information drive and developing appropriate content, including language, and the clarity and accessibility of the information in relation to the target audience. There are only a few public information campaigns that manage to meet these requirements. The HIV/AIDS sector has been outstanding in this regard, especially as far as its willingness to explore the potential of alternative multimedia platforms, including radio, TV, print media, billboards, and using face-to-face orientation and training programs.

There are numerous e-content initiatives that offer public information in South Africa. These are primarily implemented by the government at the national, provincial and local levels, and by non-profit organizations. Several government-driven information portals offer basic government information relating to contact details and services. These include initiatives such as the Government Communication and Information System portal (<http://www.gcis.gov.za/>) and South African Government Online (www.gov.za), which links to a government information portal (www.info.gov.za) and a services portal (www.services.gov.za). The portal offers an online directory to government departments, and news and information on government strategies and programs of action (however a search for 'libraries' on the portal yielded no results). The content is available in all 11 official languages. The government's Khomanani HIV/AIDS portal¹¹ also offers a range of useful information and e-content with a specific emphasis on building an e-community through its content offering.

¹⁰ Early loveLife campaigns which attempted to attract young people through off-beat billboards and media interventions were criticized as being inaccessible.

11 <http://www.healthinsite.net/health/HealthProfile.dll/eCareGeneral?wid=12&sh=10>

The government has also embarked on several mobile content initiatives, such as a Department of Home Affairs system that allows applicants to be notified by SMS about the status of their applications for unabridged birth certificates, ID books, and passports. The Department of Education allows matriculants to access their results via mobile phone, and the City of Johannesburg allows motorists to use SMS to find out if they have outstanding traffic fines, or whether a summons or warrant of arrest has been issued against them.

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

Strengths: ICT and increased outreach to communities are a national government priority. Recently the government announced both an Inter-Governmental Relations Forum (IGRF), which looks at synchronizing disparate ICT developments at the national and provincial level, and a Ministerial ISAD [Information Society and Development] Committee (approved by cabinet in May 2007 and chaired by the country's President Thabo Mbeki), which will drive the development of the information society in South Africa (including the implementation of WSIS agreements). In February 2007 cabinet approved a National Information Society Development Plan. There are also signs of the self-organization of groups such as telecenters through the Telecentre Association of South Africa (TASA). TASA aims to represent telecenters and MPCCs or any other access initiative, including Vodacom phone shops. The National Department of Arts and Culture is also injecting ZAR 1 billion (about US\$13.2 million) into libraries over the next three years to allow for upgrading of facilities and the introduction of ICTs.

Weaknesses: One of greatest weaknesses has been the lack of follow-through and implementation of policies and strategies. This has been recognized by the national government as a key weakness. Lack of adequate funding for implementation and the lack of available human skills and resources, particularly in rural areas, has been a major factor contributing to the lack of effective service delivery. The lack of relevant content, particularly for rural communities, has been identified as a problem area, particularly in the official languages other than English.

Opportunities: The development of the ISAD Plan of Action and a concerted effort by government to address the lack of service delivery creates an opportunity for future implementation efforts. The likely increased collaboration between government departments at the national, regional and local levels will allow for the more effective implementation of ICTs through a number of venues. The injection of funding into public libraries should also create significant opportunities for increased ICT access in the future. Likewise, the opportunities presented by an extensive network of HIV/Support Centers, both private and publicly funded, could provide a mechanism for providing public ICT access.

1.7 Salient Findings

Overall, government efforts to improve access to ICTs have not yet had a significant impact on the public. Internet access costs have been high due to the restrictive and uncompetitive telecommunications market environment (although this is now beginning to open up), and programs have suffered from limited funding and/or lack of institutional implementation

capacity, both at the national and local levels. It has been acknowledged that the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) has not succeeded in meeting its goals in rolling out telecenters, especially in rural areas, where anyone who obtains a modicum of ICT skills is likely to leave for the city.¹² So far the most notable ICT access impact has been the thousands of entrepreneurially run 'phone shops' which obtain subsidized (about 60% cheaper) voice call rates from the mobile operators who are required to provide discounted tariffs as part of their license obligations. These do not however provide broader computer or internet access, although pilot studies are underway. The more recent efforts at injecting substantial government funding into public libraries is still in the early stages and the visible impact has yet to be seen on a larger scale, with notable exceptions in some cases in the Western Cape province.

Nevertheless, increased efforts are now being made by national government to improve access to computers and the Internet. The National Department of Communications' 2007/8 strategy and budget aims to prioritize access to educational and health institutions, the Post Office, government offices and the Thusong Centers in the roll-out of communications networks and services for the provision of wireless broadband communication. In addition new leadership has been established at USAASA and there is increased confidence that goals for improving access in rural areas will be met. By 2009, government hopes to have a useful suite of e-government solutions available for citizens and ICT is one of five service delivery work streams that will make up government's Single Public Service plan. In addition new international submarine fiber optic cables will come on-stream in late 2009/early 2010 and this should substantially reduce the high cost of Internet access.

1.8 Key Recommendations

Infrastructure

1. Accelerate the deregulation of the telecommunication sector to encourage competition and thereby reduce connectivity prices and increase accessibility to the Internet. Allow the ISM bands (license-free) in the wireless spectrum to be used for shared and mesh wifi use across land boundaries.
2. Improve the availability and reliability of electric power both in rural and urban areas through support for alternative energy systems (subsidies/loans and capacity building) as well as the use of low-power consuming computer devices.

Coordination and collaboration

3. Rationalise the different public access kiosk programs into a unified co-ordinated effort (currently technical, content and application development resources are spread thinly between the PITs, Digital Doorways and Library information kiosks, with a new kiosk imitative being launched through USAASA as well).

¹² In a recent audit in KZN of all the telecenters and cyberlabs, the two major constraints were lack of power supply and the very low skills levels in ICT (both technical and how to sell such services).

4. The deployment of ICTs in libraries could be carried out in collaboration with nearby telecenters and MPCCs or Cyberlabs.
5. Collaboration with the local ICT private sector could help accelerate the government's ISAD Plan of Action. At this stage only the international IT companies, HP, Microsoft, Cisco and NIIT are supporting the Plan which aims to improve access to ICTs for the public.
6. The scoping of the HIV/AIDS centers strongly suggests that there is an opportunity to explore a programmatic intervention by ICT funders in partnership with one or more of the HIV/AIDS programs discussed. There is both the managerial framework, and the expressed need for such an intervention.

Human resource development

7. Despite the increased spend in libraries by the national government, there appears to be a considerable need for ICT skills development and capacity building in the libraries. The potential for libraries to play a more key role in local content development should be further explored. This covers aspects such as website development for local libraries and communities; creation of a national geospatial database showing all libraries with precise locations; archiving local history through capturing local folklore, cultural history and crafts. With so many unemployed youth, this could be an opportunity to create a stronger cultural base, while teaching youth marketable ICT skills in website and database development while also allowing more community interaction between generations.
8. Provide additional technical human resources to municipal and provincial levels of government to help address the severe lack of capacity at this level to deliver public services (capital expenditure programs at the provincial and municipal level are perennially behind schedule due to lack of capacity).
9. Support information sharing, peer mentoring and capacity building on connectivity provision options for municipalities - this could include training and circulation of best practices and case studies such as the creation of municipal WiFi networks;
10. Support information sharing, peer mentoring and capacity building on service delivery which includes project, marketing, technical and financial management skills for telecenter and MPCC/Thusong managers in municipalities.

Content Development

11. Provide information on public access facilities on the government services portal (www.services.gov.za - where currently, searching for 'libraries' or 'telecenters' or MPCCs yields no hits). All public access facilities including kiosks and cybercafés should be displayed on an interactive map with full contact information and precise locations.
12. Accelerate the development of e-government content and applications in order to create a more attractive range of useful services for the general public. This could be done in collaboration with NGOs and the private sector and through proposed e-cadres/Cybercadets in libraries.

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.

Five venues were initially selected for inclusion in this study - public libraries, telecenters (which includes those operating out of the government-operated Multi-Purpose Community Centers (MPCCs), now called Thusong Service Centers and which generally operate throughout the country in less-populated, non-urban areas); HIV/AIDS support centers; phone shops; and self-assisted ICT access points. University libraries and schools were also initially included as possible public ICT access points, but the former were eventually rejected on the basis that few allow broad public ICT access and this is unlikely to change in the near future. Schools are problematic in that many do not allow communities onto their properties for various reasons: security and concerns about theft of computer equipment, reluctance by school principals to allow community access, and also the existence of policies that dictate the use of school property. There are however schools which do allow public ICT access and this is certainly an opportunity that could be explored further at a later stage. There is however very little data available and extensive primary research would be required to investigate existing initiatives and develop a workable, scalable model.

In the second phase of this study, during which fieldwork was undertaken, it was decided to focus on only three of the five venues – public libraries, HIV/AIDS support centers and telecenters. These three venues represent the most significant government efforts in South Africa and are seen as the ones which are most likely to provide a fair representation of public ICT access points in the country. Phone shops on the whole do not provide internet access or computers, and the self-assisted terminals are either in a pilot phase, not yet implemented or have not been particularly successful (in the case of the Public Internet Terminals (PITs)). Refer to Sections 6.4 and 6.5 for a more detailed description of self-assisted kiosks and phone shops respectively.

1) Public Libraries

Public libraries were included since there has been an aggressive recent effort by the South African National Government to upgrade public library facilities and to introduce and/or upgrade existing ICT facilities within the libraries. Public libraries are libraries open to the public and which are funded by the provincial and municipal government, with grant allocations from national government). Libraries are managed jointly by municipalities and

the provincial government, with operations funded jointly (municipalities are usually responsible for providing the facilities). There are more than 1535 libraries, including more than 79 mobile units. This study does not include privately-funded libraries, school libraries or community libraries which are funded by donations. The most well-developed library infrastructures are in the Western Cape, Free State, Gauteng and Kwazulu Natal. Access to Digital ICT services varies from high in the Western Cape (43% of public libraries, most of which are in the Cape Town area) to almost non-existent in other provinces and in smaller centers, where few if any computers can be found for public use. The study focused on libraries in urban and non-urban areas in the Western Cape and Gauteng.

2) Telecenters / Thusong MPCCs

Telecenters were included in this study since these have been the main vehicle through which the South African National Government has tried to address the lack of ICT access in underserved communities. The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) was set up in 1997 and is mandated by the South African government to ensure that everyone, be it citizen or business, has equal access to ICTs. USAASA seeks to provide universal service, which is defined as “a reliable connection to the communication network that enables any form of communication to and from any part of South Africa”, and to provide universal access, defined as “the ability to use the communication network at a reasonable distance and affordable price which provides relevant information and has the necessary capacity - in under-serviced areas”. Numerous types of telecenters have been set up through USAASA.¹³ They can be found in the government (Thusong Service Centers), prisons, as stand-alone telecenters, in containers, women’s organizations, churches, community radio stations, health care centers, homes for the disabled, youth centers, HIV/AIDs centers, ex-combatant centers, rural development centers and homeless shelters among others. USAASA has, since 1997, rolled out 154 telecenters.¹⁴ The reality is that many of the existing telecenters have not been operational due to high costs of connectivity, inadequate support and training, and lack of appropriate content and applications. This has been borne out in the results emerging from the fieldwork undertaken for this study.

3) HIV/AIDS Support Centers

HIV centers present the relatively untapped potential to serve as useful (and stable) centers offering ICT access to poor communities. Many have also expressed a need and readiness to offer ICT services to their beneficiaries. Given that loveLife Y-Centers already emphasize community access to ICTs, we elected to work primarily through six Starfish beneficiaries for our survey. These centers, which were proposed by Starfish, are all situated in and around Gauteng. They were selected for their urban/non-urban split, and according to their levels of e-readiness. All except one of the centers have online access for administrative purposes (as insisted by Starfish). In the case of two centers (in Soweto and Alexandra), public ICT access is already available, or planned. At the other end of the spectrum, one center did not have

¹³<http://www.usaasa.org.za>

¹⁴ USAASA press conference presentation, 4 December 2007

internet access, and had a relatively low level of e-readiness. This range of center capacities offers a useful bird's-eye snapshot of the potential for the centers generally to serve as public ICT access points.

4) Phone Shops

Phone shops were established in response to the Community Services Obligations attached to the license conditions of South Africa's three mobile operators: Vodacom, MTN and Cell-C. Vodacom was tasked with establishing 22 000 community service lines (or subsidized lines), MTN 7 500, and Cell-C, the latecomer to the mobile market, 42 000. These were to be established in underserved areas. The solution adopted by the service providers was a 'phone shop', which allowed entrepreneurs in disadvantaged communities to on-sell subsidized call time to consumers. The phone shops could be located at an entrepreneur's own premises, or in a branded shipping container, which is provided by the mobile operator. The entrepreneur buys handsets, various units to measure and determine call duration, as well as airtime from the operator. These are set up in the container or on the premises and attached to a mast connected to the GSM network. By the end of 2007, Vodacom had established nearly 134 000 lines, and MTN nearly 15 000. Cell-C had met its CSO obligations (there appear to be unresolved issues around its obligations – which are more severe compared to the other operators – and no up-to-date numbers were immediately available). Recently the operators began experimenting with expanding the services to include telecenter-like services. MTN also piloted internet access at several sites. Telkom phone shops – essentially landline phone shops – are also mentioned in this report. Like the mobile phone shops, these are generally housed in old shipping containers, and include coin-operated and card-operated phones, as well as fax and photocopier facilities. 1000 were to be established in 2001, but the sustainability of this venture could not be immediately established.

5) Self-assisted ICT access points

This category includes three types of access points: 1) Public Internet Terminals (PITs), which are provided through the South African Post Office (SAPO) in more than 825 locations; 2) Digital Doorways, which are self-assisted e-learning kiosks developed by the Meraka Institute, an institute at the parastatal Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), with funding from the National Department of Science and Technology. There are more than 200 Digital Doorways, mostly in rural and deep rural villages, and all in public spaces with 24-hour free access; and 3) the planned Vuvuzela kiosks for which USAASA has just awarded a tender. These kiosks will provide 24-hour access to a range of services including email, e-government services, photocopying and internet access. At the time of writing, the project had not yet been implemented.

6) Other Relevant Venues in South Africa

ICT activities have received high levels of attention since the new government came into power in 1994. There are numerous smaller projects and initiatives that are being undertaken by NGOs, government departments, research institutions, the private sector through its corporate responsibility programs, and international donors. Some create the possibility for future collaboration; others provide useful learning for future projects.

There is, however, no central point which coordinates these various activities nor is there one portal where such initiatives can be easily identified.

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	HIV/AIDS Support Centers
Total number in country	About 1535 (including 79 mobile libraries)	154 USAASA telecenters; 55 located in Thusong Service Centers/ MPCCs.	>3800 nationally (including participating schools)
A. # in urban location	100% ¹⁵	0	Roughly 60%
% offering ICT	Estimate 25%; large variations between the nine provinces	-	Estimate: 25%
Total # of people served (annual)	Not available	-	Not available
B. # in non-urban location	Very few.	100%	Roughly 40%
% offering ICT	Not known; large variations between the nine provinces but generally less than 10%	83% (although not all are functioning)	Estimate: 10%
Total # of people served (annual)	Not available	Not available	Not available

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

The definition of urban/non-urban has to be understood in the South African context where the 'non-white' community was previously restricted to living in areas outside of the main

¹⁵ All libraries are located in urban locations, but using the definition provided above, an increasing number are being located in peri-urban/non-urban environments and in previously disadvantaged communities. Exact numbers for this split are not available at the time of writing. When undertaking the survey, libraries in previously underserved areas were included in the non-urban category and would include black/colored township areas on the outskirts of the previously 'white' centers and suburbs of towns and cities.

town and city centers. This effectively gave rise to the majority of the population of other color (Black, Indian, Colored) living in prescribed areas on the outskirts, in what are referred to as peri-urban areas. These areas were largely underserved, with few tarred roads, water supply and sanitation, electricity, and access to services such as libraries and shopping malls. Although this has been redressed since the abolishment of apartheid in 1994, the services in many of these peri-urban areas more closely approximate levels of service delivery in rural areas. For this reason, in the South African study, the emphasis has been on previously underserved communities which would traditionally be classified as urban areas, but which for our purposes have been classified as non-urban. Non-urban therefore refers to areas regarded as previously underserved.

Libraries: Libraries are the responsibility of the provincial government together with local government. The provision of a national picture is therefore not available.

Telecenters: All are located in previously underserved areas, as this was the mandate for USAASA in terms of delivery of ICT access services.

HIV/AIDS support centers: There are about 300 Y-Centers, loveLife franchises, Noah resource centers, and Starfish beneficiaries only.

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: Community phone shops

Description :

Phone shops are variously located at an entrepreneur’s own premises, on street corners, or in branded shipping containers provided by the mobile operators. The entrepreneur buys handsets, various units to measure and determine call duration, as well as airtime from the operator. The phones are connected to an antenna, which then transmits the calls using the GSM network. All of the phone shops offer telephonic services. Vodacom offers the possibility of expanding to telecenter services and Cell-C offers the possibility of phone shop operators offering fax services. In 2006 MTN piloted a ‘Shared Access to Data’ project in eight sites in townships outside Johannesburg. These sites offered internet and e-mail services. Total number in the country:

- Vodacom: 133 757 lines established by September 2007.
- MTN: 14 742 lines established by September 2007.
- Cell C: More than 42 000 lines.

% offering ICT access: 100%

% in urban location: 100% (although a large number of in previously disadvantaged

areas)

Phone shops provide basic telephony access to previously disadvantaged communities. Their presence, together with the proliferation of mobile telephony in poor areas, means that telephony *per se* is less of a universal service priority in South Africa than other services, such as computer and internet access, or access to credible e-information. In addition, some phone shops are providing Internet access, often on a pilot basis - this has recently become available via the 3G network and a half-dozen MTN community phone shops are known to be piloting this service. Similar to phone shops, private cybercafés are an entrepreneurial response to a felt need for basic ICT access – in this case, internet access. Often these public ICT access points evolve organically, and in response to high-density demand (for instance, from foreign nationals needing to communicate with friends and relatives elsewhere in Africa). Both of these suggest that in certain conditions, both telephonic and affordable internet access can be financially sustainable initiatives. The conditions include a base level of demand and ability to pay for a service.

Other public access experience #2: Enterprise Information Centers (EICs)

Description :

The Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), stated in a 2006 presentation (Bolani, 2006) ¹⁶ that it intended to set up a network of 294 EICs throughout the country. The purpose of these EICs is to disseminate information on SEDA and its partner networks, provide basic assistance on SEDA products and services, provide client data capturing and carry out needs analysis and referrals for SMME clients. Presently, the provincial breakdown for these 87 EICs is as follows:¹⁷

Gauteng	15	Eastern Cape	18
Free State	11	Kwazulu Natal	8
Limpopo	10	Mpumalanga	12
NorthWest	4	Northern Cape	1
Western Cape	8		

Total number in country: 77

% offering ICT access: Not known

% in urban location: Not known

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

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the EICs are not functioning effectively.

¹⁶

www.durban.gov.za/durban/government/munadmin/media/publications/conf/informal/TAMI_durban_conference.ppt

¹⁷ www.seda.org.za Accessed 18 February 2008

Other public access experience #3: Private Cybercafés

Description:

Private cybercafés consist of one or more computers offering basic online access to the public at a set fee. Often these are small, stand-alone, semi-formal businesses, set up along high-traffic routes that include daily commuters or tourist destinations. Sometimes the cybercafés are co-located with other businesses, such as second-hand bookshops, coffee shops, hotels, etc.

Total number in country: Estimated 200 – 300 in major urban areas, but no actual data exists.

% offering ICT access: 100%

% in urban location: 100%

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

There are very few cybercafés outside of the major urban centers, and based on anecdotal evidence, very few in the previously disadvantaged areas. There are no official figures available on the number of cybercafés. An earlier attempt to assess the status quo by the Department of Trade and Industry was unsuccessful due to the reluctance of cybercafé owners to answer questions about their business.

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: SchoolNets and Computer labs in schools

Total number in country: About 26 292 schools¹⁸

% offering ICT access: Estimated at less than 10%; varies from province to province

% in urban location: Not known

Description of the Venue:

Various school projects are underway in South Africa, of which are described below.

NEPAD e-schools

A variety of corporate consortia are involved in supporting the NEPAD (New

¹⁸ <http://www.southafrica.info/about/education/education.htm>

Partnership for African Development) e-Schools program¹⁹ in South Africa led by HP, Oracle and Cisco. This project links schools in about 20 African countries, as a first phase of providing children in Africa access to learning digital skills in their schools. Over the next ten years, the project aims to include 600 000 schools on the African continent, with the secondary school component being completed in the first five years. Three phases are envisaged: 15-20 countries in each phase. Project execution entails at least the following components: infrastructure (including computers, communications, networking, power, etc.); ICT training for teachers; content and curriculum development; efforts towards community buy-in, involvement and ownership of the process; and a 'health point'.

The demonstration project in South Africa involves six schools from Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and North West provinces. The initiative involves the Departments of Education, Health and Communications and private sector companies. The HP Consortium is providing solutions to Maripe Secondary School, Lomahasha High Schools in Mpumalanga and Hendrick Makapan Secondary School in North West. The ORACLE Consortium is providing solutions to Ipetleng Secondary School in Free State, and Isiphosethu High School in Kwazulu Natal. Cisco is providing solutions to Thozamisa High School in Eastern Cape Province.

Provincial School Networks

The Western Cape Schools Network is probably the most successful provincial network, established in 1993 as the first regional schools network in Africa. It served as the model on which several other grassroots non-profit regional schools networks were established by volunteering educators. These included the Eastern Cape Schools Network, KwaZulu-Natal Schools Network (later Schoolnet KZN), Gauteng Schools Network and PretNet. Other networks have been set up, for example, GautengOnline aims to establish networks and internet access in all the schools in the province. Presently more than 1050 schools have been connected.²⁰

The e-Schools' Network.²¹

The e-Schools' Network was founded in 1993 by a group of teachers who began by supplying ICT services to 10 schools and has now grown to 1700 schools country wide. e-Schools' Network offers an email service, SchoolMail, which works on any operating platform, creates a mailbox for each learner and educator in a school for less than ZAR 1000.00 per year. The e-Schools' Network is a non-profit, self funded, organisation that provides the school and FET College community with a variety of services including: Connectivity and communication solutions, which are negotiated

¹⁹ <http://www.eafricacommission.org>

²⁰ http://www.gautengonline.com/gol_schools.htm. Accessed 18 July 2008

²¹ <http://www.esn.org.za>

annually with Internet Service Providers to bring best priced quality services to schools, call center support tailored to the needs of the school and FET College environment, consultancy and training support services for educational technology, with a particular focus on providing and sustaining connectivity and online communication services in schools; and project development and management on behalf of a range of clients.

e-Schools' Network runs an educational conference which creates a platform for educators to showcase their approaches to curriculum integrated ICTs and to share these insights with their fellow educators. e-Schools' Network is country coordinator for a volunteer program that has been run for the last two years using volunteers from the Belfast Unemployment Resource Centre (Northern Ireland) to spend time in schools, fixing computers and installing software, for four weeks. Profits that are made are used to grow the number of schools who have access to ICTs in education.

SchoolNet SA

SchoolNet SA²² was established as a national organization by volunteer educators and innovative thinkers in school networking during the 1990s with support from the Department of Education's Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Education, the IDRC and Nortel. The network assists schools in obtaining access to ICTs.

TuXlabs

The Shuttleworth Foundation has helped to establish more than 200 TuXlabs around the country as joint school/community ICT access facilities, with support from ABSA Bank, Engen, Gift of Givers, Metropolitan, Pick'n'Pay, Prudential and the Ubuntu Education Fund.²³ Initiated in 2001-2002, the project aims to use open source software within primary schools. The majority of schools are based in the Western Cape (120), Eastern Cape (50) and Limpopo (30).

Reason why it was not included in the study:

Schools were specifically excluded from this study, but they do represent a significant mechanism for introducing ICTs into communities. Estimates are that fewer than 10 % of schools allow community access, but no exact data is available.

²² <http://www.school.za>

²³ <http://www.tuxlabs.org.za/history>

Other venue not studied#2: Microsoft Digital Villages

Total number in country: About 50

% offering ICT access: 100%

% in urban location: Not known

Description of the Venue:

Microsoft is investing about R84m to support 'Digital Villages'²⁴ covering all nine provinces. These Digital Villages (also referred to as Community Technology Learning Centers (CTLCs)) typically consists of 15 - 20 computers loaded with Microsoft software and internet access, based on the needs of the particular community. About ZAR 84m has been invested in the program.^{25 26}

Reason why it was not included in the study:

Limited number of sites. Private sector initiative.

Other venue not studied#3: Digital Partnership South Africa

Total number in country: 8 regional and learning resource centers

% offering ICT access: 100%

% in urban location: Not known

Description of the Venue:

The Digital Partnership South Africa aims to establish a regional center of excellence for technology refurbishment, and a program to place up to 170 000 computers in schools and community centers. So far about 10 000 PCs have been deployed. Digital Partnership engages with local development agencies and government departments to identify suitable recipients of ICT. Equipment is deployed to projects where it will assist schools, health centers and other public and private sector providers of information, goods, and services. Currently, there are eight regional digital partnership resource and learning centers in Community Centers of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Western Cape, North West Province, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape. Initiated and supported by the UK-based Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum²⁷ (IBLF) with support from the World Bank,

²⁴ Also known as Community Technology Learning Centers (CTLCs) which typically consists of 15 - 20 computers loaded with software, based on the needs of the particular community.

<http://www.microsoft.com/southafrica/communityaffairs/citizenship/giving/apply/givingprograms.mspx>

²⁵ <http://www.microsoft.com/southafrica/communityaffairs/citizenship/giving/apply/givingprograms.mspx> Accessed January 2008.

²⁶ http://www.microsoft.com/southafrica/community/dv_aims.htm

²⁷ <http://www.iblf.org>

foundations and international business, the Digital Partnership is a non-profit Section 21 company governed by a South African board of industry leaders and partnerships in the education and community sector. Standard Bank and other large corporations have donated equipment for the program. In 2006 the WK Kellogg Foundation donated \$200 000 to the Digital Partnership South Africa to "promote innovative and affordable access to ICTs in local languages to facilitate effective learning and social and economic transformation for rural communities in the Limpopo district". The computer refurbishment and training center in the Eastern Cape was developed in association with Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) and Fort Hare University.

Reason why it was not included in the study:

Limited number of centers.

Other venue not studied#4: Learning Labs

Total number in country: 5

% in urban location: Not known

Description of the Venue:

AMD's 50X15 program which has recently set up 5 Learning Labs²⁸ in partnership with retail bank Nedbank. The labs feature compact, sealed, low power IT hardware designed to cope with tough environments. The labs also come equipped with content and applications; a local area network; Internet connectivity; a teacher-training program; maintenance and support; and a sustainability plan. The first Learning Lab, at Nelson R. Mandela High School in Gugulethu received support from partners including Microsoft, Cisco, Tarsus, First for Business, CompuTainer, @tlantic and Learnthings.

Reason why it was not included in the study:

Limited number of centers. Private sector initiative.

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.

²⁸ http://50x15.amd.com/en-us/news_release_item.aspx?iid=63

2.2.1 Socio-economic status

Apartheid has left huge discrepancies along racial lines in the country which still persist fourteen years after democracy. Africans are in the majority at just over 38-million, making up 79.6% of the total population. The white population is estimated at 4.3-million (9.1%), the Colored population at 4.2-million (8.9%) and the Indian/Asian population at just short of 1.2-million (2.5%).²⁹ Despite the recent increase in the number of 'black diamonds' (wealthy black entrepreneurs/professionals), wealth is still distributed largely among the white population, with the bulk of the poor being black. 93% of the unemployed poor are Africans, 56% are female, and 70% are below the age of 35, 58% are from rural areas, 50% have completed primary education or less, and 72% have had no previous job experience. South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world. The poorest 40% of the population spend less than 3% of national consumption, while the richest 10% have a 46% share of national consumption.

In this study, venue selection was largely focused on previously disadvantaged areas in which usage by previously excluded individuals are the main users. The survey therefore included a specific question about racial groups as used in South African national statistics reporting – White, Colored/Mixed origin, Black and Indian/Asian. While this is a very sensitive issue given the apartheid legacy, there is a need to monitor progress along racial lines to ensure that previous inequities are being addressed.

2.2.2 Educational level

South Africa has 12.3-million learners, some 386 600 teachers and 26 292 schools, including 1 098 registered independent or private schools. Of all schools, roughly 6 000 are high schools (grade 7 to grade 12) and the rest primary (grade 0 to grade 6).³⁰

In this study, educational levels were defined according to levels of schooling achieved by users e.g. primary school (Grades 0 -7), high school (Grades 8 -12), post-high school/tertiary education.

2.2.3 Age

More than 50% of the population is under 15 years and therefore services, particularly, in ICTs, need to take cognizance of the large body of youth. There is also an increased number of child-headed households due to HIV/AIDs deaths of parents, which brings with it specific life and wellbeing needs.

In this study the following age groups were defined: 10 and under, 10 – 14, 15-18, 19- 25, 26-35, 36-45, 46- 60 and 60+. The youthfulness of the population required

²⁹ http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/education/education.htm Accessed 18 February 2008

³⁰ *ibid*

more detailed breakdown in the youth age categories (defined in South Africa as under 35).

2.2.4 Gender

Gender imbalances can be in terms of single-headed households, levels of poverty, and levels of income. In terms of access, there is a male predominance in use of ICTs, and particularly by the youth.

In this study, the gender of users was measured in the field surveys to assess whether there was a gender bias in usage.

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.

The location of service delivery facilities was previously closely connected to the racial groups as defined in 2.2.1 and 2.2.6. Since the abolishment of apartheid in 1994, the government has prioritized the redress of past inequities and particular emphasis has been placed on the building of schools and clinics, telecenters and more recently libraries to serve these communities. With the upsurge in HIV/AIDS, a national network of HIV/AIDS support centers has also been established throughout the country. Most facilities have been placed in the central business districts of cities and towns, in townships (peri-urban areas), and to a lesser extent in rural areas. ICT access is however still not reaching many rural areas, and even the township areas are largely underserved except through phone shops and the pervasive penetration of mobile telephony through most of South Africa.

In this study, we have largely focused on previously disadvantaged areas i.e. townships/peri-urban areas and rural areas.

2.2.6 Other inequity variables

Other Inequity Variable 1: Access to reliable infrastructure and facilities

During apartheid, large numbers of the black population were forced to live far from urban areas but close enough to provide labor for the cities. Others were forced into rural areas. This demographic is still in place and results in poor access to facilities such as government services, clinics, housing, schools, electricity and telecommunications. Government efforts are concentrated on developing infrastructure in rural and previously-neglected areas within the urban and peri-urban environments. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, combined with high poverty levels, has created demand for increased healthcare and support.

In this study, we have largely focused on previously disadvantaged areas i.e. townships/peri-urban areas and rural areas, which are characterized by limited access to ICT infrastructure.

Other Inequity Variable 2: Local languages

South Africa has eleven official languages. Most communications are conducted in English, but there is a strong emphasis in government on producing communications in local languages. This is particularly relevant in rural areas where English may not be well-understood or used.

In this study, the issue of language was not particularly addressed except through assessing the need for relevant content. Government communications are in all 11 official languages and there is a strong drive to publish more indigenous literature in the local languages.

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.

No accurate number is available for all documents and websites reviewed as the desktop research went wider in searching to find the most relevant documents which are listed in this report. The most relevant references have been cited throughout this report as footnotes. An estimate would be in excess of 100 documents and websites. The most significant documents are listed below.

2.3.1.1 Most useful bibliography:

Benjamin, P. (2001). Telecentres and Universal Capability. A study of the Telecentre Programme of the Universal Service Agency in South Africa, 1996-2000. PhD Thesis. Aalborg

University.³¹

Finlay, A. (2003). *Legal and regulatory framework for media in South Africa. Background report. Unpublished. Panos, London. Available from author.*

Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) (2007). *An evaluation of the sustainability of integrated service delivery in 25 Multi-Purpose Community Centres. African response presentation to GCIS, 15th March 2007.*

HSRC (2006) *ICT Penetration in South Africa.*

Mail & Guardian (2008). *ANC media tribunal under scrutiny. M&G, Johannesburg* [http://www.mg.co.za/articlepage.aspx?area=/breaking_news/breaking_news_national/&articleid=331935&referrer=RSS]

Nelson Mandela Foundation & Human Sciences Research Council (2002). *Nelson Mandela/HSRC Study of HIV/AIDS: Household Survey 2002, South African National HIV Prevalence, Behavioural Risks and Mass Media (Executive Summary). Johannesburg, NMF & HSRC*

Open Society Foundation (2007). *Meeting their Mandates? A Critical Analysis of South African Media Statutory Bodies. ISBN 978-1-920051-86-0.* http://llnw.creamermedia.co.za/articles/attachments/14283_meetigtheirmandates.pdf

Sturges, Paul & Neill, Richard (2004). *The Quiet Struggle.*

USAASA (2007). *Report on Access Centers as Audited in March 2007. Unpublished report.*

USAASA (2007). *USAASA Press Conference Presentation. 04 December 2007.*

USAASA (March 2008). *Presentation to the Portfolio Committee: Communications on the USAASA Strategy.*

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.

About 60+ individuals interviewed (including telephone/email discussions)

HIV/AIDS Support Centers (18 full interviews + numerous phone discussions)

Approximately 18 full-length and ad hoc interviews were conducted for the HIV/AIDS

³¹ Benjamin considers the early days (1990s) of telecenter implementation through the Universal Services Agency in South Africa. Many of his observations remain valid.

centers. These included project coordinators, and center managers. The interviewee sample was representative of the spectrum of HIV/AIDS initiatives in South Africa, and included 'high-level' funder input (CEOs, administrators, public relations experts, field workers and coordinators, amongst others), as well as grassroots project coordinator input (including from the coordinators of relatively poorly resourced community-based organizations).

Starfish Greathearts Foundation. Charlotte Steenekamp, Corporate Relationship Manager email: charlotte.steenekamp@starfishcharity.org, Tel: +27 11 259 4012.
HIV/AIDS support centers

Starfish Greathearts Foundation. Nokuthula Tsela, Fieldworker/coordinator, email: nokuthula.tsela@starfishcharity.org, Tel: +27 11 259 4330

Noah, Pat Sullivan, CEO, email: pat@noahorphans.org.za, Tel: +27 011 234 2270.
HIV/AIDS support centers

loveLife. Refilwe Afrika, Media Director, email: refilwea@lovelife.org.za, Tel: +27 011 523 1000

ICASA. Robert Nkuna, Councillor, email: RNkuna@icasa.org.za, Tel: +27 011 3218205

Libraries (9 full interviews; about 10 phone/email discussions)

Carol Slater, Provincial Library: Kwazulu Natal

Gauteng Provincial Libraries. . Elizabeth Mbata, Assistant Director, elizabethm@gpg.gov.za Tel: 011-355-2561, Fax: 011-355-2565, Cell: 083-554-1969

Kenneth Khumalo, City of Tshwane Public Library, CBD. Email: KennethK@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA Tel: +27 12 358-8827

John Tsebe, National Librarian, Pretoria. Email: John.Tsebe@nisa.ac.za Tel: +27 12 401-9763

Lesiba Ledwaba, Coordinator on ICT infrastructure, National Library and Department of Arts and Culture Libraries Unit. Tel: +27 12 401-9786.

James Thakrah, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Local Government Network Project, tel: +7 11 313-3508

Telecenters (3 full interviews; about 15 phone/email discussions)

Sandile Nzuzza. Manager: Information, USAASA. email: sandilen@usaasa.org.za Tel: +27 11 564-1600

Khosi Mahlangu. Manager: e-learning. USAASA. email: khosim@usaasa.org.za Tel: +27 11 564-1600

Aubrey Mathinjwa, Manager to CEO, USAASA. email: aubreym@usaasa.org.za Tel: +27

11 564-1600

Joshua Manamela, Manager: Projects, USAASA. email: joshuam@usaasa.org.za Tel: +27 11 564-1600

Mandla Sithole, USAASA regional manager, Kwazulu Natal. email: jobe@webmail.co.za Mobile: +27 0828868561

Alida Veldsman, Meraka Institute, CSIR, P O Box 395, Pretoria, (no longer there). Email: awraal@gmail.com Tel: +27 (82) 443-8893

Johan van Rensburg, Meraka Institute, CSIR, P O Box 395, Pretoria. Email: jvrensbu@csir.co.za Tel: +27 (12) 841-2970

Patricia Makoro, Deputy Chairperson, Telecentre Organisation of South Africa (TASA). email: siyatele@workmail.co.za Mobile: +27 82 259 1239

Phone Shops

Approximately five informants were consulted as needed hoc in the process of collecting data on phone shops. These included representatives of the mobile operators, and ICASA employees. Unlike the HIV/AIDS centers, this was more of a data-gathering exercise.

Self-assisted ICT access points

Approximately five informants were consulted to collect data on the various types of access points. These included the Meraka Institute, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Digital Doorways Project which they are piloting), the South African Post Office (SAPO) for the Public Internet Terminals (PiTs) and USAASA for information on the Vuselela Information Kiosks.

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).

No group interviews or focus groups were conducted. There was participation in a workshop organized to discuss strategies for the allocation of funds for libraries, in which a number of librarians, municipal representatives, the national library, and three provincial library representatives participated. The HIV/AIDS team member also participated in team-building activities at the loveLife center.

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).

No specific site visits, other than those included in the Phase II survey, were conducted for telecenters since some research team members have recently been involved in other projects involving visits to these venues. The team also has access to other experts who are regularly interacting with telecenter and MPCC sites and staff.

No specific site visits were paid to libraries since some of the team members have been closely involved in projects such as the SmartCape and SmartAccess projects in the Western Cape and could bring this knowledge into the team during Phase I.

Site visits were carried out for Phase I AND II at the following HIV/AIDS centers. Since HIV/AIDS centers were unexplored territory for the research team, all sites were visited to assess the feasibility of including them in the study and in the follow-up Phase II:

- loveLife Y-Centre, Orange Farm (Gauteng, loveLife)
- Ikageng Itireleng AIDS Ministry in Soweto (Gauteng, Starfish)
- Good Hope in Tembisa (Gauteng, Starfish)
- Noah ark (resource center), Diepsloot (Gauteng, Noah)

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 telecenters, 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	Telecenters / MPCCs	HIV/AIDS Support Centers
# of urban venues surveyed	3	0	3
# of non-urban venues surveyed	7	7	4
# of respondents in urban venues	118	0	142
# of respondents in non-urban venues	213	160	166

Survey description and comments:

Libraries:

In total, 10 libraries were surveyed:

Two urban libraries: Bellville (Western Cape Province) and City of Tshwane/Pretoria Mid-City Community Library (Gauteng).

Seven non-urban libraries: 3 in the Western Cape (Moses Mabhida, Hector Pietersen, Eersterivier), Limpopo(Makhuva), Eastern Cape (Sterkspruit), Gauteng (Hammanskraal, Bodibeng/Soshanguve) Northern Cape (Pampierstad) . All the Western Cape libraries are part of the SmartCape Access Project. Each library has six computers, one central PC at the librarian's workstation, and five terminals. One of these is for the physically disabled. The computers have internet, email, and several other packages e.g. word processor, spreadsheet, Paint etc. This is a completely open source solution.

1. Moses Mabhida Library, Western Cape

Moses Mabhida Library is in Khayelitsha, a large black township area with limited infrastructure situated in the peri-urban area outside Cape Town. It is situated next to the community hall, close to the taxi rank and train station but far from the bus route, and not within walking distance. It is almost directly across the road from a secondary school. It is a well staffed and very busy library.

2. Bellville Library

Bellville Library is situated next to the taxi rank and the police station. It is very close to (opposite) other local government offices. It is within walking distance from a shopping centre, and a shopping precinct. It is a very large library, and has the highest circulation figures for the City of Cape Town Library Services. It is extremely busy and is very well staffed. At the time of the survey, the fieldworkers were not well received at this library, possibly due to the fact the memory cards had been stolen from the SmartCape computers and the system was not working. There were many irate SmartCape users who had come into the library to use the computers and were disappointed - this may have skewed their responses. Theft is becoming an increasingly common problem for the SmartCape Access Project.

3. Hector Peterson library, Western Cape

Hector Pietersen Library is in Lwandle, an informal settlement just outside Somerset West in the Western Cape. It is situated next to a taxi rank and close to schools and other local government offices. The shopping centre is some distance away, and not within walking distance although accessible by taxi or bus. The SmartCape facility in this library is in excessive demand, with queues of people waiting to use the computers. The other library facilities are not well used. As a result, the library is poorly resourced and staffed, with the poor circulation figures being given as the motivation for this.

4. Eersterivier Library, Western Cape

The library is situated on an open field on the corner of a busy intersection. It is on a bus route to and from Bellville, and a taxi route that goes to Bellville and Parow, two large urban areas. The library is far from the train station but close to schools, churches and a shopping complex. Eersteriver is about 30-35 kms east of Cape Town. The SmartCape facility is very busy, with long queues of people waiting to use the computers. The community, while not rural, is also not quite urban (they were referred to as "farm people" by the researchers), and were therefore not as forthcoming during the fieldwork.

5. Makhuva library, Limpopo

The Makhuva library is part of the Makhuva MPCC complex in the village of Makhuva in the Limpopo province. It houses various government offices which offer services to the public. The MPCC includes the following: library, post office, police, Eskom (power utility), various government department offices such as health, home affairs, social security, and water affairs among others.

6. Mid-City Community Library / City of Tshwane, Gauteng

This library is a large, modern facility of three floors, situated in the CBD of Pretoria/Tshwane. It largely services the working community and the youth who attend the many schools and colleges in the downtown area. The user base is clearly differentiated between registered library users, largely white, and unregistered users who make use of the library facilities mainly for study purposes. There also appears to be a strong social function in that it serves as a meeting place for young people. Young children use the facility by themselves for doing their homework in the afternoons. It is easily accessible by bus and taxi, and the train station is about 10 minutes walk away.

7. Bodibeng Community Library, Soshanguve, Gauteng

The Bodibeng library is located in the township of Soshanguve, about 45km north of Pretoria and is located in the MPCC. The surrounding area consists of diverse housing, from informal shacks to modern brick houses. Soshanguve was previously part of the homeland area created for the relocation of black residents from other areas outside of Pretoria. Infrastructure has been improved in areas but there are many parts which are still underserved. The library is situated on a major thoroughfare and is close to a taxi rank. The modern library has a large hall for studying which is separated from the book collection. There is a children's mini-library with reading space as well as seating areas for casual reading.

8. Sterkspruit library, Eastern Cape

Sterkspruit is a small rural town located in a mountainous area in the Eastern Cape. The Sterkspruit telecenter is located in the MPCC and offers photocopying, faxing, typing and email services. The MPCC includes the following: library, post office, police, Eskom (power utility), and various government department offices such as economic affairs, home affairs and labor.

9. Hammanskraal Community Library, Gauteng

Hammanskraal is about 60km north of Pretoria and was previously part of a homeland created under apartheid where the previously disadvantaged could purchase land. The

area is characterized by diverse housing, from wooden shacks to more sophisticated brick houses. The Library is situated inside the government-supported MPCC. It is a well-developed, very modern double-storey building close to the Mandela statue which is a tourist attraction. The MPCC and library are situated close to a taxi rank and a shopping center is being built close to the MPCC. The library has a large separate quiet area/study facility and a separate book collection, as well as a reception area which also houses the ICTs. Various government services are offered at the MPCC and there is a police station.

10. Pampierstad Library, Northern Cape

This telecenter is located in the peri-urban/township area outside of the closest town of Hartwater. The library houses computers, provides office applications such as the typing of documents, faxing, photocopying and Internet access.

Telecenters:³²

All the USAASA and government supported telecenters are located in non-urban environments.

1. Belhar Telecenter, Western Cape

This Telecentre, near Bellville, is also part of a community centre which houses a day-care centre for children and runs a vegetable garden for the elderly. It is close to taxi and bus routes but far from the station i.e. not within walking distance. The shopping centre is quite a distance away but accessible using a taxi or bus. It is close to churches, schools and municipal offices. This is a USAASA telecenter which offers discounted services to the public. There are approximately 12 PCs with public internet access. The staff also offers basic computer literacy training for adults and students. There are fax facilities and other administrative services are offered. This centre is also available for conference purposes. There is only one staff member. The centre seems very poorly used and in a morning only eight users were surveyed, largely female. Apparently there has been a decline in its user base over the past few months, the reasons being unknown.

2. Bonteheuwel Telecenter, Western Cape

This Telecenter rents a room in the Thusong MPCC which is located in the heart of the Bonteheuwel town and has nine computers. The center is across the road from a shopping centre, next to mainstream churches, schools, and a mosque. It is on the taxi and bus route. The train station is a five-minute walk away. Like Belhar, this centre also offers a discounted service to the public. This is a public access facility, and the staff also offers basic computer literacy training. There are fax facilities and other admin services offered. This telecenter also seems very poorly used, although the MPCC itself is busy and well-used.

³² More details about the Thusong Service Centers can be obtained from <http://www.thusong.gov.za/>

3. *Makhuva Telecenter/MPCC, Limpopo*

As described above. It forms part of the Makhuva MPCC complex.

4. *Sterkspruit Telecenter / MPCC, Eastern Cape*

As described above. It forms part of the Sterkspruit MPCC complex.

5. *Zithobeni Telecenter/MPCC, Gauteng*

Zithobeni is the black township located 5km outside the small town of Bronkhorstspuit, about 60km from Pretoria. The telecenter is situated inside the government MPCC building, which has about eight offices housing various government departments. There is a police station and a library within 200 meters of the MPCC. There are three phone shops as well as several Telkom public phones, and a few shops close by.

6. *Kgautswane Community Development Center (KCDC) / MPCC, Limpopo*

The Kgautswane Community Development Center forms part of the Kgautswane MPCC, where government offers services to the public. The MPCC includes the following: clinic, police, various government departments such as health, justice, education, home affairs, social security, municipal offices, and the office of the premier of Limpopo. The KCDC functions as a telecenter which offers computer, training, typing and internet services, village banking, a post office, crafts, and a library.

HIV/AIDS support centers

For Phase 2 of the study, surveys were implemented at the following Starfish-supported HIV/AIDS centers in Gauteng:

- Ikageng Iterileng. Contact: Carol Dyanjie, Tel: +27 11 536 2278
- Nangavhutshilo (Soweto, Gauteng). Contact: Sbongile Mazibuko, Tel: +27 11 984 7324
- Vuselela Ulwazi Lwakho Drop-in-Centre (Diepsloot, Gauteng). Contact: Cecelia Sato, +27 11 464 7144
- Thusanang HIV/AIDS Relief Project (Slovoville, Gauteng). Contact: Kgomotso Tel: +27 72 605 7764
- Masibambane Community Care & Support (Lawley informal settlement, Gauteng). Contact: Fikile Ntumba, Tel: +27 83 6357080
- Friends For Life (Alexandra, Gauteng). Contact: Lulama, Tel: +27 11 8829152

An additional survey was also conducted at a rural loveLife franchise in Makhuva (Giyani, Limpopo). Ivy Mabunda. Tel +27 84 0312056 ivy.mabunda@gmail.com

For historical reasons of unequal socio-economic development, all of the HIV/AIDS surveys were carried out in 'black' settlements, including townships, Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) housing projects, or informal settlements. In this context,

urban is defined as those settlements that are directly related to major city centers, such as the Johannesburg city center. These include Soweto, which is now described as a suburb of Johannesburg, and Alexandra, a poor township close to wealthy Johannesburg suburbs, such as Sandton. Non-urban refers to areas that fall on the periphery of the greater Johannesburg region, and where the centers are about 5-10 minutes away from open farmlands, small holdings, or undeveloped industrial land. These include the centers surveyed in Diepsloot, Slovoville, Lawley informal settlement, and Giyane.

For the Gauteng survey the CIS survey template was tailored to suit the South African context. This was then offered to Starfish for review and approval. The six centers were identified by Starfish, who then accompanied us on site visits to the centers. It was decided that the surveys were to be carried out by staff at the HIV/AIDS centers during the course of their day-to-day interactions with the public. At the sites, the project was explained to the center coordinator, as well as to staff who were to implement the survey. We then worked through the survey to ensure that it was properly understood. Members of the public that visited the centers for testing, counseling, or information were surveyed over a period of the equivalent of two days for each center. While using center capacity to conduct the survey assists with buy-in, and encourages a participative approach to the research, the staff members were not experienced researchers. Although the survey was relatively straightforward to implement, this may have led to some margin of error in the results.

2.3.6 Other data gathering techniques

Other Data Gathering Technique 1: none

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.

Meraka Institute, CSIR. CEO, Kagiso Chikane, KChikane@csir.co.za Kobus Roux, Competency Area Manager, Meiring Naude Road, Scientia, Pretoria. Tel. +27 12 841-4460. email: kroux@csir.co.za Digital Doorways, Wireless Networking.

Starfish Greathearts Foundation., Charlotte Steenekamp, Corporate Relationship Manager. email: charlotte.steenekamp@starfishcharity.org, Tel: +27 11 259 4012. HIV/AIDS support centers

Noah, Pat Sullivan, CEO, email: pat@noahorphans.org.za, Tel: +27 011 234 2270. HIV/AIDS support centers

Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA). James Theledi, CEO, Building 21, Thornhill Office Park, 94 Bekker Road, Vorna Valley, Midrand 1686. Chairman of the board Cassandra Gabrielle. Tel: 0833274421, PA: Korabo 082-8850294, Aubrey Mathinjwa: Manager, CEOs office: 082-8850924. Tel. +27 11 564-1600. Telecenters, School Cyberlabs, Universal Access

Free State Provincial Library and Information Services. Ms Jacomien Schimper, Director, Library, Archives and Technology Services Directorate, Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. Private Bag X20606, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa. Tel.: +27 (051) 4054681, Fax: +27 (051) 4033567, jacomien@sac.fs.gov.za Modjadji Molepo, molepo@sac.fs.gov.za, Tel (051) 407 2845, Fax (051) 407 2852

Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture. King Williams Town, Eastern Cape, South Africa Tel: +27 (0)43 604 4127 Fax: +27 (0)43 604 4144 info@ecdsrac.gov.za .

Mpumalanga Provincial Library, and Information Service. Mr Francois Hendrikz, Deputy Director, (also Building Electronic Bridges Project Director). Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture. Mpumalanga Provincial Government, P.O. Box 1243, Nelspruit 1200, South Africa. Tel.: +27 (013) 766 5026. Fax: +27 (013) 766 5594. E-mail: fhendrik@nel.mpu.gov.za. Also, Ms Anso Smit, Assistant Director, Electronic Networking Development (also Building Electronic Bridges, Project Manager), Tel.: +27 (013) 766 5061, Fax: +27 (013) 766 5594 ansosmit@nel.mpu.gov.za

LIASA Information and Communication Technology in Libraries Interest Group (ICTLIG). Convener: Wynand van der Walt (wvanderwalt@uwc.ac.za). Western Cape ICTLIG: Chairperson: Caroline Dean (caroline@uctlib.uct.ac.za).

Foundation for Library and Information Service Development, State Library, Pretoria. Susanne Bolt, sbolt@statelib.pwv.gov.za

Johannesburg Library and Information Services. Ms Elise Roberts, Head, Bibliographic Services, City of Johannesburg, Private Bag X93, Marshalltown, Johannesburg 2107, South Africa. Tel.: +27 (011) 870-1217; +27 (0)82-550-2880, Fax: +27 (011) 838-7472; +27 (011) 870-1252, E-mail: <eliser@joburg.org.za

Cape Access Project, Refilwe Tshabalala, Tel: 021 483 3794, Fax: 021 483 5888, rtshabal@pgwc.gov.za

President's Commission on Information Society and Development & Department of Communications. Lyndall Shope-Mafole, Director General Dept of Communications (also responsible for regulation of the ICT sector and the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA). Tel: 012 430 7186 / Mobile: 082 771 5173 lyndall@pnc.gov.za

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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.

Phase I of the research was undertaken by the team leader in collaboration with a core team of three researchers, each of whom has extensive experience in the ICT arena in South Africa. Their depth of knowledge and extensive networks allowed the effective gathering and interpretation of information from numerous key players and experts.

In Phase II the core research team made a joint decision that the most efficient and cost-effective way of undertaking the fieldwork would be to deploy a large team of fieldworkers who were based in the areas selected for study. Preparatory briefing notes and samples of completed questionnaires were prepared as background for the teams. All of these fieldworkers were supervised and coached by core members of the research team. The benefits of this approach were as follows:

- In the case of the HIV/AIDs centers, staff members were used to administer the survey as a) it was a practical way to build capacity and create buy-in at the center; b) the staff members are trusted by the community, especially those affected with HIV/AIDs; the staff members can communicate the survey questions in vernacular languages; and the staff members have ready access to respondents over the two-day period during which the survey was undertaken. A fieldworker from the Starfish project, who is well-known to the center managers, accompanied the researcher during site visits and orientation sessions, and helped to explain the questionnaire and project objectives to the center managers and staff. Working through Starfish offered a way of centralizing the research process, and of giving the survey credibility and legitimacy. The survey results will also be shared with the centers, and in this way it is hoped that the survey process will serve in some way as a process of self-reflection for the center managers.
- In the case of libraries, three approaches were adopted: in the case of the Western Cape, there was collaboration with researchers who are presently involved in the SmartCape project. Their knowledge of local communities and the application of ICTs in libraries added to their credibility in undertaking this work. The work in

Gauteng libraries was undertaken by a graduate student with experience in conducting field surveys. The student was supervised and coached by the team leader, who also accompanied him to the first site visit to ensure that the questionnaires would be used as required.

- In the case of telecenters, use was made of a team of five 'infopreneurs', young entrepreneurs who have been trained in the use of ICTs by the Meraka Institute and who live in non-urban, underserved communities where telecenters and MPCCs have been established. All of these Infopreneurs are familiar with the communities under study, an important aspect due to the suspicion and sensitivity in these communities to answering survey questions.

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.

The sample size for a country the size of South Africa is small, particularly in the case of libraries (<.01%) and with the scope and budget of the study only allowing limited provinces to be covered.

In the case of the HIV/AIDS support centers, the staff members at the centers were not experienced researchers, although it was felt that their knowledge of the centers would compensate to a large extent for this lack of experience;

A large team of field workers was deployed, with surveys implemented by different people at each of the venues. Experience and levels of education were diverse. This increases the chance of errors as a result of inconsistencies in the survey process.

2.4.2 Team qualifications

1 paragraph

Description of the research team and its qualifications to undertake this study.

Tina James has more than 25 years experience in the field of ICTs, particularly in South Africa and Africa. Work undertaken to date has drawn on her wide range of experience in the management of multidisciplinary projects in both the fields of ICTs and environmental information management, ICT policy and strategy development, program design, and facilitation of participative processes. As Senior Program Officer and Senior Advisor to the Canadian International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) Acacia (1997 – 2001) Program, which addressed the use of ICTs by disadvantaged, rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa, she was responsible for project development and implementation as well as support for planning activities. She has operated as a consultant since 1997, and recently established icteum consulting, which is based in South Africa. Her prior work experience includes various ICT-related management positions at the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). She is an associate lecturer of the University of the Witwatersrand's LINK Centre in Johannesburg on gender and ICTs and serves on the International Taskforce on Women in ICT.

Alan Finlay has been involved in numerous projects that required fieldwork of this nature, including face-to-face interviews and site visits and assessments. Recently he implemented a mobile communications survey in Orange Farm, outside Johannesburg. He has also coordinated and run focus group discussions dealing with HIV/AIDs, media and behavior in townships in and around Gauteng. The HIV/AIDs staff members have various day-to-day responsibilities at the centers, including counseling and support and administrative responsibilities.

Mike Jensen is an independent consultant assisting in the establishment of information and communication systems in developing countries over the last 20 years. With work experience in 40 African countries, as well as in Sri Lanka and Brazil, he provides advice to international development agencies, the private sector, NOGs and governments in the formulation, management and evaluation of their Internet and telecommunications projects. Often acting as a resource person and public speaker at international meetings, he focuses on policy and technology developments in rural telecommunication projects, community access, fiber, wireless and satellite connectivity.

Mark Neville, through Radian, has been extensively involved in the roll out of the Smart Cape project which aims to broaden public access to ICTs in the Western Cape and particularly in Cape Town. Their project was a recipient of an award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for this work. Computers have been placed in libraries, training provided and the ongoing technical support for the project is supplied by Radian. The project is presently extending into areas outside the Cape Town metropolitan area. Mark Neville has been included in this team specifically because of his deep and extended experience in providing ICTs in libraries in the Western Cape, and the belief that his practical experiences can be usefully applied to work in other parts of South Africa

Survey team / data capturing / Infopreneurs. Four groups of field researchers were used:

Infowizz: InfoWizz is an SMME specialising in providing practical knowledge-related services to clients, with a special focus on social and economic development. InfoWizz employs a team of researchers from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, and equips them with research, content management, knowledge management and information technology skills. Many of InfoWizz's current projects are in the ICT4Development arena. Given their core focus area of social and economic development, InfoWizz's clients are primarily government and small business. The business is managed by Rasagee Pillay, who coordinated the Western Cape research for this project. Infowizz has been managing the Ubusha program which is the only government sponsored local content project in South Africa. It provides a context for the access provided at libraries and elsewhere, by encouraging content consumption, developing information literacy, and supporting content development. The team of researchers who worked on this survey are 1) Zuthobeke Mvakade who has a Library and Information Science background and is presently working on two content creation and management projects and one library project in the Western Cape; 2) Zanele Matshotyana has a background in Human Ecology (community Development) and is also involved in two content creation projects. She previously worked as a researcher and fieldworker for the Trust for Community Outreach and Education; 3)

Thurlo Cicero is a web designer by profession, but has been involved in conducting interviews and writing local content articles for websites managed by infowizz; 4) Warren Windvogel is a web developer with skills in the open source arena.

Infopreneurs: The infopreneurs were selected for their access to rural areas of South Africa. All are linked to the provision of ICT services associated with the government-supported MPCCs. They have been put through ICT learnerships which were developed and coordinated under the supervision of the Meraka Institute and which comply with the requirements of the national Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA). The Infopreneurs are: Sifiso Nkosi (Zithobeni); Ivy Mabunda (Makhuva); Edith Sello (Pampierstad); Ismael Adams (Kgautswane); Moundrice Gqetywa (Sterkspruit).

Numerous of the HIV/AIDS Center Staff assisted in undertaking the survey under the supervision of Alan Finlay. Details have been presented earlier in this report.

Khotso Rammopo undertook the library surveys in Gauteng and was also responsible for most of the data capturing for this project. He has previously been involved in commercial market surveys and has a post-matric diploma in tourism management.

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?

Overall, government efforts to improve access to ICTs have not yet had a significant impact on the public and this is borne out by the research carried out for this study. The telecenters in Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCCs) do not appear to be functioning well and several of the sites were not operating, operators were not on duty when they should have been, or ICT access was not available for numerous reasons. There appear to be some significant developments in the public library arena, and the concerted efforts to extend the network of libraries and to increase the provision of ICTs through these facilities can be seen, particularly in some parts of the Western Cape through its SmartCape project.

Internet access costs have been high due to the restricted telecommunications market environment (although this is now opening up), and programs have suffered from limited funding and/or lack of implementation capacity, both at the national level (where it has been acknowledged that USAASA has not succeeded in meeting its goals) and particularly at the local level, especially in rural areas where anyone who obtains a modicum of ICT skills is likely to leave for the city³³. So far the most notable ICT access impact has been the thousands of entrepreneurially run 'phone shops' which obtain subsidized (about 60% cheaper) voice call rates from the mobile operators who are required to provide discounted tariffs as part of their license obligations. Most do not however offer computer or internet access although some pilots are in progress to test the feasibility of extending the range of 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)?

The deployment of ICTs in South Africa continues to be influenced by limitations in the availability of telecommunication infrastructure and electric power, especially in rural areas which still suffer from the lack of investment caused by the apartheid legacy. While mobile phone use has

³³ In a recent audit in KZN of all the telecenters and cyberlabs, the two major constraints were lack of power supply and the very low skills levels in ICT (both technical and how to sell such services).

expanded dramatically, lack of competition in the telecom sector and ineffective initiatives to broaden ICT access has resulted in little improvement in the delivery of more advanced ICT-based services to the public. In addition, unreliable and increasingly expensive electric power supplies now affect the whole country.

Internet is used by only about 1-2 million people in the country, and of the total basket of costs that a consumer pays for Internet access, most of these go directly to the incumbent fixed line operator in the form of access charges. Fortunately there is increasing competition in the broadband sector and plans for national and international fiber links which should substantially reduce costs and increase penetration over the short-to-medium term.

Currently however radio is still the most widespread ICT medium and it is estimated that eighty-eight percent of the rural population listens to radio in a seven-day period. South Africa also has by far the largest television (TV) audience in Africa. There are more than four million licensed television households. The national television network comprises four full-spectrum free-to-air channels, a satellite pay-TV channel. Services include 55 video and 48 audio channels operating 24 hours a day.

The newspaper markets consists of 17 dailies, 7 Sunday newspapers, 24 weeklies and 161 local or country newspapers, most of them weeklies. There has, however, been an explosion in the number of titles in recent years, with the business-to-business magazine sector remaining larger than the consumer market. Most of the publications have websites and there are more than 600 'blog/netzines' in South Africa, with at least 20 of them specializing in daily news.

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)?

Similarly to the access issue, South Africa's capacity ecosystem is very diverse, ranging from world class software developers and tight integration of ICTs into daily routines amongst the more wealthy and in the more industrialized areas, to virtual absence of capacity and use in more rural areas.

Government is making strong efforts to put government services online and some private sector e-services such as the mass media, e-commerce (online purchasing), banking and money transfer are now becoming more widespread, the latter especially through the mobile phone. The education sector is also seeing increased use of ICTs as more schools are equipped with computers and internet connectivity, and specialized ICT training centers are established.

In contrast to most other African countries and countries in other developing regions South Africa has a relatively small diaspora which has reduced the demand for public Internet access services to provide low cost international communications via email or VoIP. In addition there are 11 official languages which has created further difficulties in ensuring sufficient content in own languages.

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)?

Overall the national economy has benefitted from growing global demand and higher prices for natural resources (mainly minerals), as well as strong fiscal management and a growing tax-base. Nevertheless, economic activity in South Africa is concentrated in the major urban areas, especially around Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, while rural area economies still suffer from stagnant growth and dependence on remittances from family members working in the major urban areas.

The recently developed national strategy for delivering universal service in ICTs aims to reach the following targets:

- Access to telephony within a walking distance of no more than 500 meters.
- Telecommunications services (fixed or mobile) should be available in every household by 2010.
- Broadband penetration should be equal to or exceed 5% by 2010.
- That not less than 25% of the population has Internet access by 2010.
- All public institutions have broadband connectivity within three years.
- That 112 emergency telephone services be extended to the fixed-line services.

In addition various measures have been undertaken to address significant “brain drain” in technical and entrepreneurial ICT skills, with an estimated 200–300 ICT-skilled resources leaving the country each month. Current unemployment rates are high (30–35%), but it is also difficult to find a sufficient supply of skilled ICT workers to meet the rising demand. In an effort to address this, the government has created the Human Resources Development Fund which is being used to provide grants and subsidies to promote the provision of adequately skilled human resources for ICTs.

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

Disadvantaged population groups often lack access to essential services, such as electricity, water, health care and telecommunication services, and ‘essential resources’ such as housing, land and work opportunities. Much of the agenda of the post-apartheid government has been about extending the quality and range of essential services enjoyed by privileged white areas to black townships and informal settlements, and redressing the lack of business, land and housing ownership amongst black communities. Similarly these communities also lack access to information that would improve their livelihoods. ICT access has not in the past been considered

an essential service. However, initiatives such as telecenters have attempted to address the lack of access to ICTs amongst poorer communities and there is increasing recognition that universal service objectives should go beyond the provision of just telephony to include the provision of more advanced digital services.

Given the socio-economic conditions of the majority of the population – including the impact of HIV/AIDS and unemployment - practical public service information is a priority for disadvantaged communities. This includes information on how to apply for grants and ID books, accessing government information on HIV/AIDS, TB or child and general healthcare, education opportunities and funding resources for studying, training and employment opportunities, and knowing where to get information on the latest local government tender (see below for more details).

Source: *Research team experience; interviews; survey results; literature review*

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

While there are numerous information gaps, South Africa is relatively information rich as far as public information goes – evidenced by extensive print, broadcast and online commercial media sectors and the dozens of information campaigns and programs in the public and non-profit sectors, as well as the work-place public information drives in major corporations, such as the mines. As in the case of the nationwide loveLife HIV/AIDS campaign, which has in the past received significant funding, concerns relate more to the *kinds* of information produced rather than the budget to produce that information, as well as the practical reach and appropriateness of that information.³⁴

Public information drives have used most available media in their efforts to reach disadvantaged communities, including radio, TV, print media, internet, posters and pamphlets. Information drives have also been word-of-mouth, with, for example, community workers discussing important issues in community fora. The multivalence of these public information drives – and their divergent sources - makes them difficult to summarize in the available space. Whether or not the content can be said to be locally relevant will depend on the nature of the information campaign. Key challenges include using appropriate media for the information drive (given the media appetite of the target community), and developing appropriate content, including language, and the clarity and accessibility of the information in relation to the target audience. While South Africa is information rich, it is also true to say that there are only a few public information campaigns that manage to meet these requirements. The HIV/AIDS sector has been outstanding in this regard, especially as far as its willingness to explore the potential of

³⁴ Early loveLife campaigns which attempted to attract young people through off-beat billboards and media interventions were criticized as being inaccessible.

alternative multimedia platforms, including radio, TV, print media, billboards, and using face-to-face orientation and training programs.

There are numerous e-content initiatives that offer public information in South Africa. These are primarily implemented by the government at the national, provincial and local levels, and by non-profit organizations.

Several government-driven information portals offer basic government information relating to contact details and services. These include initiatives such as the Government Communication and Information System portal (<http://www.gcis.gov.za/>) and South African Government Online (www.gov.za), which links to a government information portal (www.info.gov.za) and a services portal (www.services.gov.za). Amongst other things, the portal offers an online directory to government departments, and news and information on government strategies and programs of action (however a search for 'libraries' on the portal yielded no results). The content is available in all 11 official languages.

A provincial portal, such as the Cape Gateway (<http://www.capegateway.gov.za/>) aims to be a single point of access to local government services and information in the Western Cape province (the site also offers content in isiXhosa and Afrikaans). Departmental-specific websites, such as that of the Department of Trade and Industry (dti) (<http://www.dti.gov.za/>) provides useful information for local businesses, including legislation, industry and government news, opportunities and government-led or aligned initiatives. Targeted information such as information aimed at the country's youth is also offered by government-led projects like the Umsobomvu Youth Portal (<http://www.youthportal.org.za>). Non-profit organizations such as SANGONeT (www.sangonet.org.za) seek to lead the way in general online information provision in the non-profit sector. The SANGONeT portal offers a range of information including an NGO directory (<http://www.prodเดอร์.org.za/>), funding and training information, a 'development calendar', news, events, commentary, and other practical tips and advice for the non-profit sector. Grassroots-focused NGOs offer useful content for communities, such as the People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA, <http://www.powa.co.za>) which has an online directory that includes contact details for shelters, domestic violence help lines and women support groups, and an extensive, and useful range of other support information for abused and violated women. HIV/AIDS has received much attention, and two content initiatives stand out: loveLife (<http://www.lovelife.org.za>) and Soul City (<http://www.soulcity.org.za/>).³⁵

35 Soul City, multi-media edutainment project, is one of the longest running communication campaigns in South Africa. While Soul City deals with a broad range of health-related topics, the majority of its budget is allocated to HIV/AIDS. Both loveLife and Soul City make wide use of cross-media platforms. Soul City has produced a television and radio series. In addition, in 2000 it launched a children's series called Soul Buddyz. Besides broadcast, Soul City uses print media to create HIV/AIDS awareness and has a life-skills program. While its institutional website offers some research information, its partnership with the Communication Initiative, Soul Beat Africa (<http://www.comminit.com/africa/>) offers a range of information to the non-profit sector on health and communication issues through its newsletter. Lovelife – which was launched with the ambitious strategy of reducing the rate of HIV infection amongst 15-20 year olds by 50% in five years – combines a heady mixture of print media, outdoor marketing, television and radio with outreach and support programs aimed at the youth in poor communities. Its web presence is more developed and targeted than Soul City's, and reflects the youth market it wishes to appeal to.

The government's Khomanani HIV/AIDS portal³⁶ also offers a range of useful information and e-content with a specific emphasis on building an e-community through its content offering. Key content producers in the education sector are Mindset (<http://www.mindset.co.za/>), which provides content through a range of media, including multi-media, print and satellite TV, and the Learning Channel (<http://www.learn.co.za/>), which is a partnership between the private sector (Liberty Life, Standard Bank), the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)'s Education unit and the Department of Education.

The government has embarked on several mobile content initiatives, such as a Department of Home Affairs system that allows applicants to be notified by SMS about the status of their applications for unabridged birth certificates, ID books, and passports. The Department of Education allows matriculants to access their results via mobile phone, and the City of Johannesburg allows motorists to use SMS to find out if they have outstanding traffic fines, or whether a summons or warrant of arrest has been issued against them. However, the potential of mobile public information content remains largely unexplored.

Source: Online research; researcher experience

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.

Considered public information campaigns such as Soul City or loveLife are reaching the communities they intend to (and the campaigns conduct various impact evaluations to confirm this). It is, however, fair to say that due to the high cost of Internet access or bandwidth, lack of a pervasive broadband infrastructure and the low level of awareness generally, online information drives do not reach their intended communities effectively. In many cases, information intermediaries are necessary to download the information and explain it to beneficiaries (government-driven multi-purpose community centers recognize this gap although the skills levels of staff to provide this service are often lacking). While mobile communication would be one of the most effective ways to reach communities directly with basic information, this potential has not been fully explored or exploited (even by relatively sophisticated programs such as loveLife, which is only now looking into the issue).

Despite the growth of print and broadcast media in South Africa there remain gaps in media reach. A Nelson Mandela/Human Sciences Research Council (2002)³⁷ study found that the lowest

³⁶ <http://www.healthinsite.net/health/HealthProfile.dll/eCareGeneral?wid=12&sh=10>

³⁷ Nelson Mandela Foundation & Human Sciences Research Council (2002) Nelson Mandela/HSRC Study of HIV/AIDS: Household Survey 2002, South African National HIV Prevalence, Behavioral Risks and Mass Media (Executive Summary). Johannesburg, NMF & HSRC

exposure to broadcast and print media was experienced by people living in poorer households and in rural areas, and that particular language groups remain marginalized from the mainstream media. Exposure to TV for a few days a week or more in tribal areas and farms ranged between 44.6% and 53.3%. There have also been suggestions that as many as 2- to 5-million South Africans do not have access to a public service broadcast station, despite strong public broadcasting policy and community radio roll-out.

And as in most other developing nations, lack of locally relevant content in local languages is a key barrier to use in rural areas, especially among the older age-groups. This is borne out by the results from the survey carried out for this study, where most users fall in the 19 – 35 age group. Interestingly, the lack of relevant content and materials in local languages did not emerge as a major issue. The lack of reliable, affordable and reasonably fast access was seen as far more of a problem.

Source: Online research, researcher, experience, survey results

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?

Three types of venues were surveyed in Phase II of the study – public libraries, telecenters and MPCCs, and HIV/AIDS Support Centers. The services offered by each of these venues differ widely and meet different needs and requirements. All these venues tend to be used mostly by users between the ages of 19 to 35, with very few older people or young children. In the case of the HIV/AIDS support centers, some children as young as 10 – 14 are served, but this largely due to the housing of OVCs at these centers. Public libraries attract a large user base of school-going youth due to the provision of reading/study areas, as well as ICT facilities which are used for finding educational and job opportunities. Where users do have choices, as for example at the MPCCs which offer a library, telecenter, MPCC and sometimes an HIV/AIDS center, the use of ICTs will be determined by price and speed/reliability of the ICT equipment. Transport costs to reach a venue are also a determining factor.

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.

While there have been some changes in the demographic breakdown of disadvantaged groups since 1994, the racial make-up of economically and socially vulnerable groups remains similar to that under apartheid. Key vulnerable groups include women, children, illegal immigrants, the unemployed (30% of the adult population) HIV/AIDS victims and economic/political refugees from other countries (there have also been some examples of xenophobia). The spatial distribution of poverty that remains highly concentrated in three of the country's nine provinces: Free State (63%), North-West (62%) and Limpopo Province (59%), which have a large

concentration of previously marginalized communities (ARPM Review) At the same time, people who live in informal settlements typically lack the municipal infrastructure necessary for basic services like water, electricity and sewerage (some informal settlements have been upgraded over the years with essential services). In addition, people resident in economically poorer provinces, receive inferior local government services compared to richer provinces, in the worst cases leading to civil unrest.

With respect to the characteristics of the people in the poorest quintile, 93% of the unemployed poor are Africans, 56% are female, 70% are below the age of 35, 58% are from rural areas, 50% have completed primary education or less, and 72% have had no previous job experience. Of the unemployed poor who have work experience, 78% are in the major occupational categories 'elementary occupations' (e.g. domestic workers and farm workers) and 'craft and related trade', which includes construction workers and mine workers (South African Yearbook 2004/05). According to the Young Communist League of South Africa, "75% of young women are unemployed, the rural and peri-urban areas are most affected. Together with the retrenched, they opt for meager survivalist activities in the informal economy, making them particularly vulnerable to labor market exclusion and intense poverty." (Young Communist League of South Africa. 2005. Women Empowerment in South Africa. Submission to the Joint Ad-hoc Committee on Socio-Economic Development during its public hearing in Johannesburg.) The Income and Expenditure Survey of 1995 indicated that 62% of rural dwellers are poor, compared to 32% of people living in small towns, 25% of those in secondary cities, and 13% in major metropolitan areas. (South Africa Millennium Development Goals Country Report 2005). The UNDP estimates that the prevalence of underweight children has increased from 9.3% in 1995 to 10.3% in 2000 and the Department of Health has estimated that about 30% of South African children are stunted from a lack of adequate nutrition in the early years of their lives. (Department of Health. No date. Integrated Nutrition Program – program description on the departmental website.)

South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world. The poorest 40% of the population spend less than 3% of national consumption, while the richest 10% have 46% share of national consumption. The United Nations reported in 2003 that between 1990 and 2001, the poorest 20% of the population had a 2% share of South Africa's national consumption (United Nations Development Program. 2004. South Africa Human Development Report 2003.)

Monitoring done by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry indicates that, at the end of the 2004/05 financial year, there were 3.6 million people with no access to safe water; a further 5.4 million had a source of safe water but, at more than 200 meters from the households, According to the 2001 census figures only 1.1 million households in South Africa have a phone in the dwelling, while nearly 1.6 million have both a phone in their dwelling and a mobile phone and just over 2 million households have cell phones only. About 4.3 million households are near to a public pay phone while over 670 000 households in South Africa continue to have no access to telephony Infrastructure is poorly linked and spread unevenly across the country. The development in the commercial zones contrasts with very low penetration of services in rural and remote areas (22 lines per 1,000 people).

HIV/AIDS is having an impact in South Africa across all population groups. However, its most notable effect appears to be felt amongst economically disadvantaged population groups. Because

of its importance in the South African context, it is worth stating a few key statistics. A report released by the Actuarial Society of South Africa in November 2006,³⁸ estimates that 5.4-million people (or 11% of the population) was infected with the HI virus, which includes 19% of the working age population (ages 20 to 64). The HIV prevalence rate in women was highest between ages 25 and 29 (33%) and in men between ages 30 and 34 (27%). It also found that KwaZulu-Natal was the worst affected by the pandemic, while the Western Cape was the least affected. The Free State, Gauteng and Mpumalanga are also said to be severely affected by HIV/AIDS.

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?

Media freedom is protected by the country's Constitution. Recently, however, many feel that media freedom has come under undue influence and pressure from the ruling party. This includes political interference in the public broadcaster (the SABC), and recent calls for an investigation into the potential of a media tribunal that would adjudicate on content in an effort to, in theory, balance media freedoms with things like privacy and personal dignity. This follows sustained attacks by the media on key ruling party individuals, such as the recently appointed ANC President (and former Deputy-President of the country) Jacob Zuma, and the current Health Minister.

Political interference in the public broadcaster is said to be at odds with media freedom. In 2003 concerns were raised that the SABC was attempting to fuse the position of CEO with that of editor-in-chief, and through that merging commercial and editorial responsibilities. This was seen as a threat to independence as well as opening a door for increased political control of the public broadcaster. Also in 2003, concerns were raised when a predominantly ANC-aligned SABC board was appointed. Both these follow a quashed proposal (made by the SABC in 2002) that the Minister of Communications determine SABC policies. In April 2004 a senior executive responsible for communications and media in the Ministry of Labor was appointed managing director of news and current affairs at the SABC, and more recently, a board representing an ANC faction friendly to President Thabo Mbeki was approved by the President without due process. There are a range of media organizations and institutions that seek to protect industry concerns such as media freedom and critically look at the state of the media, including the South African National Editors Forum (SANEF), Print Media South Africa (PMSA), the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI), the Media Institute of Southern Africa – South African Chapter (MISA-SA) and the Media Monitoring Project (MMP). The key issue around the trend in judicial thought involves the balance of emphasis that courts are likely to place between the Constitutional right to freedom of expression, and the other rights contained in the Constitution. Currently, the trend is towards upholding the rights to freedom of expression.

³⁸ Actuarial Society of South Africa (2006) Summary of Biennial Report on the State of the South African HIV/AIDS Epidemic [<http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/reports/2006/summary.html>].

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 ³⁹		Telecenters and MPCCs ⁴⁰		HIV/AIDS Support Centers	
		Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use
Gender*	Male	52	54	Not applicable. No urban venues available and therefore not surveyed	49	35	33
	Female	47	45		49	62	63
Age	10 and under	0	1		0	7	1
	10 – 14	3	12		4	11*	8
	15-18	12	20		19	22	18
	19-25	42	26		34	25	25
	26 - 35	25	26		33	13	17
	36-45	13	9		11	4	13
	46-60	6	5		5	16	15
61 and over	0	0	0	0	4		

³⁹ Only libraries and telecenters with ICTs were assessed. All users have therefore been categorised under ICT use. In the case of the HIV/AIDS support centers, three centers did not have any ICTs and these have been categorised under General Use and the other 4 under ICT use.

⁴⁰ The data for education, social and income levels needs further verification.

Education level****	No formal education	10 ⁴¹	10	Not applicable. No urban venues available and therefore not surveyed	25	10	34
	Up to Primary school	30	30		30	55	52
	Up to high school	50	25		35	23	12
	College or university	10	35		10	12	2
Income bracket (approx)*****	High	18	10		10	4	0
	Medium	65	50		29	14	0
	Low	17	40		61	82	100
Social status (approx)	High	18	10		15	7	0
	Medium	65	50		34	5	5
	Low	17	40		53	88	95
Racial Groups*	Black	91	90		89	(96) ^{***}	(80)
	Colored	8	10		10	(4)	(20)
	Indian	0	0		1	0	0
	White	0	0		0	0	0

Source: Survey results

Comments, including comments on other inequity variables.

* Numbers do not add up to 100% as some questionnaires did not specify gender and /or racial groups but were included since all other data was presented.

** The survey results of the HIV/AIDS centers refer to walk-in clients and consultations, and do not refer to the hundreds of OVCs under the centers' care, or home-based initiatives.

⁴¹ These figures reflect the high user base of schoolchildren, including pre-school and primary schoolchildren, rather than a very low level of education in adults

*** The ethnic breakdown of the center users is highly dependent on where the center is situated. No data on racial groups was gathered in HIV/AIDS support centers but most users are black. The numbers indicated here are estimates based on previous experience.

**** There is considerable variation in levels of education, and income levels between telecenters and MPCCs, as well as libraries. In some telecenters, there are as many as 25% of users who have post-secondary qualifications, which skews the averages. On the whole most users have up to matriculation (12 years) education but the bulk lies on the lower end of the education spectrum. The Gauteng libraries tend to have a high proportion of students with post-secondary qualifications, which is a reflection of the large number of students who use these facilities. Some of the libraries have a high user base of young children, which explains the low levels of education.

***** Social status and income levels were seen as linked and were defined in the study as high = professional e.g. teachers, doctors; medium = government workers, administrative and clerical; low = manual labor such as farm workers, domestic workers, cleaners, unemployed.

3.4.1.2 Information People Seek, by type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries		Telecenters and MPCCs		HIV/AIDS Support Centers	
	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use	Urban ⁴² General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use
Business	32	31		329	19	15
Education	70	63		69	62	57
Health	9	14		39	49	71
Agriculture	1	6		8	1	22
Government services	24	21	Not applicable. No urban venues available and therefore not surveyed	52	47	36
Entertainment	14	24		26	35	15
News	29	23		13	32	18
Personal	26	49		54	42	38
Other	1	10		2	1	2

Source: Survey results

Comments: (Include description of "other". Suggested headings based on frequently reported topics in other research and may vary across countries).

Other types of information were not specified. More than 60 of users are using ICTs to access educational information, with a relatively high proportion accessing government information.

⁴² No urban centers were included in the sample. All government supported telecenters have been placed in underserved, non-urban communities

3.4.1.3 Uses of ICT, by type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries				Telecenters and MPCCs				HIV/AIDS Support Centers			
	Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
Email		47		55				61		35		8
Chat		12		12				21		25		11*
Web browsing		70		63				63		47		8
Blogs & social networking		10		5				7		13		1
Commerce & business		7		9	Not applicable. No urban venues available and therefore not surveyed					1		0
Phone or webcam		4		6				6		22		0
Games		8		17				28		16		12
People at venue	45		17					38		43		82
Pamphlets/ brochures	46		32					61		54		65
Other		20		22				36		1		1

Source: Survey results

Comments: (Include description of "other". Suggested headings not exhaustive, based on frequently reported topics in other research and may vary across countries).

Other uses of ICT and/or information services at these three venues include the downloading of documents and e-books, photocopying, and other business services such as typing, faxing and photocopying. ICT skills training forms a significant part of additional services offered at telecenters. The telecenters are

also used for community meetings.

A large proportion of users in libraries and HIV/AIDS support centers rely on information from non-ICT sources such as the staff at the venue and the availability of brochures and pamphlets provided at these outlets.

* Results from loveLife franchise suggest a high use of “chat” not found at the other centers.

3.4.1.4 Frequency of Use for each type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries				Telecenters and MPCCs				HIV/AIDS Support Centers			
	Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban		Urban		Non-urban	
	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use	General use	ICT use
First visit		7		2				2		9		6
Rarely (less than monthly)		7		3				7		3		4
Occasional (about once a month)		10		11				23		15		9
Regular (about 2-3 per month)		29		16				21		31		18
Frequent (about once a week)		28		18				33		17		10
Daily (about every day)		20		32				14		25		53

Source: Survey results

Comments:

A high proportion of users tend to be very regular visitors to the venues. The very high proportion of daily users at the HIV/AIDS support centers (53%) may be as a result of programs that are provided at the support centers, the provision of meals, etc.

3.4.1.5 Barriers to use for each type of venue

(estimated proportion in each category, %)	Public Libraries		Telecenters and MPCCs		HIV/AIDS Support Centers	
	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT Use	Urban General & ICT use	Non-urban General & ICT use
Not enough services	17	16		50	25	47
Location, distance	9	9		23	26	11
Hours of Operation	30	30		40	25	8
Cost	14	21		32	27	12
Lack of skills/training	24	25	Not applicable. No urban venues available and therefore not surveyed	46	39	54
No Internet	11	10		35	19	43
No computers	14	10		17	20	51
Not in right language	0	8		29	4	13
Not enough relevant content	36	30		45	3	25
Other	95	13		16	0	3

Source: Survey results

Comments: (Include description of "other". Suggested headings not exhaustive, based on frequently reported topics in other research and may vary across countries).

In the libraries other barriers include dirty toilets, not enough printed materials of relevance (brochures, printed pamphlets, school books, study books), not enough space, slow Internet and queues, noise levels, the need for more computers and/or computers that functional (presently there is too much downtime, they are slow and tend to 'freeze') . A number cited travel distances to a particular library as either the reason for use/non-use.

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:

Pre-1994, and during the apartheid era, resources were largely provided to white minority communities. For example, venues such as libraries were generally only found in the centers of towns and cities, and in the surrounding suburbs largely occupied by the white community. Libraries in black townships, where they did exist, were severely under-resourced. Under the new government since 1994, emphasis has been placed on extending the library network, and a telecenter network was created through USAASA. The creation of Thusong government service centers throughout the country has been a priority in terms of rollout of government services to a broader base of communities, and particularly those in underserved areas. A number of these Thusong centers have become increasingly 'multipurpose' in that libraries and telecenters now form a part of these building complexes. This was not the case in the earlier models.

More information:

<http://www.thusong.gov.za/about/history/index.html>; <http://www.nlsa.ac.za/NLSA/about-us/history>; <http://africanhistory.about.com/library/bl/blsalaws.htm>; http://djim.management.dal.ca/issues/issue2_1/illsley/index.htm

3.4.2.2 Ongoing initiatives:

Increased efforts are now being made by national government to improve access to computers and the Internet.

The National Department of Communications' 2007/8 strategy and budget aims to prioritize access to educational and health institutions, the Post Office, government offices and the Thusong Service Centers in the roll-out of communications networks and services for the provision of wireless broadband communication. In addition new leadership has been established at USAASA and there is increased confidence that goals for improving access in rural areas will be met. By 2009, Government hopes to have a useful suite of e-government solutions available for citizens and ICT is one of five service delivery work streams that will make up government's Single Public Service plan.

USAASA is mandated by the South African government to ensure that everyone, be it citizen or business, has equal access to ICT. This is defined as "a reliable connection to the communication network that enables any form of communication to and from any part of South Africa", and to provide universal access, defined as "the ability to use the communication network at a reasonable distance and affordable price which provides relevant information and has the necessary capacity – in under-serviced areas".

Originally targeting a deployment of about 4000 telecenters, USAASA has so far only rolled out about 164 telecenters, now including MPCCs (see below). These contain at least 10 computers networked to a server with Internet connectivity, telephones, a printer, fax machine and photocopier. In a recent audit of about 40 of these in KZN mid-2007 most of them were non-functioning with no ICT access and dismal service levels and much work will be needed at the community level to resuscitate these initiatives, a major problem being unreliable power and lack of skilled human resources. Having been recognized by government as largely failing to fulfill its mandate to provide more widespread access, USAASA is now being revitalized and diversifying its modalities of operation to include support for other public access initiatives such as the Thusong centers, Cyberlabs, Community Digital Hubs, school networks and farmers associations.

The Government's national Communication and Information System (GCIS) was tasked with providing development communication and information to the public to ensure that they become active participants in changing their lives for the better. Multi-purpose Community Centers (MPCCs), now called Thusong Centers, were identified as the primary approach for the implementation of this objective. The centers aim to be a one-stop, integrated community development centre, where access to information, services and resources is provided from both governmental and non-governmental sources. In helping to establish Thusong Centers, GCIS acts in an oversight and partnership building role, with the actual implementation being left at provincial level through DPLG, with support from SITA and USAASA for providing public access to ICTs in the MPCCs. Some provinces, such as KZN have fairly well established Thusong Centre programs, while others have yet to begin these. In Gauteng province the program is also being implemented through the location of Internet Kiosks in Libraries.

The South African Post Office hosts Public Information Terminals (PITs) connected to the Internet and loaded with local government information, developed jointly by the SAPO and DoC in 1998. PITs are customized computer touch screen Internet kiosks located at selected post offices and Thusong centers to provide citizens with Internet and e-mail facilities as well as access to government information and services. Plans are to roll out more PITs, especially to the Nodal Points as part of an Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme. In addition the SAPO plans to a) establish more collaboration and co-operation with other Government departments and Agencies e.g. USA, Telkom SNO etc; with the view of speeding up network back-bone connectivity and sharing costs, and b) enable more applications on PIT to take advantage of Smart Card technology, Biometrics etc.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is supporting the rollout of 200 "Digital Doorways" across South Africa. Being developed and implemented by the Meraka Institute, the project provides a kiosk facility which aims to improve computer awareness and literacy, enable end-users to interact with technology and transfer learning to communities. The kiosk consists of a freestanding multimedia computer terminal with a keyboard and touchpad embedded in a robust kiosk accessible to the public 24 hours a day. It is equipped with a satellite receiver and General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) cellular data technology for updating content, real-time monitoring and user feedback. The kiosks are being installed at community centers, libraries, schools, and at Further Education and Training (FET) colleges and in shops. About 50 of the kiosks are being installed in the Eastern Cape in the OR Tambo municipal

district and in Limpopo in the Sekhukhune district, where they will be installed in schools as hubs from where a wireless mesh network will provide free broadband connectivity to surrounding communities.

One of the longest running communication campaigns in South Africa is Soul City – a non-governmental multi-media edutainment project. While Soul City deals with a broad range of health-related topics, the majority of its budget is allocated to HIV/AIDS. Both loveLife and Soul City make wide use of cross-media platforms. Amongst other things, Soul City has produced a television and radio series. In addition, in 2000 it launched a children’s series called Soul Buddyz. Besides broadcast, Soul City uses print media to create HIV/AIDS awareness and has a life-skills program.

The Department of Education’s Thutong Project is a national education portal and aims to be the starting point for the South African schooling communities accessing the World Wide Web. The portal aims to provide access to a wide range of curriculum and support material. The content is aimed to be relevant to the lives and learning contexts of South African learners, educators, education managers/administrators and parents.

A special allocation of R1bn over three years to upgrading and expanding libraries was made in the national budget in 2007. The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) has since commissioned KPMG to carry out an assessment of needs at the Provincial level and begun distribution of the funds to the provincial governments which are responsible for libraries in partnership with municipalities. So far only about 25% of the grant allocation has been spent by the Provinces, largely because of the lack of technical implementation capacity at the Provincial level.

More information:

<http://www.usaasa.org.za/>; <http://www.soulcity.org.za/>;
http://www.mydigitallife.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4997&Itemid=84;
<http://www.meraka.org.za/digitalDoorway.htm>

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.

There is a general trend in the regulatory environment that is expected to result in further relaxation of the telecom market to allow self-provisioning of infrastructure by any licensed service provider (this is currently restricted to the three mobile operators and the two fixed line operators). There is also increased awareness of the need to coordinate the various diverse efforts of government to provide public access to ICTs that could lead to more rapid and efficient ICT-based service delivery. There are also efforts at the provincial and municipal level to develop broadband strategies for wider rollout of infrastructure to key institutions e.g. Kwazulu Natal

Broadband Strategy, as well as increased ICT rollout through digital community hubs, libraries and community centers e.g. SmartCape project;

Source: Research team experience; desktop research

3.4.2.4 Planned initiatives:

The prospect of improved national and international backbone connectivity through various ongoing fiber infrastructure projects is expected to give a substantial improvement in the pervasion and cost of broadband by 2010 when most of these projects will have come on stream. These activities have been bolstered by the need to provide telecom infrastructure for the 2010 football World Cup, and for the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) radio-astronomy project which will eventually generate up to 200Gbps of data.

More information: Broadband boost for 2010. (6 May 2008)

http://www.fin24.com/articles/default/display_article.aspx?ArticleId=1518-25_2317545

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2008-07-10-broadband-cable-wont-be-ready-for-2010> (Mail and Guardian Online, 10 July 2008)

Square Kilometre Array (SKA) South Africa. <http://www.ska.ac.za/>

Personal experiences of the research team.

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.

There are strong indications for increased attention being given to libraries by government. In 2006, the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) announced the provision of ZAR 1 billion to recapitalize the community library system. The Department expects this to be the largest and most ambitious project until 2009, requiring a partnership at all tiers of government especially provincial and local. Consultants were appointed to develop a funding model for the management of funding for the public, community library and information services. This was completed in June 2007 and includes an Impact Assessment Study, Status Quo Report and the development of an Action Plan. This report has recently been released and includes the following recommendations:

In addition various measures have been undertaken to address significant “brain drain” in technical and entrepreneurial ICT skills, with an estimated 200–300 ICT-skilled resources leaving the country each month. Current unemployment rates are high (30–35%), but it is also difficult to find a sufficient supply of skilled ICT workers to meet the rising demand. In an effort to address this, the government has created the Human Resources Development Fund which is being used to provide grants and subsidies to promote the provision of adequately skilled human resources for ICTs

Increased efforts are also being made by national government to improve access to computers and the Internet. The Department of Communication's 2007/8 strategy and budget aims to prioritize access to educational and health institutions, the Post Office, government offices and the Thusong Canters in the roll-out of Sentech's electronic communications networks and services for the provision of wireless broadband communication. In addition new leadership has been established at USAASA and there is increased confidence that goals for improving access in rural areas will be met. By 2009, Government hopes to have a useful suite of e-government solutions available for citizens and ICT is one of five service delivery work streams that will make up government's Single Public Service plan.

Whilst there is much talk of reducing the digital divide, and a Universal Service Access Fund exists (which all licensed commercial telecommunications providers must pay towards from their revenues in terms of their licensing conditions), the actual provision of public access computing facilities is very limited. This is in part constrained by the high cost of bandwidth and the technical difficulties involved in operating a distributed computer network in facilities (libraries) with no staff with appropriate technical skills. The government is addressing the achievement of a robust, reliable and affordable ICT infrastructure across the country. This includes capitalization of the parastatal broadcast infrastructure and wireless internet service provider, Sentech to establish a national wireless broadband network. Municipalities will also be assisted in deploying their own broadband networks and Under-serviced area licensees are also expected to help fill in the gaps. The government has also licensed a new parastatal, Infraco, to provide additional backbone infrastructure and provided it with about R700m in initial capital finance for national and international fiber connectivity. If all goes according to plan, undersea fiber links to Brazil and the UK will be established which will also provide onward connectivity for UhuruNet, the NEPAD ICT broadband infrastructure network for East Africa.

In addition, the government has announced the establishment of the Investment Council that will focus on positioning South Africa's imports and exports globally and also on generating foreign direct investment through international collaborations.

Trends:

See 3.4.2.3. above. The major emphasis has moved towards improved service delivery and implementation by government.

Source: *Research team experience, desktop research*

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 Department of Communications (DOC) ⁴³ is responsible for communications policy, the communications regulatory body, ICASA, USAASA, and the post office. The DOC has been overseeing a process of 'managed liberalization' of the sector through a regulatory framework that has been aimed at ensuring affordable access to ICT. In 1997 there was a partial privatization of the country's fixed line operator, Telkom, secured through the extension of its monopoly for a further five years.

For the second phase of reform the Telecommunications Amendment Act (Act No. 64 of 2001) was passed in order to legalize a second fixed network operator which was licensed in 2006, along with a further mobile competitor and a new category of under-serviced area licenses to salvage the unsuccessful rollout of services into economically marginal areas during the exclusivity period. The Act further granted a multimedia license to the incumbent broadcasting signal distributor together with an international gateway license. The Amendment Act also sought to introduce a number of competitive measures such as carrier selection and number portability. Further deregulation of the sector in general is being discussed, and number portability has recently been introduced. However local loop unbundling is not expected to take place until 2011 and despite the legislative reform initiatives, the sector continues to be characterized by relatively high retail prices, large profits by the providers, job losses, licensing delays and little new foreign investment in the sector.

A recent report by the South Africa Foundation highlights the discrepancy between South Africa and other comparable countries in terms of telecommunications costs. For example, the cost of ADSL in South Africa is 139% more expensive than the average price out of the 15 countries surveyed. Local call costs (peak) are 199% more expensive than the average price of all the countries surveyed. The failure to bring on line the second national fixed line operator and the de facto continuation of Telkom's monopoly both in retail fixed services and in wholesale facilities provisioning are cause for concern. Local call prices have nearly doubled since the privatization of Telkom despite significant efficiency gains resulting in it nearly halving its labor force since 1997.

The DOC is also tackling the issue of the Under Serviced Area Licenses (USALs) which have been issued in some under-serviced areas. It aims to conduct a review and re-thinking of the role of the USAL's especially in light of service convergence and the USAL's observed inability to provide last mile regional services. The Portfolio Committee on Communications announced last year that it would engage USAASA, Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) and the Department of Communications on the USALs issue in finding solutions to the challenges.

Aside from the pressure on national media described above there do not appear to be any significant instances of censorship. WiFi use is restricted to within property boundaries for all except the two licensed telecommunication operators.

The prevailing mechanism for regulating the cost of communications in South Africa is the price-cap methodology. This is based on mainly two pillars: on the one hand, taking into consideration the inflation of the costs of producing specific telecommunications services and, on the other, the possible increase in the operator's productivity for particular services. The principles and rules in terms of which operators report their revenues, costs, assets and capital for individual services to ICASA is determined by the so-called COA/CAM – the Chart of Accounts/Cost Allocation Manual. It should be

⁴³

<http://www.doc.gov.za>

noted, though, that not all service providers in the communications environment are subject to the COA/CAM regime.

Since the end of the apartheid regime in 1994, South Africa has implemented various ICT strategies aimed to encourage the use of ICTs, particularly for disadvantaged segments of the society. In 2001 President Mbeki established Presidential National Commission (PNC) on ISAD and the Presidential International Advisory Council (PIAC) on ISAD which recommended that government develop a national plan to rally the whole country. In February 2007 the Cabinet approved The National Information Society and Development (ISAD) Plan as a framework for building an inclusive information society in South Africa. The process of developing the ISAD Plan was started in 2004 with the establishment of the National Working (NWG). This is a forum of representatives from national government departments, provincial and local governments (through SALGA) . The process also included consultation with local and international technical experts in the area of Information Society, experts from countries such as Finland, Ireland, Mozambique, Malaysia, India & Brazil. The following are the priority focus areas:

1. Education, skills development and training.
2. e-Health.
3. Government service delivery.
4. ICT & SMME Development.
5. Local Content Development.

These areas were identified for having the greatest potential to:

1. Make a substantial contribution to South Africa's economic growth;
2. Significantly impact on the quality of life of the majority of South Africans; and
3. Build an inclusive Information Society.

At the 2005 Telecommunications Colloquium it was resolved that a composite national strategy for delivering universal service should try to reach the following targets:

- Access to telephony within a walking distance of no more than 500 meters.
- Telecommunications services (fixed or mobile) should be available in every household by 2010.
- Broadband penetration should be equal to or exceed 5% by 2010.
- That not less than 25% of the population has Internet access by 2010.
- All public institutions have broadband connectivity within three years.
- That 112 emergency telephone services be extended to the fixed-line services.

Under the leadership of the Presidential National Commission on Information Society and Development (PNC on ISAD) and with participation of relevant departments (DPLG, DPSA, DOC), provincial governments and SALGA, the implementation is driven by various fora:

- The Ministerial ISAD IGR Forum chaired by the Presidency
- National Working Group (NWG) task team on provincial ISAD model
- Local government ICT Forum of GITOC.

The Ministerial Committee meets twice a year to approve strategic ISAD issues for consideration by the January and July Lekgotla (strategic cabinet meetings).

Trends:

Connectivity and interaction between all levels of government is expected to be much improved with the better applications and backbone infrastructure that is becoming available over the next 12-18 months. Low cost broadband will be much more widely available across the country, leading to increased users and usage of the Internet and this in turn is expected to result in increased availability of private e-services as the commercial sector responds to increased demand.

Source: Research team experience; desktop research

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.

There are a number of key international policy and development initiatives that affect the delivery of ICTs in South Africa:

- NEPAD (The New African Partnership for Development) and its host agency, the African Union's efforts to establish an international broadband infrastructure to link every country on the continent. This initiative has strongly been supported by South Africa and has culminated in a project called UhuruNet which will use South Africa as a hub for traffic along the east coast of Africa and onward to Europe, Asia, the Middle-East and Latin America. From South Africa's point of view this will also help share with others the cost of obtaining additional international bandwidth.
- The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) established a set of targets for the adoption of ICTs in society and South Africa is actively making efforts to achieve these goals.
- The Millennium Development Goals also have 2 ICT related targets which South Africa aims to achieve.
- SADC and the Communications Regulatory Association of Southern Africa (CRASA). The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is an economic union of neighboring countries which has recently adopted an ICT strategy. The national telecommunication regulators of each country are each members of CRASA, which acts as an information exchange agency as well as a vehicle for the development of model telecommunication legislation.

Trends:

Increased intra regional communications and trade is likely to result from the better telecommunication infrastructure linking South Africa with its neighbors, the rest of the continent and the rest of the world.

Source: Research team experience; desktop research

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.

The government has lately made improved efforts toward co-ordination in the area of ICT service delivery (see below, and the ISAD section above). However until very recently, a lack of coordinated policy agendas means that, taken as a whole, South Africa has more or less stumbled towards community ICT access as it is, rather than attained a clearly directed and coherent goal. Convergence has meant that community access has become an interest to a number of sectors, each with their particular agenda. Amongst various government departments, several initiatives have developed simultaneously, often independently of an umbrella process to co-ordinate them. In an audit conducted by the Community Media Services task team, as many as 20 different community media service-type projects were discovered in government departments – sometimes with more than one existing in the same department.⁴⁴ Even the definition of universal access has shifted over the years, complicating roll-out strategies, plans and co-ordination efforts.

This lack of internal policy and implementation co-ordination has in the past met with sometimes disastrous effects: In one instance, technicians from a schools networking program called GautengOnline installed PCs at a school that already had a USA Cyberlab installed. The technicians simply ripped up the USA's PCs.⁴⁵ At the same time, there was often a wariness between government and civil society on the roll-out of access initiatives. Many donor projects tend to be established independently from government projects or roll-out plans. NGOs who were willing to work with government sometimes found institutions like the USA alienating and unwilling to collaborate. A key challenge identified by multi-stakeholder participants at a USA workshop in 2004 was that there is lack of reliable information from the USA about its programs and strategies. This meant that many institutions could not even properly consider aligning its strategies with the Agency's, despite there being a need to do so.

Recently the government announced that both an Inter-Governmental Relations Forum (IGRF), which looks at synchronizing disparate ICT developments at the national and provincial level, together with a Ministerial ISAD [Information Society and Development] Committee (approved by cabinet in May 2007 and chaired by the country's President Thabo Mbeki), will drive the development of the information society in South Africa (including the implementation of WSIS agreements). In February 2007 cabinet approved a National Information Society Development Plan. There are also signs of the self-organization of groups like telecenters. Recently the Telecenter Association of South Africa (TASA) was launched. TASA aims to represent telecenters and MPCCs or any other access initiative, including

⁴⁴ Open Research (2005) *Community Access Initiatives in South Africa – Potential Strategic Interventions*. Open Society Foundation – SA, Cape Town.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Vodacom phone shops. At the moment, 45 telecenters have paid their membership fees.

There are currently two different information Kiosk programs being implemented by different wings of government (DST/CSIR and SAPO), with a third in the wings (USAASA). These initiatives could benefit from economies of scale and sharing development and support resources if they collaborated.

The deployment of ICTs in libraries could be carried in collaboration with nearby Telecenters and MPCCs or Cyberlabs.

Collaboration with the local ICT private sector could help accelerate the ISAD Plan of Action.

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 HIV Support Centers stand out for their successful information initiatives—they provide an interesting opportunity to add digital ICTs to their initiatives. The increased emphasis on library development by the government creates opportunities for a stronger emphasis on the creation of local content through local libraries. The government Thusong centers have created community hubs for activities and strengthening of their public ICT access capacity will go far to reach larger audiences. New low cost wireless broadband and international connectivity leading up to the 2010 World Cup present future opportunities for broader ICT access.

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.

There appear to be divergent views in public access venues, ranging from the view that computer games (online and software available on CD-ROM / DVD) should be banned, to the view that gaming teaches users valuable skills in mouse control, eye-to-hand coordination, tactical skills (Age of Empires) and in some cases, social skills (e.g. the Sims). From the personal experience of the research team games, even the simple ones pre-loaded with Microsoft products, are removed by teachers at schools. In many cases, the limitation is more due to restrictive bandwidth availability than anything else. Internet cafes do provide games and anecdotal evidence from telecenters suggests that the provision of games is a useful revenue stream. Internet cafes, in some cases, carry signs forbidding the use of their equipment for scams. Local spam is becoming a more significant problem, although at this stage most is received from outside the country, using up scarce bandwidth.

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.

A recent mobile study by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Union (see: <http://www.cto.int/Default.aspx?tabid=223>), that included a survey of users in Orange Farm, found that:

- Few users use mobile phones or the internet to access important information. Mobile phones were therefore considered having untapped potential for public information provision.
- The role of the private sector was necessary to provide the technological backbone to information provision;
- Education, health and incoming generation were found to be important potential e-content service types for mobile and internet delivery.

Our survey found that the potential of mobile technologies is underutilized at the HIV/AIDS centers, and that only loveLife was considering this possibility. In general, a focused ICT roll-out initiative could potentially dramatically improve the access eco-system at many of the centers through mobile technology. Amongst other things, it could be used for information delivery when offering outreach services such as home-based care, or for remote counseling (e.g. through SMS).

Aside from voice calls and traditional personal text messaging, mobile phones have mainly been used for purposes such as advertising sponsored 'call-me-back' text messages, ring-tones download and picture sending. Some more innovative services that are now becoming more widespread are mobile phone banking and funds transfer services, and some health applications such as medication reminders and reception of medical test results. Increasing numbers of online-e-commerce web sites also confirm transactions via text message.

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](#)).

When ICT services were available at HIV/AIDS, most e-information was accessed through surfing the web and e-mail. However, a noticeable number of respondents use interactive online vehicles, such as chat, blogs, and even VoIP. This suggests that the potential for social appropriation of technology is high. Like mobile technology, Web 2.0 tools offer an opportunity to create a 'virtual' eco-system at the centers that complements and strengthens the print-based and face-to-face service delivery.

Nevertheless due to the relatively low levels and high cost of broadband access, the use of Web 2.0

tools is largely restricted to the small numbers of more educated and wealthy users in major urban areas.

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.

loveLife is the most media-intensive of all of the HIV/AIDS programs surveyed, and mainstreaming public information on health and life skills is central to its agenda. The program has a strong public presence that includes messaging on billboards, radio programming, magazine inserts, and online content, amongst other media tactics. Media messaging is aimed at the country's youth, and seeks to change behavior by empowering and raising awareness. Information is also communicated through loveLife 'groundbreakers' – trainees who go out into the community to talk about HIV/AIDS and the life challenges facing young people. loveLife's radio studios – which narrowcast program-specific information in between music at 11 of the Y-Centers, and also serve as vehicles for the youth to produce radio content that is broadcast on other radio stations – is an innovative, empowering and forward-thinking intervention in the context of access to technology and information provision and production.

3.9.4 Other shifting media landscape examples

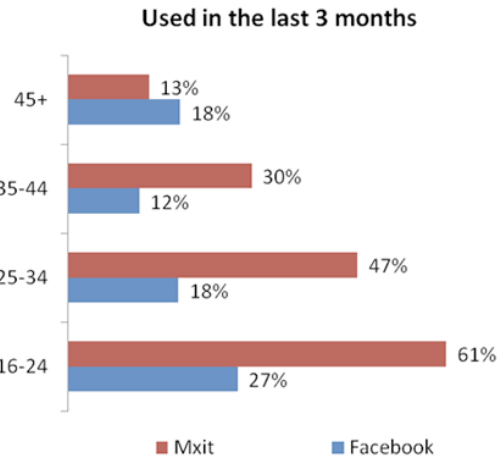
If appropriate, describe other new features and practices in the media landscape that affect public information venues and information needs of underserved communities.

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.

The MXit message exchange program for mobile phones (GPRS/ 3G) has become a huge success among the South African and Namibian youth. The technology allows mobile users, at an extremely low cost of less than ZAR 0.02 (US\$ per minute), to chat to people on their computers and to other MXit users on their mobiles, from anywhere in the world. Messages of up to 2000 characters can be sent. It also allows connections to MSN messenger, Yahoo, ICQ, AOL messenger or Jabber communities. The existing subscriber's service provider issues the billing as part of its data service packages.

A recent survey⁴⁶ indicates that MXIT usage has overtaken Facebook usage among users under 44 years of age. Mobile instant messaging has more than doubled in usage in the past 12 months, the majority of which is believed to be on the MXit platform.

⁴⁶ Digital Lifestyles Predictor Studies, BMI-Techknowledge Group News release; <http://www.bmi-t.co.za/bmi/Content/News-archives/news%20-%20latest.htm#DLP>; See also <http://www.webaddict.co.za/2008/06/12/mxit-vs-facebook-useage-south-africa/>



Source: BMI-Techknowledge, 2008

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):

16.6%	7.1%	17.4%	52.3%	22.3%	34.9%	39.9%	4.1%
Community Resources	Private Internet	Public Internet	Clinic / Hospital	Friends / Family	Health worker	Public access venue (library, community center, etc)	Other

Comments: Other specified sources of information include schools and churches.

3.10.2 Types of health information

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

23.65%	46.1%	36.3%	38.4%	59.8%	4.9%
HIV/AIDS	disease prevention	how to locate healthcare	child health information	remedies/drugs	Other

Comments: Data derived from survey results from three venues – public libraries (10), telecenters and MPCCs (7) and HIV/AIDS Support Centers (7). Additional categories were added

to address the specific need for HIV/AIDS related information. Other types of information needed include: kwashiorkor, cancer, diabetes, how to help people in need, HPV, research articles, science, statistics on diseases, social services information, HIV/AIDS voluntary counseling and testing (VCT)

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?

Information on ICT access in public libraries is not easily accessible, and in most cases does not exist. However, the national Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) recently released an audit⁴⁷ that will direct its decisions on funding the public library sector. This study is the most recent and comprehensive overview of libraries and contains useful information on the status quo, needs, budgets and funding, and future plans.

South Africa has 1 537 public libraries (of which 79 are mobile libraries). This equates to about 30 libraries per million people with an annual expenditure of about US\$3 per person. There are also 88 Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCCs) which house libraries, as well as about 5372 school libraries.

The best developed infrastructure can be found in the Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State and Kwazulu Natal. Libraries from the Western Cape, Gauteng and the Northern Cape were included in the user survey for this study. Most of the public libraries are located in the major metropolitan areas of South Africa, and these are the areas where the largest expenditure is also evident: Cape Town (99); eThekweni (Durban) (about 87); Johannesburg (76); Tshwane/Pretoria (about 40); Ekurhuleni/East Rand (29); Nelson Mandela Bay (Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage/Despatch) (22). Only 39 new libraries are projected to be built in the next three years, an increase of only 0.85% per year. The conditional grant for about US\$13.2 million allocated by the DAC could accelerate this growth pattern.

The need for ICTs (computers and internet access) is regarded as much a priority as the need to increase the number of books and other library resources. This demand is increasing not only for internal administration e.g. electronic cataloguing and book loans, but also for internet searching. This has been confirmed through the results of the DAC audit as well as through interviews conducted for this study in Kwazulu Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng. Most public libraries do not have computer facilities for public use, although some of the larger metropolitan areas do

⁴⁷ Undertaken by KPMG and Jacaranda Intellectual Property Business Consultants.

<http://www.dac.gov.za/projects/nclis.htm>

provide access and do have internet connections. In many cases, where libraries use external connectivity for their administrative purposes, they do provide searching services for the public on request. The purchase of ICTs is seen as the domain of provincial government – the expenditure on ICT equipment has however been very low and is not seen as significant in terms of future budgets. Provinces spent less than ZAR10 million on ICT equipment for the period 2001 – 2006 and there is no indication in their budgets that they will spend more than this in the next few years. In some cases this is due to sustainability concerns on the part of municipalities.

Due to the rather complex responsibility-sharing between province (constitutional) and municipal (operational) structures relating to libraries, provincial library departments are not always informed of what is happening in the municipal public libraries. This goes some way to explaining the discrepancies in data between what has been found in the national audits and data emerging, for example, from the SmartCape project in the Western Cape. A substantial number of municipalities do not have the administrative capacity to collect and report on library budgets, particularly those regarded as low capacity municipalities. The strained relationships between municipalities and the provincial government (mainly caused by the legal and funding problems) have exacerbated this problem.

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)?

Both the KPMG audit and our survey reveal that libraries are not always very accessible. According to the KPMG audit, there are 13 municipalities, serving 2.3 million, which do not have access to libraries (particularly in Kwazulu Natal and the Eastern Cape provinces). Most libraries do not have enough space to house their book collections and provide suitable study/quiet areas for students. Users also mentioned the lack of space (and high noise levels in some cases) as a limiting factor. The uneven distribution of libraries across municipalities is a problem. Even among the better performing provinces these services are mainly concentrated in urban centers, and the penetration level in the townships and rural areas is very low or none at all.

The lack of computers in libraries was identified as a growing need (estimated at a 70% increase in the KPMG report). Access to ICT services varies from high in the Western Cape (43% of public libraries, most of which are in the Cape Town area) to almost non-existent in other provinces and in smaller centers, where few if any computers can be found for public use. The cost of ICT access and library registration fees are barriers for wider library use. In the case of the Western Cape, there is no fee for Internet access but it is restricted to 45 minutes per day per user, and only registered library users may use the Internet. Library ICT equipment is generally seen as slow, with alternative venues being preferred where these exist – mention was made of long queues at library computers whereas the local internet café had faster connectivity and no queues (but higher access costs). In many cases, however, the library may provide the only ICT access in the area. The user survey did pick up some competition within the government Thusong Centers where the library and local telecenter were in competition.

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.

The accessibility of libraries to the broader public is limited due to:

- Limited operating hours (most operate between 36 – 44 hours per week due to understaffing in most libraries). Library hours are often during normal working hours and in limited cases on Saturdays. Smaller libraries are generally closed in the evenings and over weekends. This limits access to those community members who are in informal employment or unemployed. Smaller libraries may also be closed over lunchtimes. In the Western Cape, Smart Cape Access Points are only open when the library is open, in which case the same limitations apply.
- Library subscriptions and ICT access are not always affordable by poorer community members. Many library users are not registered users, and therefore may make use of the study/reading room facilities but may not loan books. Some librarians regard the need to stimulate a greater reading culture as a key challenge, particularly among the previously disadvantaged part of the population. This goes hand in hand with the following point.
- There are limited books available in local languages. The lack of suitable reading materials, particularly for children, is seen as a barrier to promoting a strong reading culture. Books are available in the English, Afrikaans and other local languages such as Xhosa in the Western Cape and Zulu in Kwazulu Natal. The Smart Cape registration process is offered in the three main local languages (English, Afrikaans and Xhosa).
- All SmartCape Access Points have at least one workstation adapted for use by persons who use a wheel chair.

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.

There is a huge pent-up demand for ICTs in libraries, with ICT skills training identified as a strong need. The lack of relevant information available in libraries was seen as a significant barrier, with over 30% of users citing this as a problem area (as compared to no more than 8% seeing the lack of information in a relevant language as a problem). This may relate to the fact that the user base in libraries tends to be young (> 70 – 80% of users are between the ages of 15 and 35) and therefore more likely to be familiar with English.

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.

There is quite a variation in the costs of ICT access in libraries. For example, in the Western Cape, membership of public libraries is free of charge to residents of the local municipality. Use of Smart Cape Access Point computing facilities is free of charge on condition that the user is a registered library member. In most cases, however, the lines are slow and make use of a dialup 64k modem. In the case of the City of Tshwane libraries in Gauteng, library costs vary according to age (> 12 years or over 60 is free; students and teenagers have a reduced membership fee; adults pay about USD\$ 7 per year for membership). Internet access costs about US\$ 2.60 per hour. In smaller libraries, these can go up to about US\$4 per hour, which is high particularly in non-urban environments. Fees are set up by the provincial/municipal authorities, or where Infopreneurs are deployed, they would set the charge for their services.

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?

As in 4.1.2.3 above

Indicate amount in local currency Internet access varies from ZAR 0 – 30/hour

Equivalent in US Dollars: US\$ 0 – 4/ hour

Date of estimate July 2008

and local currency name South African Rand (ZAR)

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:

None.

4.1.2.5 Geographic distribution

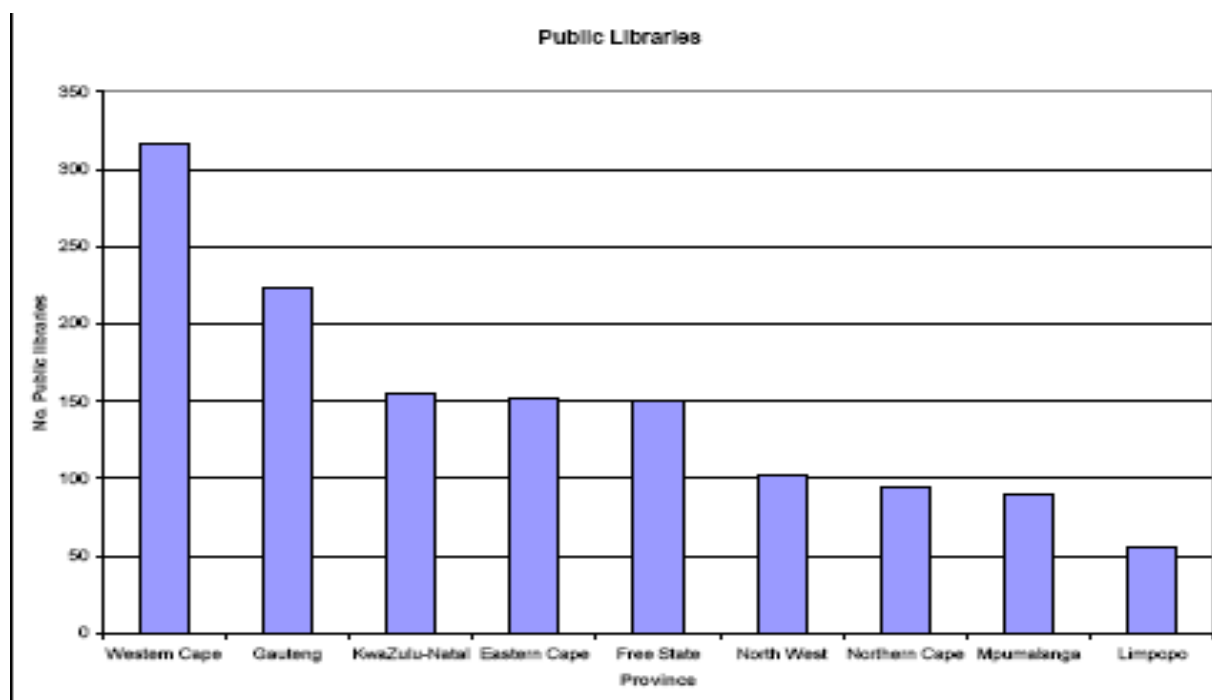
What is the distribution of the venues in terms of their geographic location?

Complement any details not already included in other sections.

Libraries are distributed throughout the country and are managed by local municipalities (except for the Free State), which in turn fall under the nine Provincial Government Departments respectively. Besides the KPMG status quo report (2007), there is no single consolidated access point that presents a complete picture of library initiatives in the country.

There has been a concerted effort to establish and/or upgrade libraries in previously disadvantaged communities and rural areas, including the innovative use of containers, the allocation of writers' grants to promote indigenous languages, and the establishment of toy

libraries for children. Libraries also continue to be established within the government Thusong Service Centers/ MPCCs in underserviced areas.



Source: KMPG report, 2007

Information on some provincial library initiatives is presented below. The older provinces of Free State, Gauteng, Kwazulu Natal and Western Cape showed the highest library development, whereas the newer (and poorer) provinces – Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Limpopo and Northwest – are presented with greater challenges to establish new library infrastructure:

Free State

This is the only province in which libraries are owned and managed solely by the provincial government. Public library services are provided in almost all the towns in the Free State with services rendered at 161 service points, which include the following: 137 public libraries, 10 school-community libraries, 10 depots at institutions such as hospitals, prisons and military bases and four special libraries at nursing colleges and the provincial government offices.

In 2006/7 government information services were established at 15 libraries, business information services at five libraries and literacy support sections at five libraries. All newly established libraries are equipped with computers and Internet access. In the past year two new public libraries, namely Fateng Tse Ntsho in Paul Roux and Qalabotjha in Villiers, were opened to the public. Both libraries were provided with 10 computers and Internet access. Each library also has a book stock of about 9 000 items and is subscribed to a number of periodicals and newspapers. Each library also has an educational toy section serving young children, their parents and ECD

(early child development) caretakers. Service provisions offered at the libraries include a literacy service for learners and both business information and government information services.

Gauteng

Gauteng Province has about 213 libraries. ZAR 5.2 million will be used to establish an integrated ICT infrastructure network for all libraries by 2008. Libraries in the 20 priority townships will be equipped with ICT hardware and software and their capacity to utilize this ICT will be increased.

Kwazulu Natal

Kwazulu Natal has 168 libraries, of which only those in the City of Ethekewini (Durban) and the Mzunduzi Municipality have Internet Access. In all other affiliated libraries, only the librarians have internet access. The department provides training, reading promotion initiatives, a centralized information service and other services and support to the 168 affiliated local authority administered libraries.

Western Cape

Western Cape has the highest number of libraries in the country with a total of 236 libraries plus 45 library depots (308 in total). In 2004, the Western Cape population was 4,645,000; there were 1,238,103 registered library members (27%). Of the 236 libraries, there are 99 within the Cape Town metropolitan area. 98 of these have free-to-use, public access computers. Three other libraries outside of Cape Town also have public access computers installed. Therefore a total of 101 (43%) have public access. Figures relate to the most recent year for which official figures are available – typically 2005. In an effort to bridge the digital divide, a project to implement ICTs in public libraries was initiated during the 2007/08 financial year. Four libraries will be connected to PALS (a library administrative system) and Internet for use by the librarians, and two libraries will receive R260 000 to complete upgrading.

Northern Cape

The Northern Cape is the most sparsely populated province with long distances between towns. According to 2004/5 figures there are more than 157 service points, but this includes mobile libraries. About 80 targeted libraries have been equipped with computers and Internet access and the Province aims to expand this service to remaining libraries.⁴⁸ Toy libraries have been established and continue to be expanded. A container library project was recently launched, with 40 container libraries to be placed in remote communities. This is to be expanded in to 2008/9 with another 40 containers.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <http://www.northern-cape.gov.za/docs/reports/annual/arts/part2b.pdf> Accessed 16 February 2008

⁴⁹ <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2008/08070416151001.htm> Accessed 24 July 2008

Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape has 118 libraries of which 36 have been given a conditional grant.⁵⁰

Northwest

According to 2003 figures, there were about 87 libraries and 16 depots, four of which are prison libraries, in a province of 3.7 million people. Most established libraries are in former white communities which were previously managed under the apartheid Transvaal and Cape Provincial Administrations. Most of the rural areas have no libraries. The province spent R7m on the building of three community libraries in 2004/5. Two more libraries will be constructed in the next financial year. All new libraries are fully equipped with ICT equipment.

Limpopo

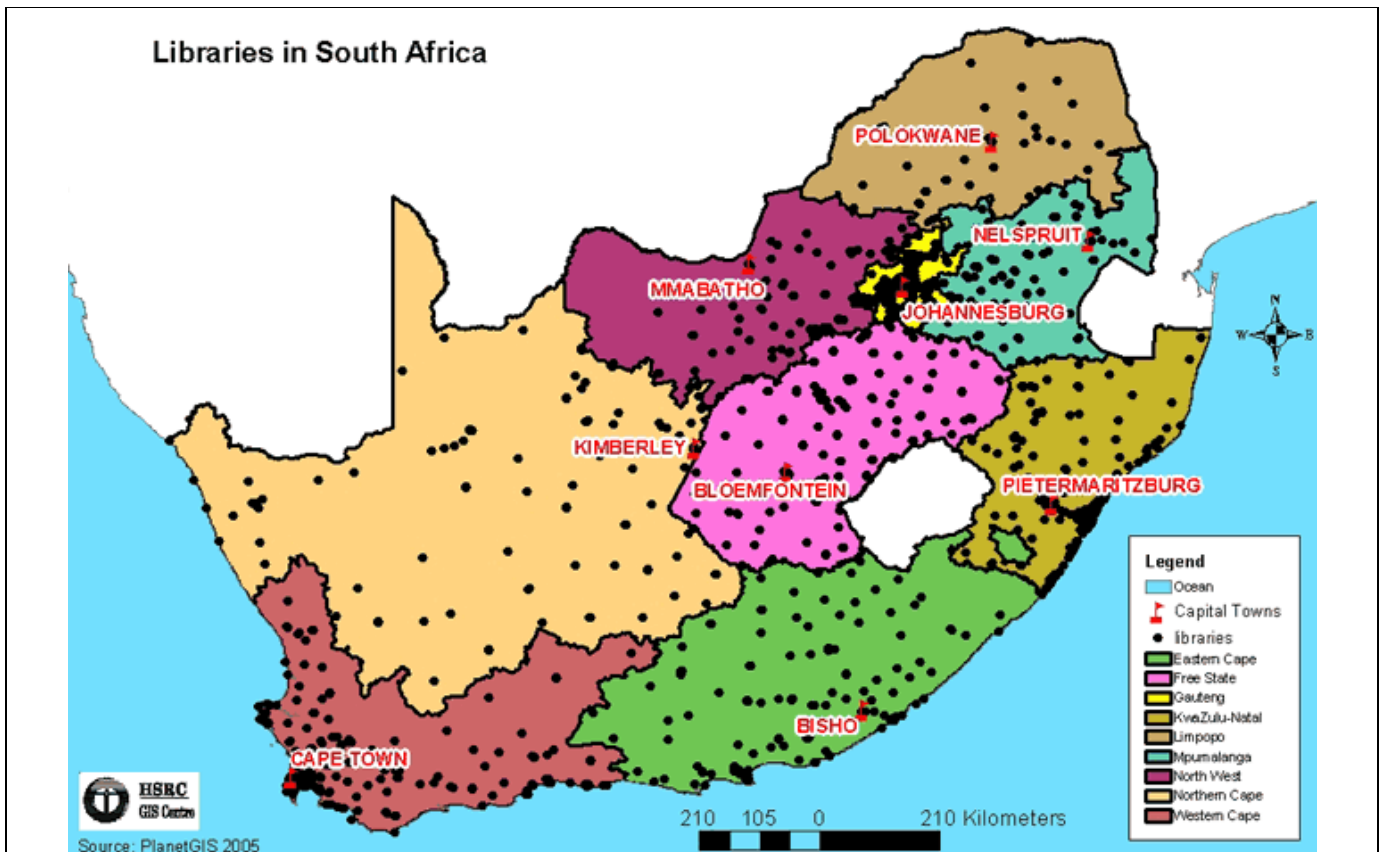
Limpopo has about 52 libraries and the second highest concentration of mobile libraries after the Northern Cape (about 13%).

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).

⁵⁰ Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 13 May 2008.

<http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20080513-adoption-committee-reports-oversight-visits-northern-cape-eastern-cap>



Description of map:

This map was produced by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) for the Universal Service Agency (USA) as part of the final report, *ICT Penetration in South Africa* (February, 2006).⁵¹ The map shows the distribution of libraries throughout the country. Since this map was produced, and the introduction of the conditional grant by the DAC, more efforts have gone into servicing smaller and more remote communities.

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.

Transport costs to reach venues with ICTs are a significant factor in determining use. For example, in the case of many libraries being set up in previous black/colored townships, the facilities are not as good as in major urban areas or in the CBD, but taxi costs are too high to allow for regular trips to the better equipped libraries.

While there is no specific research on this matter, there is general consensus that access is limited by:

- Socioeconomic status – libraries with ICT access points in very poor township areas (shack

⁵¹ <http://www.usaasa.org.za/index.php?q=projects,1>

dwellings) have a lower use rate than other areas

- Education level – school age children and youth living in poorer areas, who are likely to have received a better education than their parents, form a disproportionately higher portion of the total users in those libraries. In middle class areas, the range of age groups using the facilities is closer to the area demographic.
- Age – younger people are more likely to make use of the computers than older people. This is reflected in the results from the survey, where >70% of urban users and > 80% of non-urban users are aged between 15 and 35.
- Gender – males are more likely to make use of the computers than females.
- Fluency in English – English language users – even when a second language – are more likely to make use of the computers than people with limited fluency in English.

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)?

Libraries are generally understaffed and there is a lack of professional staff to assist users in searching for information. ICT equipment and internet access are regarded as priority needs, at almost the same level as the acquisition of new books. The identified need for furniture also highlights the role of libraries as study and reading places. Libraries are largely used for educational purposes by schoolchildren and students studying through distance education institutions such as the South-African based UNISA. Very few librarians have received ICT training.

Libraries were previously regarded as rather elitist, but this culture has changed considerably since 1994 under the new government and considerable efforts are being made to extend the reach of libraries into underserved and more remote areas through the building of new libraries, container and mobile libraries.

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.

The number of people working in each library varies from two to more than twenty, depending on size. Generally libraries are short-staffed and often only non-professional staff can be found in the smaller libraries. The KPMG audit found that 607 professional and 330 general staff are employed in South African public libraries, with a vacancy rate of 30% for professionals. This points not only to understaffing, but also to an absence of professional library skills. Generally librarians have not been trained in ICT skills, although this is likely to increase as the conditional grant allocations are spent in the next few years. Of relevance is that about 48% of staff had received training in the

past year.

4.1.3.2 Staff training

What is the overall capacity of the staff (i.e., librarians, telecenter 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.

The overall capacity of library staff to help individuals with their information search needs varies, from good in well-resourced libraries, to poor in areas where library assistants may be the only staff member able to assist the public.

Library staff have only limited training in how to assist with online information; helping the public with finding online information is not a part of their job descriptions. However, in some libraries there are staff who are able and willing to assist in a professional and helpful manner. This is more likely to be in the larger libraries and metros.

In the Western Cape, no staff are specifically employed in relation to the computing facilities. However, some libraries have part time volunteers who assist users to get the most value out of the computers. In Kwazulu Natal, the province is providing funding to 20 libraries in 2008 for the provision of 3 - 5 PCs, but it is also providing salaries for one-year Cybercadets, with the possible extension for another year. CyberCadets are likely to be young people with ICT skills, residing in the community, who will provide first-level support to community members in the use of ICTs.

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.

<i>Services Offered</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Book loans	Only registered library users may take out books. Large proportions of library users are not registered and only make use of the library facilities for study and educational purposes. User fees are regarded as high by poorer community members.
2. Periodicals	These are available in larger libraries and may not be removed from the library.
3. Sound recordings for loan	All sound recordings are CDs, DVDs, audio books, cassettes, etc. Libraries are generally ill-equipped to meet the demand for 'new' media requests.

4.	Magazines and Newspapers	These may generally not be removed, but are provided for reading in the library. This includes daily and weekly national newspapers, local newspapers and popular magazines.
5.	Study collections	Some of the larger urban libraries e.g. City of Tshwane, Cape Town have collections of study books used by UNISA students, which may be used in the library.
6.	Study and reading facilities	A large number of library users are not registered and only use the library facilities for study purposes, largely by secondary school students and students at colleges and distance universities such as UNISA.
7.	Computer use and Internet access	Computer access is provided free or at a small fee. In some libraries e.g. Pampierstad, Infopreneurs have been appointed who provide ICT-enabled services to users at a fee. This includes typing, faxing, email and Internet access. Computers skills training is also offered at some libraries e.g. in the Western Cape as part of the SmartCape project
8.	Children's Corners	Some libraries have specific areas where children can sit, browse through books, and on occasions storytelling is provided. The KPMG audit revealed that this is the most popular library program and that about 80% of the libraries surveyed offered this service.
9.	Reading / Study areas	These areas have assumed a very important function in libraries as they provide quiet areas where students and scholars can study. This is particularly important in areas where housing is cramped and little space is available in homes for study purposes.
10.	Toy libraries	These provide toys which can be taken out on loan.

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

Some of the small libraries offer very limited services which may include only book loans and limited opening hours. The substantial need for furniture reflects the need for more space to accommodate users in the library.

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.

Libraries are distributed throughout the Provinces and there is increased emphasis on establishing facilities in communities that are at present deprived of such services.

Many libraries make particular effort to reach out and serve school children by providing children's corners, storytelling, help with project research and facilities for personal study. There is an increased demand for the provision of prescribed school textbooks in libraries.

Some libraries located in disadvantaged areas make particular effort to advertise the availability of public access computers to the local community. These activities are driven by individual library managers at the library level.

In the Western Cape, the users of Smart Cape Access Point computers are predominantly young and male. A number of initiatives have been made by the Smart Cape project team to encourage greater use by women, by – for example – producing locally relevant content and providing computer literacy training with a high quota of female learners.

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:

Most libraries place emphasis on the provision traditional hardcopy materials, news papers and periodicals. Increasingly users are demanding materials in digital format (CDs, DVDs, audio).

Other Content Needed:

There is a huge demand for prescribed schoolbooks and books prescribed by UNISA, the South African distance university. There is however mixed opinion about who should pay for this (Department of Education, universities or the libraries) and even whether public libraries should play this role.

There is a huge unmet need for locally relevant content; whilst this is not necessarily recognized by all users, the pattern of content actually consumed indicates that non-South African content dominates and local content is not meeting user needs or expectations. Having said this, there are a number of good quality and frequently updated new sites which tend to be underused, as found in the Smart Cape project. The problem could therefore primarily be due to lack of awareness. In Kwazulu Natal, the need for the proposed Cybercadets to be involved in local content development has been under discussion e.g. local community news, creation of local library websites, etc.

Local Initiatives to build needed content:

The Ubusha program has been established in the Western Cape libraries to provide locally relevant information using the SmartCape Project. To our knowledge, it is the only one of its kind in South African libraries. The program aims to:

- Create online information of interest and value to local communities
- Support economic development in disadvantaged communities by providing assistance and publishing platforms in the form of web sites for SMMEs and community organizations and publicising the services provided by the e-Government program

To date, the Ubusha program has greatly expanded the Smartcape web site (www.smartcape.org.za) to become a community portal providing a wide range of external information, developed websites for the Digital Business Centres, promoting their work as well as providing a useful reference source for small businesses; developed web sites for approximately 15 SMMEs and community organisations; developed an online, searchable Local Business Directory for small businesses to register and advertise their services; developed an automated CV generator for SmartCape users; and developed a dialogue with Smartcape users. This was achieved by running surveys requesting feedback from SmartCape users, holding competitions requiring SmartCape users to write short stories for publication (SmartCape has run four competitions in the last twelve months). This encourages users to become more familiar and comfortable with the medium of online content. Ubusha has developed an online research assistance service for learners requiring assistance with school projects. This service alone receives a minimum of 20 requests daily, with no advertising; published a quarterly news letter ('Smart News') to keep stakeholders informed of the status of e-Government projects; contracted and trained a small team of previously disadvantaged individuals in local content research and creation; these people now perform most of the non-technical work needed to maintain the Smartcape web site; and developed a local content development strategy.

The Ubusha project team spends approximately 50% of its time with users in disadvantaged communities, conducting research and collecting information for their content, but also seeking feedback on existing ICT for Development initiatives. In this way, they also fulfil a monitoring and evaluation role for the e-Governance Unit.

Source: Ubusha program, KPMG audit, research team experience

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.

Generally the demand for materials in local languages varies from location to location. There tends to be a low supply of books and materials in local languages on the shelves and opinions vary as to the need for more indigenous materials.

There is a strong drive in government to produce official documents, pamphlets and booklets in

many, if not all, of the official eleven languages (language also being dependent on province and region). These are made available through various institutions such as Thusong Centers, libraries and government offices. Topics include: health especially HIV/AIDS, access to government services, careers advice and environmental issues.

The National Library's Indigenous Literature Publishing Project, aimed at producing a series of publications in different languages by writers from different backgrounds, across South Africa.

DAC are assisting in the creation of partnerships between state entities and private companies to give a lead to the private sector who have thus far proved very reluctant to publish in African languages. Although there has been a drive to stimulate the publishing of more books in the local languages, there is controversy about the need for such literature. Publishers complain that there is no demand for such books from libraries and the public, whereas there are varied opinions within the library community about the demand. Many parents prefer their children to read in English as this is the language required at secondary and tertiary educational institutions and is seen as the language more likely to assist their children to advance in their future careers. This does imply a lack of recreational reading culture.

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.

Libraries are used for the loan of books and audio materials by schoolchildren to research projects, and in an increasing number of centers as reading and study facilities, e.g. library facilities in the metro areas are frequently filled with young students who use the tables and carrels for studying. These are not necessarily registered library users and therefore difficult to measure in terms of numbers. There is a growing need for ICT services.

Interestingly, the Free State provincial report on the implementation of the community library grants over the first quarter of the current financial year, finds that although the young flocked to use the new computers in the libraries, they then went over to find more information in books. The user statistics showed complementary increases in both Information Technology (IT) and book use in these libraries.

4.1.3.8 *Number, type, and frequency of users*

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

The user survey undertaken for this study (n = 331) showed slightly higher uses by males (urban: 51.2%; non-urban: 53.5%) and largely by the black community. This result is skewed as the libraries included in the sample were particularly chosen for their presence in underserved and previously disadvantaged areas.

Most of the users were in the 15 – 35 age groups (urban: 78%; non-urban: 67%), although almost 42% of users were in the 19-25 age category in urban libraries. More than 32% were daily users

in non-urban libraries with 18% visiting a library once a week. The majority visit the libraries during weekday afternoons (52%), with 33% doing so in the mornings. In urban libraries, the usage was fairly similar in the mornings and afternoons. Weekend usage tends to be low (between 8 – 12%), which is probably a function of users visiting the libraries during the week for study purposes.

In a survey carried out in the Western Cape, the age and gender distribution of library members, based on 2005 data with a total of 1,238,103 library members, was as follows:

- 0-12: 29.9% (46% male, 54% female)
- 13-18: 15.1% (43.3% male, 56.7% female)
- 19-35: 25.3% (34% male, 66% female)
- 36-60: 22.3% (31.6% male, 68.4% female)
- 60+: 7.4% (35% male, 65.9% female)
- Overall gender distribution: 37.1% male, 62.9% female

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.

Users tend to be young in the libraries surveyed. Lack of ICT training was seen as a barrier by about 24% of users, which is much lower than the survey results from users in telecenters and HIV/AIDS support centers. This may be indicative of a more educated group of users.

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: None

ICT specific training courses: None, although a selected number of Infopreneurs are using libraries to teach ICT skills for a fee. Likewise the Kwazulu Natal CyberCadet initiative will provide first-level ICT support for users.

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.

The distribution of public libraries in provinces such as the Western Cape and Gauteng is fairly good (smaller provinces, higher density of libraries), though inevitably people in the smaller centers and rural areas are more likely to be physically further from their nearest library. The biggest problem preventing the integration of information and services offered by libraries into the daily lives of people is their opening hours. As noted above, most libraries tend to be open

during working hours, and closed during the evenings and weekends, when working people are able to visit them. This effectively restricts the access of people in informal employment to these facilities.

The reason for these short opening hours is lack of operational funding for sufficient staff to operate sufficient shifts to keep the libraries physically open for longer (more hours per day, more days per week).

In the Western Cape, inadequate bandwidth (connectivity) means that the user experience of Smart Cape Access Points is not as good as it could be. The reason for this is the high cost of bandwidth in South Africa; the limited budget available cannot afford sufficient bandwidth to meet people's needs. The result is that response speeds are slow; consequently users cannot easily or quickly just 'pop in' to check their email or do Internet searches. This is likely to be a problem throughout the other provinces. In Kwazulu Natal, libraries have been included in the recently developed broadband strategy which is now in the early stage of implementation. Of interest is that libraries were not included in the early versions of the strategy and had basically been forgotten.

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.

Generally libraries are viewed as study places and used for educational purposes rather than places to pursue recreational reading. In urban libraries such as the City of Tshwane, younger children are using the facilities to do their homework and carry out school projects.

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

In the Western Cape, the general use of Smart Cape computers by typical users cannot be said to have reached the point of social appropriation. Users are primarily consumers of content and users of applications and tools; they are not creators of content or tools that meet their specific needs. However, there is no data indicating that many users find the web-based information and services to be useful and of value to them personally. To the extent that this can be considered to be social appropriation the technology is of increasing value. For example, the use of email does allow people to develop and maintain new relationships and modes of communication.

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?

Public libraries are generally seen as safe and secure places to study and read. Community outreach and reading, together with children's programs are regarded as priority activities by librarians. The need in some libraries for homework clubs for schoolchildren has been identified. In the City of Tshwane library in the CBD, young children have created a 'corner' for themselves to do their homework and assist each other.

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)

See 4.1.3.5.

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)?

There are strong indications for increased attention being given to libraries by government. In 2006, the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) announced the provision of ZAR 1 billion (about US\$ 132 million) to recapitalize the community library system. The Department expects this to be the largest and most ambitious project until 2009, requiring a partnership at all tiers of government, especially provincial and local. Consultants were appointed to develop a funding model for the management of funding for the public, community library and information services. This was completed in June 2007 and includes an Impact Assessment Study, Status Quo Report and the development of an Action Plan (KPMG report, 2007).

Some provinces have more advanced strategies for improving libraries and equipping them with ICTs, (most notably the Western Cape, Gauteng, the Free State, and KwaZulu Natal), while other provinces have lagged behind and have so far done little to improve the sector. Some of the programs are part of more general efforts to improve public access to ICTs, which is also a high priority at national level. This ranges from establishing open access national and international fiber backbones, to support for telecenters and kiosks, ICT training centers, and ICT access in schools.

Increased efforts are also being made by national government to improve access to computers and the Internet. The Department of Communication's 2007/8 strategy and budget aims to prioritize access to educational and health institutions, the Post Office, government offices and the Thusong Canters in the roll-out of electronic communications networks and services for the provision of wireless broadband communication. In addition new leadership has been established at USAASA and there is increased confidence that goals for improving access in rural areas will be met.

Libraries are now included in their mandate.

By 2009, Government hopes to have a useful suite of e-government solutions available for citizens and ICT is one of five service delivery work streams that will make up government's Single Public Service plan.

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.

General aspects of the national economy have been dealt with elsewhere in this report (see Section 3.2.3).

Total municipal expenditure on libraries was about ZAR 626 million in 2005/06. More than 90% was spent on buildings. About ZAR 11 million was spent in 2006/07 on ICT.

The Libraries Conditional Grant from the DAC R1bn resulted in a total of R91,5 million set aside over the 2007/8 year to step up and institutionalize community library services in underserved areas, to stock books, recapitalize library facilities and expand services.

While provincial governments are ultimately responsible for libraries, constitutional change has left them somewhat in limbo in terms of the split in financing responsibilities with the municipalities. Studies of alternative revenue models and fiscal have taken place and it is expected that this issue will be resolved shortly.

Presented below are short summaries of the status of the budgets in each of the nine provinces:

Western Cape

Total Budget for Fiscal Year = ZAR109 million + R 11m (US\$14.4m) for 99 SmartCape Access points. The Western Cape received R16,74 million as the conditional grant from DAC which will mainly be used to alleviate staff shortages at public libraries. R32 million was allocated for library material in 2007/08, and a new Community Library Services Grant, will be introduced over the 2007/8 year which will assist the human capacity development of community libraries.

As part of the conditional grant, a mobile library Wheelie Wagon service will be extended even further to remote rural areas. To promote economic growth and job creation through dissemination of information and knowledge, the Department is providing material for Library Business Corners and budget to increase business related material in libraries. There are currently 85 Library Business Corners in the province, 43 in the City of Cape Town and 42 in the rural areas.

Mpumalanga Province

In 2006/7 the Mpumalanga Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation allocated an amount of

about R156 million for the construction of the Provincial Archive Centre and the renovation of eight public libraries in eight municipalities. In 2007/8 the DAC allocated a conditional grant of about R23 million to the Province to refurbish and upgrade public libraries, purchase relevant books for libraries, increase the number of books in under-stocked libraries, popularize the use of libraries and make them accessible to communities; facilitate the implementation of ICT projects in seven municipalities, employ 35 library staff; and build one local municipal library. A total of 135 computers will be installed.

The recurring budget allocation for Library and Archives Services in 2007/8 was R41 270 000. During the 2005/06 financial year an amount of R3 million was spent on purchasing library material, while in 2006/2007 an amount of ZAR16,887 million was allocated to the Library and Information Services program and an amount of R4,088 million was set aside to purchase library material for all 139 public libraries. Alternative library services using book boxes were installed in two municipalities.

KwaZulu Natal

In the 2006/7 financial year an allocation of R17,4 million was made available for the building and upgrading of library facilities. The conditional grant of about R14 million from National Treasury (the DAC R1bn) was to be used to address the relevancy of library collections through the expenditure on resource materials for distance tertiary learners, the automation of public libraries and the provision of access to computers, IT training and internet access for the public.

The total allocation in 2007/8 for Libraries and Archives Services was about R91.5 million. R22 million was allocated for the purchasing of library material, an increase of eight percent from the previous year. In 2006/7 R19.9 million was budgeted to fund the building, furnishing and equipping of new libraries and R20.3 million was allocated for the purchase of library material. Expenditure was focused on material in support of education for learners.

2008/9 will see the completion of six new community libraries; four new libraries were constructed with an extension to the Msunduzi library for children. New libraries are currently being constructed and/or planned at five libraries, while extensions for additional study space for learners will be completed at three libraries.

Free State

A total of 44 371 items of new library materials (books and audio visual and electronic formats) to the value of R4 million were provided to the libraries in the 2006/7 fiscal year (about 14.6% of the 2006/7 program's budget (R6 million) was allocated for the acquisition of reading and information resources).

In 2007/08, the Free State received a ZAR16.4 million conditional grant from the DAC R1bn to upgrade library services and assist municipalities with service delivery. The conditional grant was to be used for the following projects:

- Assisting municipalities with additional staff at public libraries: 54 libraries: R4,1 million
- Building and developing skills of library staff: R100 000
- Providing ICT infrastructure: 40 libraries will be provided with four computers each and

connectivity: R4,5 million

- Upgrading library collections: dated collections to be upgraded at 20 libraries: R4 million
- Upgrading library buildings: R1,3 million
- Providing photocopiers to 15 libraries: R,9 million
- Improving staff capacity in the Sub-program: R1,5 million

Eastern Cape

In 2007/2008 the Library and Information Services program of the Provincial Department of Arts, Sports and Culture was allocated about R68 million and about R22 million was transferred to municipalities for library services.

In 2007 a new library was opened, and through the provision of two new mobile libraries and 26 new libraries-on-wheels access was provided to previously disadvantaged communities, at a cost of R150 000 and R1 million respectively.

The Department also marketed the national library week awareness campaign and developed collection policies and procedure manuals. About 14 libraries, mainly rural, were to be provided with ICT infrastructure at a cost of R750 000. R6 million was budgeted for the provision of library books and other formats to public libraries. A records management and improvement plan will also be put in place, along with promotion of social memory and identity through oral recording of un-chronicled history and oral tradition.

The Department received an additional R22,6 million as part of the DAC R1bn conditional grant to recapitalize library services. This will see 36 libraries benefiting from refurbishments, cabling, access adaptation and purchasing of electronic equipment. A new grant, called Community Library Services, has been introduced in the 2007/08 financial year to scale up and institutionalize community library services in underserved areas. The grant is provided to support the recapitalization of library infrastructure facilities. An amount of R22,9 million has been allocated to the Department of Sports, Culture, Arts and Recreation for the 2007/08 financial year. This grant will increase to R42,6 million in 2008/09 and R58,7 million in 2009/10 financial year.

This projected increase in budget is attributed to additional allocation on mass participation program conditional grant and library service conditional grant totaling R28,369 million and R22,680 million.

Expenditure trends in Eastern Cape Libraries and Information Services:

- 2005/06: R20,285m
- 2006/07: R43,442m
- 2007/08: R57,181m
- 2008/09: R73,270m

North West Province

In the current financial year the North West Department of Sport, Arts and Culture will use the National Conditional Grant Allocation of R21 million (from the R1bn allocated to DAC) to strengthen the capacity of both the personnel and the libraries themselves through appropriate

stocking, automation, appointment of professional and support staff and provision of people with special needs facilities. The Department is also looking to establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that can measure the level of impact of libraries in communities.

Gauteng

Starting in 2007 an allocation of R103 million over the MTEF is being made available to fund community library services. The allocation for library and archival services was increased from R14,25 million in 2006/7 to R38 million (an increase of 167,2%) in 2007/8. The conditional grant of R18,8 million from the DAC R1bn has been made available to recapitalize libraries. This additional budgetary resource will be used to assist municipal libraries to provide information resources and services to communities. The funds will be used to install ICTs via targeted fund transfers and the program will also use R5 million to support municipalities to implement reading programs to purchase books and other material, subscribe to newspapers and other periodicals, and provide reference and information services. R5.2 million will be used to establish an integrated ICT infrastructure network for all libraries by 2008. Libraries in the 20 priority townships will be equipped with ICT hardware and software and their capacity to utilize this ICT will be increased.

Northern Cape

R9.3 million has been allocated in 2008/9 to Library Services for library transformation and development (3.2 million from the provincial equitable share and R6.1 million from the conditional grant). R 13million will be spent on book materials (up from R3.3 million in the 2007/8 financial year). Four new libraries will be constructed at a cost of R14.3 million. R 14.3 million is to be spent on providing another 40 container libraries. R0.25 million has been set aside for a writer's grant to contribute to local language development.

Limpopo

In the 2008/9 budget, the library services conditional grant will be increased from R20 million to R 42.9 million, an increase of 87% over the 2007/8 budget. The provincial allocation will be about R 47million for library services, with a total of 61.6 million including archives. Two new community libraries are to be built. In 2007/8, 15 libraries were cabled for ICTs and over R3 million was spent on ICTs.⁵²

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.

The Department of Communications (DoC) is responsible for communications policy, the communications regulatory body (ICASA), USAASA (see below), and the post office. The DoC has

⁵² MEC for Limpopo Sport, Arts and Culture J Mashamba, 2008/9 Budget speech
<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2008/08052012151001.htm>

been overseeing a process of ‘managed liberalization’ of the sector through a regulatory framework that has been aimed at ensuring affordable access to ICT. In 1997 there was a partial privatization of the country’s fixed line operator, Telkom, secured through the extension of its monopoly for a further five years.

For the second phase of reform a second fixed network operator was licensed in 2006, a further mobile competitor and a new category of under-serviced area licenses to salvage the unsuccessful rollout of services into economically marginal areas during the exclusivity period. The Act further granted a multimedia license to the incumbent broadcasting signal distributor together with an international gateway license. The Amendment Act also sought to introduce a number of competitive measures such as carrier selection and number portability. Further deregulation of the sector in general is being discussed, and number portability has recently been introduced. However local loop unbundling is not expected to take place until 2011 and despite the legislative reform initiatives, the sector continues to be characterized by relatively high retail prices, large profits by the providers, job losses, licensing delays and little new foreign investment in the sector. A recent report by the South Africa Foundation highlights the discrepancy between South Africa and other comparable countries in terms of telecommunications costs. For example, the cost of ADSL in South Africa is 139% more expensive than the average price out of the 15 countries surveyed. Local call costs (peak) are 199% more expensive than the average price of all the countries surveyed. The failure to bring on line the second national fixed line operator and the de facto continuation of Telkom’s monopoly both in retail fixed services and in wholesale facilities provisioning is cause for concern. Local call prices have nearly doubled since the privatization of Telkom despite significant efficiency gains resulting in it nearly halving its labor force since 1997.

The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) has the vision of achieving digital inclusion by accelerating affordable access and promoting the use of Information & Communication Technology Services by all in South Africa for socio-economic development.” . The USAASA seeks to provide universal service, which is defined as “a reliable connection to the communication network that enables any form of communication to and from any part of South Africa”, and to provide universal access, defined as “the ability to use the communication network at a reasonable distance and affordable price which provides relevant information and has the necessary capacity – in under-serviced areas”.⁵³

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.

The conditional grant is probably the single most significant indicator of political will to address the situation of libraries in the country. To date, libraries have been very under-resourced and characterized by rationalization through the closing of libraries, inadequate budgets for staff, training and equipment, and limited expansion to provide new facilities in underserved areas.

⁵³ <http://www.usaasa.org.za>

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)?

All the libraries form part of the national library system, which is administered on the provincial level but with implementation through the municipalities. The National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) provides oversight. In terms of the South African constitution, the provision of public libraries is a “provincial government competence”; the Provincial Governments are therefore constitutionally responsible for all of the public libraries within a Province. The Provincial government has the choice to delegate responsibility to municipalities. Eight of the nine provinces have chosen this route, with the Free State Province choosing to take responsibility directly for its libraries. For example, the Western Cape Provincial Government has delegated this task within the Cape Town municipal area to the City of Cape Town – the Provincial department provides funding for buildings and books whilst the municipality provides staff. In terms of this arrangement, the Smart Cape Access Project is confined to the libraries staffed and managed by the municipality.

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.

Various partnerships are in place with international donors and with local private sector partners, either through in-kind contributions or through their corporate social responsibility programs. Some examples include the following:

- In Bophirima, North West Province, a poor rural area formerly situated in the Bophuthatswana homeland, forged partnerships with Samancor Foundation and the Transnet Foundation. Samancor Foundation funded a Resource Centre to an amount of R3, 1 million at Batlharos Village in Gasegonyana Area Project Office (APO). Transnet donated a high school of 24 classrooms, administration block, library and computer centre at Mmamutla Primary School in Greater Taung.⁵⁴
- In 2006, the Mpumalanga Library and Information Service, in collaboration with the University of Cape Town’s Centre for Information Literacy presented information literacy (IL) workshops as part of a pilot information literacy campaign. This was funded by UNESCO’s Information for All Program. The campaign intended to provide public librarians with information literacy skills for use in their libraries.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Provincial Budget vote, 2006/7,

[http://www.search.gov.za/info/previewDocument.jsp?dk=%2Fdata%2Fstatic%2Finfo%2Fspeeches%2F2006%2F06080715151004.htm%40SpeechesandStatements&q=\(+\(+J+%3CAND%3E+Tselapedi+\)%3CIN%3E+title\)&t=J+Tselapedi%3A+North+West+Education+Prov+Budget+Vote+2006%2F07](http://www.search.gov.za/info/previewDocument.jsp?dk=%2Fdata%2Fstatic%2Finfo%2Fspeeches%2F2006%2F06080715151004.htm%40SpeechesandStatements&q=(+(+J+%3CAND%3E+Tselapedi+)%3CIN%3E+title)&t=J+Tselapedi%3A+North+West+Education+Prov+Budget+Vote+2006%2F07)

⁵⁵ <http://www.ched.uct.ac.za/cil/dils/Information%20literacy%20campaign.pdf> Accessed 14 August 2008

- The Sony Corporation is providing support for SAPESI, the South African Primary Education Support Initiative, to establish mobile libraries for schools. This is part of the South African Mobile Library Project.⁵⁶

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 2006/2007

Local currency name ZAR amount (local currency) 380 million (2006/7); estimated 837 million (2008/9)

Approx. equivalent in USD 50 million/ 10 million based on exchange rate of 7.60 on date 20/07/08.

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	ZAR 611-billion	2008/9 figures
Education	ZAR 121.1-billion	2008/9 figures
Telecenters/Cyberlabs	ZAR 56.88 million	2008/9 figures
Public libraries	ZAR 380 million	2006/7 figures
	ZAR 837 million	2008/9 estimates from KPMG report

Other Comments:

There is no national consolidated budget available for libraries since these are budgeted for at provincial and municipal levels in the country. The 2006/7 figures were obtained from the recently released KPMG audit report. More recent figures were presented in Section 4.1.4.1 above. Accurate figures could not be obtained from available sources, but there has been a significant increase in the case of budget allocated to library services, both from the provincial budgets and from the conditional grant allocation.

⁵⁶ <http://www.huliq.com/60325/sony-group-support-quotsouth-africa-mobile-library-projectquot>

The Table below, reproduced from the KPMG report, indicates a budget of R 837 million for 2008/9, of which 54% is contributed from the conditional national grant allocation.

	Actual 00/01	Actual 01/02	Actual 02/03	Actual 03/04	Actual 04/05	Actual 05/06	Budgeted 06/07	Budgeted 07/08	Budgeted 08/09
Municipal Expenditure	374	401	427	443	504	626	583	-	-
Provincial Expenditure	96	99	227	200	261	297	359	356	384
National Expenditure			44.84	60.30	57.69	67.17	87	288	453
Municipal Expenditure %	80%	80%	61%	63%	61%	63%	57%	0%	0%
Provincial Expenditure %	20%	20%	32%	28%	32%	30%	35%	55%	46%
National Expenditure %	0%	0%	6%	9%	7%	7%	8%	45%	54%

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%	Budget is provided from provincial and municipal budgets, and national grant allocation
International donors:	Negligible	Not known but likely to be contributions to support specific projects
National donors:	Negligible	Not known but likely to be contributions to support specific projects
User fees/services:	Not known	Very minimal, due to low membership fees

Other Comments:

See 4.1.4.1 for more detailed information.

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?

The funding of public libraries is currently in a state of change. Schedule 5 of the constitution demarcated “libraries other than national libraries” as areas of exclusive provincial competence, but no additional funding for this function was granted to the provinces and at the same time,

when the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, No 77 was passed in 1998, it excluded libraries from the responsibilities of municipalities. Usually, when a function of government is shifted from one area of administration to another, the funds are expected to move correspondingly, in this case, from the municipal government to provincial government. However, there was no mechanism developed for shifting own-revenue from a municipality to a province, so technically, the municipalities are responsible for sustaining the library service, which contributes to the large variation in the consistency and coverage of libraries in the country.

The constitution does allow provinces to assign functions to municipalities but the provinces must then ensure that the necessary budget is available for this. In this catch 22 situation, libraries have been the responsibility of the provinces but with no recurring national government funding for them and no way of absorbing funds from the municipal level. Among a number of other services which have been similarly shifted, public libraries have been known as “unfunded mandates”.

Despite these difficulties, partnerships between provincial and municipal authorities have continued or developed; in most cases based on pre-1994 provincial and municipal ordinances: the province usually provides books and materials, and the municipality pays for staff and maintains buildings and equipment. However ICT facilities for the public have not been traditionally part of the library budget and are treated similarly to the collections – provided by the Province. The financial support from the provincial governments is not large. For instance, in 1999/2000 the City of Cape Town Council allocated R127m for its public libraries and the Western Cape Province allocated R50m for the entire province. Analysis from all nine provincial governments shows that in 2004 municipalities were still contributing 79% of the funding of public libraries. This situation has changed recently to some extent following the national government’s special 3-year allocation of R1 billion to libraries in 2007, but as yet it is unclear if this level of funding will continue.

In the past, municipalities have been important contributors of funding for public libraries. Typically the funding has come from either their own revenues (i.e. rates and taxes) for the metros and urban municipalities, or municipal equitable share for the smaller and rural municipalities. The aggregate municipal expenditure on library services has increased during the period under review. However, the nominal expenditure growth rate of 7.7% per annum appears to have been inadequate to keep pace with growing community needs. The largest cumulative expenditure during the period was by the City of Cape Town, followed by Ethekwini and the City of Johannesburg. Overall the top 10 municipalities contributed 90% of the overall municipal expenditure during the period.

Currently, as in the past, the national Department’s role has been limited to funding the National Library of South Africa and the National Council of Library and Information Services. The amount that the Department spent on library services in the financial years from 2002/03 until 2006/07 was virtually unchanged at R50 million. But this has changed as a result of the R1 billion additional funding that has been made available for the three financial years starting in 2007/08. However, as most of this funding will be transferred to the provinces, it will be reflected as provincial expenditure.

In any event, recent research by KPMG (see below) has pointed out that all Provinces need more resources and that the constitutional impasse needs to be resolved. Whether public libraries

should fall under provincial control was debatable. The constitution, section 156(4) states that if a municipality is able to perform a function more efficiently than the national government or a province this function must be assigned to that municipality. In the Western Cape it was recognised that certain municipalities could do the job better than the province, whereas in Limpopo it has been argued that the municipalities did not have the capacity to run library services.

The Department of Arts and Culture in consultation with the National Council for Library and Information Services appointed consultants KPMG to develop a funding model for the management of funding for the public, community library and information services. The consultants proposed that public libraries as a function of provincial government should be funded through the provincial equitable share allocation, assisted by other funding options that should be coordinated through agreements signed for every municipal jurisdiction.

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?

As described in 4.1.2.3 – 4.1.4 above.

4.1.5.6 Cost categories

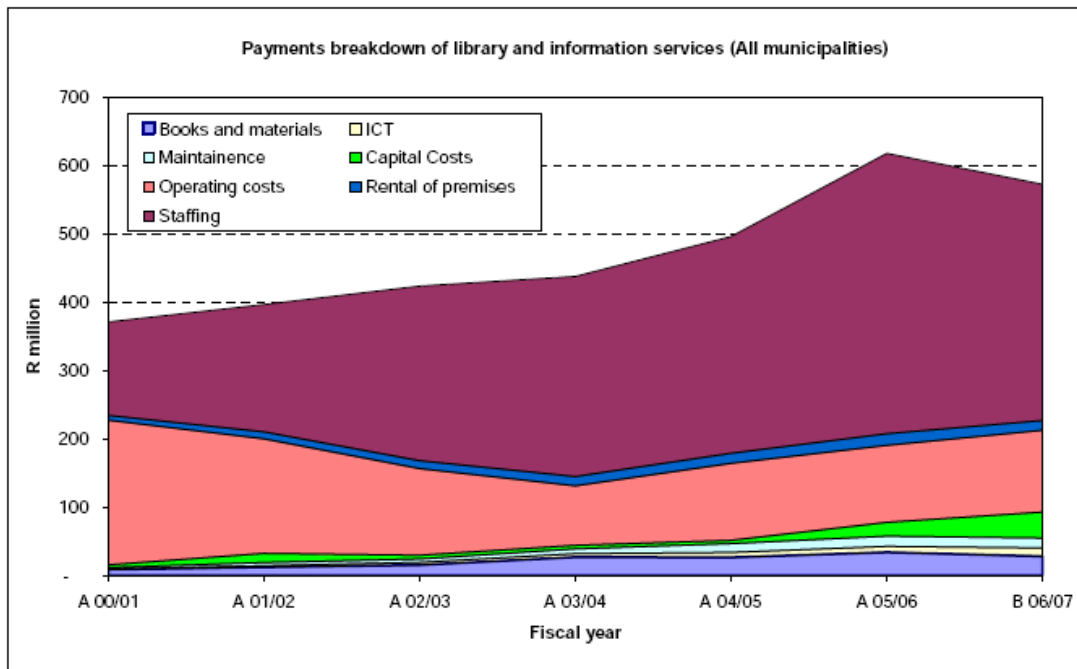
What are the main cost categories in the operation of this kind of venue? (% of total annual budget)

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

Cost Categories for Operation:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Staff (salaries, benefits)	82%	This is the largest cost factor and has increased dramatically in the past five years
Building infrastructure/rental	4.2%	
Maintenance	2.1%	
Staff Training	Not specified	
Computers/technology	3.3%	
Books and Materials	6.9%	2006/7 budget estimates based on KPMG report
Security	1.2%	
Literacy programs	0.3%	
Total	100%	

Other Comments:

The Table below, reproduced from the KPMG report, shows the payments breakdown of library and information services over a six-year period. 2006/7 estimates are reflected above, based on a total expenditure of about R 336 million.



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?

There are strong indications for increased attention being given to libraries by government. In 2006, the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) announced the provision of ZAR 1 billion (about US\$ 132 million) to recapitalize the community library system. The Department expects this to be its largest and most ambitious project until 2009. The library community has also been mobilized to ensure that this funding is spent. For example, the National Library hosted a workshop recently to present information on the conditional grant to librarians from a number of provinces. There is however a serious under-spend of conditional grant funding in most of the provinces – this is of concern since unspent funding will be diverted back to the National Treasury for re-allocation elsewhere. For example, R180-million of the conditional grant was made available to provincial government to upgrade facilities and buy books, for the financial year which ended in March 2008 [2007/2008 financial year.] The amounts ranged from R13,9-Million for KwaZulu-Natal to R24-Million for the Northern Cape. By October 2007, percentage of budget spent looked as follows:

PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET SPEND BY OCTOBER 2007⁵⁷

Eastern Cape	9.3%
Free State	33.6%
Gauteng	25.9%
KwaZulu-Natal	33.9%
Limpopo	9.0%
Mpumalanga	26.3%
Northern Cape	27.7%
North West	5.1%
Western Cape	47.6%

4.1.6 *Case example for venue 2: 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.

⁵⁷ Dept of Arts and Culture National Budget.

Western Cape - From learner to author – Siphó's story

When the Smart Cape Access Project ran its first pilot project in 2002, one of the more significant problems that the project team encountered was the lack of basic computer literacy in many communities. The five computers in each of the six pilot libraries were quickly in full use, but the special Help Desk set up to assist library staff with technical problems was quickly overwhelmed with user problems. For many, even the simple registration process seemed too much. The free, daily forty-five minute sessions were often taken up with learning how to tab between fields and using the keyboard!

Five years later, many users have become proficient in ways that it would have been hard to imagine. With free public access in all of Cape Town's hundred odd public libraries, many people have had the opportunity to learn not just new computer skills but also skills that the computers enable. One of these is Siphó Kekezwa, from Maccasar, Khayelitsha.

Siphó has gone way beyond writing emails – he is using the computers at the Nazeema Isaacs library to write stories and get them published.

In 2005, he started to work every day at the library researching the material for short stories. He began with articles for magazines, but his dream was to write short stories and novels.

With advice and encouragement from the library staff, he wrote a Xhosa language novel called "Ngamajingi qhiwu otshintsho", and a short story called "Locked in Agony" which was published in November 2006 in a volume of short stories called "Telling Tales" which has been published internationally.

Siphó most recent story, called "Stoned", was published in November 2007 by the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association. He is now in the process of finishing a complete Xhosa novel, titled "Ndilwela utata", which will be published by Je'ko publishing. Finally, this human dynamo has also registered for Masithethe Language Practitioners, a project through which he aims to teach basic isiXhosa to non-isiXhosa speakers.

In 2007, the City ran a competition, asking Smart Cape users to submit stories about how the Smart Cape Access Project has changed their life. Of course, Siphó was one of the winners. He now has his own refurbished computer given to him as a prize, but still comes to the library each day to research ideas and to communicate with publishers by email.

Siphó received his prizes (he also received a new mobile phone donated by MTN, a South African mobile network operator), in a ceremony at the library in 2007 (see photos). He is proud to say "thanks" to Smart Cape, because without the free access to technology, services and advice, he would never have had the opportunities he now enjoys.



4 Venue-Specific Assessments

4.2 Venue 2: HIV/AIDS Support Centers

4.2.1 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:

The three programs considered as part of this research offer a good overview of the kinds of HIV/AIDS interventions being implemented in South Africa. The HIV/AIDS support centers come in various shapes and sizes, are conceptualized and implemented differently by the three programs, and have different institutional capacities. They range from ‘arks’ set up by Noah, only some of which are resource centers (i.e. physical venues), to loveLife clinics (which might be no more than a room in a clinic), to fully operational centers, functioning as training grounds for volunteers, administrative hubs for outreach programs, an ICT resource for beneficiaries and the immediate community, and offering after-school educational care. A number of the Starfish and Noah initiatives are community-based in the grassroots sense, with staff having only basic administrative and technical skills.

Program structure, orientation, capacity and resources impact on how public access to information is managed. As a result, each program shows very different characteristics in this regard.

loveLife is the most media-intensive of all of the programs, and mainstreaming public information on health and life skills is central to its agenda. The program has a strong public presence that includes messaging on billboards, radio programming, magazine inserts, and online content, amongst other media tactics. Media messaging is aimed at the country’s youth, and seeks to change behavior by empowering and raising awareness. Information is also communicated through loveLife ‘groundbreakers’ – trainees who go out into the community to talk about HIV/AIDS and the life challenges facing young people. In total, loveLife ‘centers’ are a mixture of Y-Centers (16),⁵⁸ clinics (335), partnership schools (approx. 3000), franchises (124), and outlets (217).⁵⁹ A number of the loveLife Y-Centers also have computer centers, and offer computer training that is accessible to the general public.

⁵⁸ 2006 data.

⁵⁹ Y-Centers are described as “multi-purpose recreational venues for young people” (Annual report, 2006 – see case example below); loveLife’s presence at clinics varies, but often is little more than a room where the program offers youth-friendly counseling; partnering schools are schools that allow loveLife to implement its program at the school at specific times; franchises are community organizations involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and youth activities that have become part of the loveLife network; outlets are partnerships with the Department of Social Development aimed at reaching rural and marginalized communities. (ibid.)

The e-readiness of Noah and Starfish centers is mixed, and the centers tend to be far less media and messaging intensive.⁶⁰ Instead they focus on hands-on support and counseling, offering clinic services, and outreach to the communities, including schools and affected households. As a result, much of the public information available at these venues is conveyed face-to-face during consultations or house-visits, or through pamphlets and other print information available at the centers.

Some Noah and Starfish centers are, however, in a position to offer public information using ICTs. More developed and resourced centers, such as Ikageng in Soweto, have already secured funds to set up a computer center on-site. Others, such as Friends for Life in Alexandra, have set up a two-PC public access terminal at its premises (funded by Nedbank), where members of the public can surf the web, and send e-mails. This access is controlled and monitored.

The level of public access to the centers is mixed. While loveLife offers relatively open access to its centers in the affected communities, and while Friends for Life offers relatively free access to its computer node, the centers do have target beneficiaries. Many have emphasized that while they are willing to develop public access to information using ICTs at their centers, this access would only be available to their target beneficiaries and not the public more generally. The extent to which this is the case, however, will vary from center to center.

Noah has established a total of 112 arks, including 33 resource centers.⁶¹ Starfish works with 81 NGOs and CBOs. 57 CBO groups are beneficiaries of Starfish's Mentoring and Training program⁶² in 2008 and 2009.

4.2.2 Access

2–3 Paragraphs:

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

Most of the HIV/AIDS centers considered are within walking distance of the affected communities, and a number are centrally situated. This, combined with outreach programs to schools, clinics and homes, means that the programs can be considered accessible. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that our survey suggested that some felt urban centers were less accessible than non-urban ones, both in terms of location and hours of operation. This may be due to the fact that some non-urban centers were situated in smaller townships or informal settlements, and were therefore easier to reach, compared to some sprawling urban centers such as Soweto or Alexandra. Higher

⁶⁰ Partly due to the fact that, at least in the case of Starfish, the centers function independently of the Starfish program.

⁶¹ The number of resource centers is according to website data (www.noahorphans.org.za). Noah's arks are established in stages, with the first being getting community leaders to take responsibility for the OVCs in the community. Stage 3 is the establishment of the resource center, which accommodates OVCs on a daily basis, offering them meals, homework supervision, access to counseling, and various life skills and educational programs.

⁶² The Starfish Mentoring and Training Program capacitates CBOs to deliver a range of basic services to OVCs.

urban employment rates may also limit some members of the public to after-hours access only, typically when centers are closed.

Given the focus on HIV/AIDS, the information tends to be specific to the needs of the target communities, and relevant. No fees are charged at the centers for accessing public information, including through ICTs. This is in line with other sector-specific initiatives of this nature.

Only some of the centers surveyed offer digital ICT services (in the form of access to computers and training, and even internet access) to their beneficiaries or the community at large. As a result, face-to-face information exchanges, as well as print material provided at the centers, are two of the most powerful ways in which information is disseminated through the programs. However, all programs have stressed the need for computer access for their target beneficiaries and say that the beneficiaries have asked for this. In particular, the potential of mobile technologies is underutilized at the centers.

In general, a focused ICT roll-out initiative could potentially dramatically improve the access ecosystem at many of the centers. Amongst other things, this could be done through:

- Offering controlled internet and computer access at the centers (many of the centers already have spare broadband capacity through administrative access);
- Developing targeted content for the public, including interactive community networks;
- Using mobile technology when offering outreach services such as home-based care or for remote counseling (e.g. through SMS).

4.2.2.1 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.

The centers are typically set up in locations accessible to the target communities (i.e. OVCs (orphans and vulnerable children) or people affected with HIV/AIDS). Many community-based organizations (CBOs) evolve organically within affected communities. Noah's arks began by organizing leaders within a community, and therefore can be considered community-centric initiatives, even while the establishment of a resource center in Stage 3 typically depends on available infrastructure, which may remove it slightly from the epicenter of a community (i.e. resource centers are not built anew, but may be abandoned government buildings on the periphery of an informal settlement or township). Outreach programs take center services to households, schools, and clinics, which are already established in underserved areas. While most of the centers are accessible by foot, it is worth noting that our survey suggested that some felt urban centers were less accessible than non-urban ones. This may be due to the fact that some non-urban centers were situated in smaller townships or informal settlements, and were therefore easier to reach, compared to some sprawling urban centers such as Soweto or Alexandra.

4.2.2.2 *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.

Most of the information offered by the centers is available in print (e.g. loveLife materials, or material from NGOs and the Department of Health), or disseminated face-to-face through the range of services offered by the centers. On the whole, these are effective media, given the nature of HIV/AIDS programs (e.g. the need for face-to-face counseling or hands-on OVC care and mentoring), and can be considered appropriate. Many of these programs and services have taken a number of years to develop, and are initiatives of reputable organizations (e.g. Soul City). This gives the program-orientated information provided at the centers a high degree of relevance.

All programs have stressed the need for computer access for their target beneficiaries and say that the beneficiaries have asked for this. There also appears to be a high degree of awareness of technology (e.g. the internet) amongst the beneficiaries, who feel the need to set up interventions such as computer centers even when the skills, know-how and exposure to technology is largely absent. However, only some of the centers offer digital ICT services (in the form of access to computers and training) to their beneficiaries or the community at large. All of loveLife's Y-Centers are ICT-enabled, including offering computer literacy courses to the community. The Noah resource center in Diepsloot used to have access to computers (through an arrangement with the nearby Thusong Center), but these had been stolen. Noah has identified four of their centers as standing out in their use of ICTs (i.e. in Lanseria; Melusi in Mtubatuba; Sithokozise in Umlazi; and in Alexandra). Starfish estimates that 50% of its beneficiaries *could* offer ICT services to the community. Of the Starfish site visits conducted one beneficiary – considered a best practice example - was in the process of establishing a computer center, while Friends for Life in Alexandra offered internet access to the public under controlled conditions (i.e. a register was kept of those who accessed the internet). Another beneficiary in the North West had also developed a computer literacy training program. Most of the Starfish beneficiaries have administrative access to computers and e-mail. Few Noah arks have internet access, and costs prohibit online access for Y-Centers.

When training centers have been or are being established their use appears to be in line with the immediate needs of the community. For instance, research has suggested that training in computer literacy is a high priority for people living in disadvantaged communities, followed by access to computers for the drafting of documents, such as business plans or CVs. Educational programs are also offered at some arks, and will be offered at Ikageng.

The proliferation of mobile telephones in disadvantaged communities, as well as radio access, suggests that these would be appropriate technologies for information provision. However, while loveLife was in the process of exploring the potential for mobile interventions, few current programs emphasizing mobile communication were evident during the site visits. loveLife's radio studios – which narrowcast program-specific information in between music at 11 of the Y-Centers, and also serve as vehicles for the youth to produce radio content that is broadcast on other radio stations – is an innovative, empowering and forward-thinking intervention in the context of access

to technology and information provision and production.

4.2.2.3 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.

No fees are charged to the beneficiaries of the programs, which includes OVCs and Child-Headed Households (CHH), the youth, as well as the broader affected community. Computer literacy courses at loveLife Y-Centers are offered free to the community's youth. Adult classes are also offered for free. At the same time, access to the computer center (e.g. to type a CV) is free. Internet access at Friends for Life is free and information downloaded can also be printed at no charge. This can be said to be a typical arrangement for computer centers established to serve the direct beneficiaries of the programs.

4.2.2.4 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?

All services at the centers are offered for free to the center beneficiaries.

Indicate amount in local currency n/a

Equivalent in US Dollars: n/a

Date of estimate n/a

and local currency name n/a

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:

As described in 4.2.2.2

4.2.2.5 Geographic distribution

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

Complement any details not already included in section

The following table offers a provincial breakdown for the centers, as well as the urban/non-urban split where available.

	Number of facilities in each administrative unit	Number offering Digital ICT services
Gauteng	loveLife Y-Centers: 1 loveLife clinics: 47 loveLife franchises: 15 loveLife outlets: 17 Noah arks: 34 Noah resource centers: 16 Starfish: 12 (approx) ⁶³	n/a (90% of arks in Gauteng have administrative access to a PC)
North West	loveLife Y-Centers: 1 loveLife clinics: 30 loveLife franchises: 11 loveLife outlets: 9 Noah arks: 1 Starfish: 15 (approx)	n/a
Limpopo	loveLife Y-Centers: 2 loveLife clinics: 47 loveLife franchises: 11 loveLife outlets: 25 Starfish: 9 (approx)	n/a
Mpumalanga	loveLife Y-Centers: 2 loveLife clinics: 26 loveLife franchises: 20 loveLife outlets: 17 Starfish: 2 (approx)	n/a
Free State	loveLife Y-Centers: 2 loveLife clinics: 20 loveLife franchises: 12 loveLife outlets: 11 Starfish: 9 (approx)	n/a
KwaZuluNatal	loveLife Y-Centers: 3 loveLife clinics: 46	n/a (50% of arks in KZN)

⁶³ The Starfish register of beneficiaries changes, and I have been given three different sources of information to work with.

	loveLife franchises: 22 loveLife outlets: 42 Noah arks: 77 Noah resource centers: 17 Starfish: 5 (approx)	have administrative access to a PC)
Eastern Cape	loveLife Y-Centers: 3 loveLife clinics: 51 loveLife franchises: 13 loveLife outlets: 49 Starfish: 18 (approx)	n/a
Western Cape	loveLife Y-Centers: 1 loveLife clinics: 47 loveLife franchises: 6 loveLife outlets: 27 Starfish: 13 (approx)	n/a
Northern Cape	loveLife Y-Centers: 1 loveLife clinics: 21 loveLife franchises: 14 loveLife outlets: 19	n/a
Unable to allocate	loveLife partner schools (721)	
	Number of facilities in this type of location	Number offering Digital ICT services
Urban	Noah: 25% urban in KZN; 85% urban or peri-urban. Starfish: 60% ('guesstimate') ⁶⁴ Y-Centers are typically established in urban or peri-urban settings.	n/a
Non-urban	Noah: 75% non-urban in KZN; 15% non-urban in Gauteng. Starfish: 40% ('guesstimate')	n/a

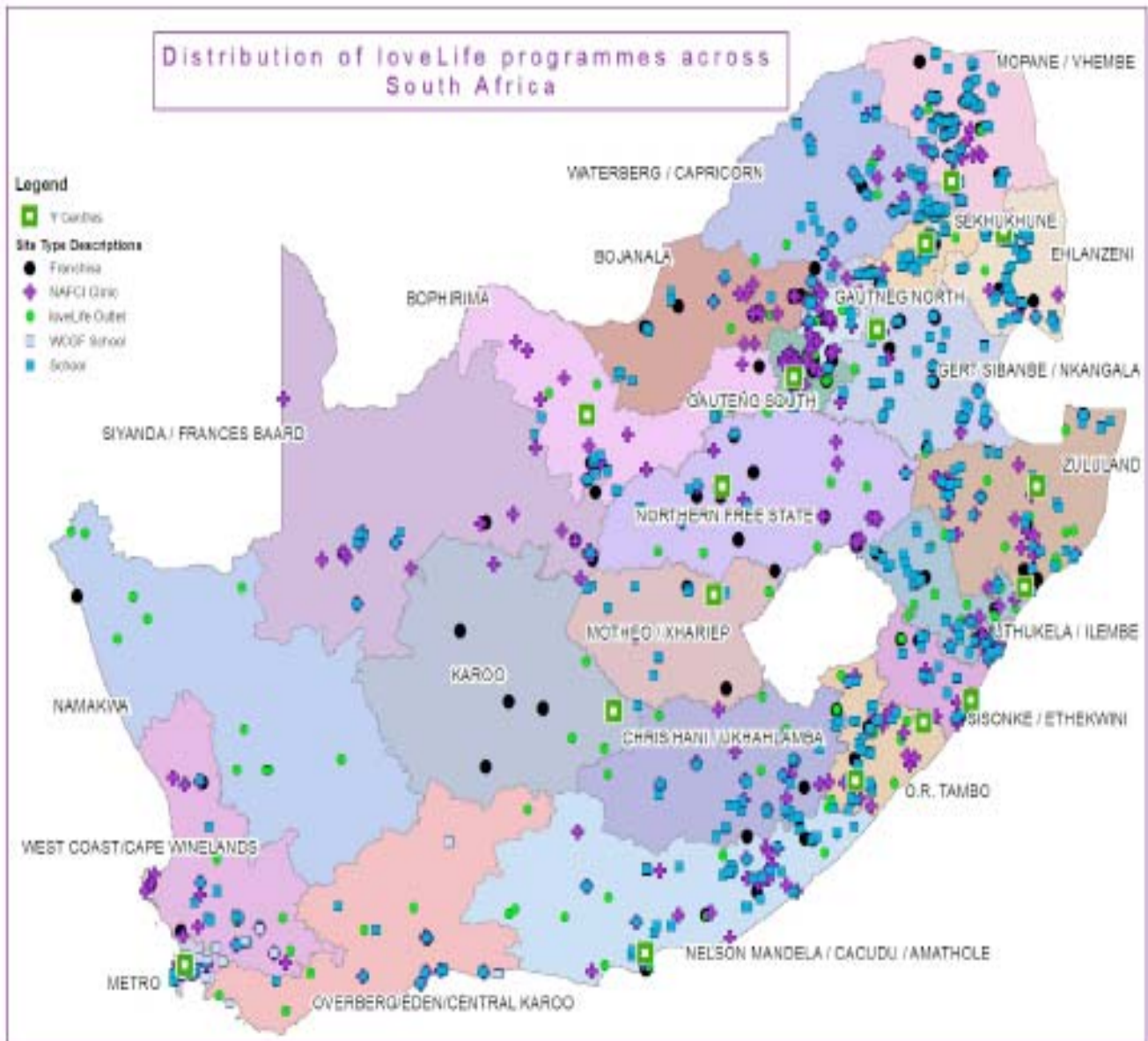
⁶⁴ Due to the difficulties of designating organizations, Starfish does not break its beneficiaries into urban and rural splits. It has offered these 'guesstimates'.

4.2.2.5.1 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: LoveLife centers across South Africa



Source: LoveLife factsheet

4.2.2.6 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.

None.

4.2.3 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 needs orientation of the services offered at the centers means that there is a high relevance to their offerings, including counseling, life skills, clinic services, feeding schemes, education (such as homework support) and OVC care generally. All centers were within walking distance of most of their intended beneficiaries, while outreach programs into homes, clinics and schools, meant that beneficiaries were able to integrate the services into their daily routines. However, some respondents to the survey at urban centers felt that center operating hours inhibited better user of the center's services. The ICT skills capacity of staff members at the centers varied, and only some centers showed that they had the technical capacity on board to manage and run a computer center. Those that did have the capacity (e.g. Ikageng) were already taking the initiative to set up ICT centers. At the same time, a number of respondents to the survey indicated that a lack of ICT training would be an inhibitor in accessing e-information at the centers.

Content at the centers was generally found to be relevant; in particular information on business, education, health and e-government services. However, few centers appeared to have given their print information strategies much thought, and gaps remained, even in the field of health information. Health information on remedies, disease prevention, children's health, and locating health service providers was considered difficult to find by urban respondents. A similar trend was found in non-urban centers.

In general, the interaction between the center and the community can be said to be dynamic, and organic, in that the centers respond to the community needs, and are shaped by these needs. ICT information interventions would need to tap into this dynamism in a way that responds to and complements the needs and capacities of the centers and the affected communities.

4.2.3.1 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.

Staff numbers at the centers vary, and include volunteers. Outside of administrative staff at the Y-Center in Orange Farm, eight 'Groundbreakers' (or program implementers who work for a year at the center) each train about eight 'Mpintshis', volunteers aged between 12 and 17 who assist Groundbreakers in implementing their programs. Staff at Noah arks range from about one to as

many as 10 (one ark has no staff members and relies on volunteers only), with as many as 20-30 volunteers working at some. Ark committees have also been established and these range from anything between 2-20 people. Employee numbers at the Starfish beneficiaries vary. Nine people worked at Good Hope compared to 24 staffers and the same number of volunteers at Ikageng. Technically all of the staff at Good Hope are volunteers as they only receive a meager stipend of around ZAR250 (about USD 33\$)/month each (they are sustained in other ways through the program itself, such as eating when meals are prepared for the OVCs). Ikageng has 24 volunteers.

Support staff for ICT initiatives, when they are present, appears to be low. For example, the computer center and all the other ICT requirements at Ikageng are being run and coordinated by a single person who is studying programming. An education coordinator at Thusanang was described as being IT literate, the suggestion being that they could serve as a support person for a computer center. There does not, however, appear to be a mentoring system in place to ensure that ICT support and implementation skills are retained at the centers. At the loveLife Y-Center, the radio studio has not been working for about a year, and there does not appear to be the necessary technical skills at the center to take steps to fix it (technical support for the Y-Centers is centralized, and only small problems relating to things like “lightning strikes and DVD jams” will be handled locally).

4.2.3.2 Staff training

What is the overall capacity of the staff (i.e., librarians, telecenters 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.

The capacity of the staff at the centers varies greatly. In general, CBOs or CBO-like centers suggested a lower ICT literacy and exposure. At Ikageng, for instance, the staff are qualified and computer literate (e.g. social workers) and would be able to facilitate access to information. The person co-coordinating the ICT network at the center was in the process of learning JAVA programming, and in general the ICT literacy at the organization can be said to be relatively high. This is in sharp contrast to Good Hope, who apparently still do most of their administrative work on paper, even though they are encouraged to use a PC (there was an awareness of ICTs, however, such as “the internet”). Both Starfish and Noah insist that each center has access to a computer for administrative purposes, if practically possible, and encourage the center co-coordinators to use them. Despite this, Noah staffers are said to have a low computer literacy (a training program is being rolled out in 2008). The ICT awareness and literacy at loveLife can be said to be relatively high, although there appeared to be a lack of support skills.

4.2.3.3 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.

<i>Services Offered</i>	<i>Comments</i>
11. Basic Needs	Food is distributed through both the Starfish and Noah programs, and/or nutritious meals offered.
12. Developmental	Both Noah and some Starfish beneficiaries offer some form of early childhood developmental support. Noah offers the Clamber Club program at some of its resource centers, as well as Ntataise, which works with children between the ages of two and seven. These programs emphasize physical and cognitive development.
13. Educational	Mathematics and science educational programs will be used in the computer center currently being set up at Ikageng in Soweto. Noah sees the potential for roll-out of similar educational packages at its resource centers should they become computer-enabled. Educational software dealing with biology, geography and science, amongst others, are already used at a few centers. Two arks (in Alexandra and Lanseria) have linked up with 'virtual families' in the United States, and communicate through Skype and the internet so that the beneficiaries can be helped with homework, chat and share information. Through Noah's Gold program beneficiaries communicate with school children in Australia through e-mail and letters. All programs offer some sort of educational support, whether through the crèches set up by Noah, the homework centers that are being established by some Starfish beneficiaries, or the loveLife's roll-out at schools, which loveLife considers "co-curriculum" (it supplements the core curriculum). Through a partnership with The Oaktree Foundation and the Gold Peer Education initiative, Noah's arks have awarded scholarships to peer educators for Monash University and there is a schools exchange program planned for 2008.
14. Libraries	Some Noah resource centers have developed small libraries for OVCs. Ikageng is about to establish a library for OVC learners.
15. Training	Computer literacy courses, as well as radio training

is offered at the loveLife Y-Centers. Basic computer literacy training is also offered to beneficiaries at some arks and Starfish centers. A basic computer literacy program for staff is to be rolled out at the arks in 2008. Besides the training components imbedded in the numerous programs rolled out at the centers, all the interventions offer some sort of volunteer training and there are often more volunteers working at the centers compared to full-time staffers. The extent to which the volunteers benefit from more formal training programs differs.

16. Life skills

loveLife has integrated various life skills issues into its computer literacy curriculum. All of the programs offer some form of life skills training, whether in the cross-cutting concerns of loveLife's program areas (including fitness and health, debate and motivation, sport and recreation, computers and radio), or in what Starfish calls 'social-psycho' support (one of its core focus areas, the others including education and food.) Amongst others, Noah is rolling out the Soul Buddyz program which encourages children to discuss issues such as poverty, vulnerability, hygiene, and HIV/AIDS.

17. Sport and recreation

Sports and recreation programs are offered by the loveLife Y-Centers. Various sports and recreational activities are also offered by Noah, such as the Inter-Ark sports days and choir festivals.

18. Clinical

Besides its outreach program at clinics, loveLife Y-Centers offer basic clinical services to the youth, including pregnancy, contraceptive and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) services.

19. Counseling

The loveLife program includes counseling on HIV/AIDS, contraceptives, STIs, pregnancy, relationships, sexual and substance abuse, depression, rape and suicide. A bereavement and trauma counseling program is offered at Noah arks. In general, the social workers based at both Starfish beneficiaries and Noah arks are able to offer counseling.

20. Community use of venue facilities

The loveLife Y-Centers serve as community meeting

points where a range of activities take place, including the loveLife Games (a school sports competition), debates and poetry performances.

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

None

4.2.3.4 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 three programs benefit disadvantaged communities, in particular the youth and OVCs in those communities. OVCs are typically characterized by the programs as children/teenagers from 0 to about 18 years of age. OVCs are then further demarcated according to relevant age groups depending on the nature of the program being rolled out. The computer access initiatives at the centers, where they are taking place, are aimed at the program beneficiaries. In the case of the loveLife Y-Centers, the computer studios also run adult computer literacy classes. (Please also see 4.2.3.3. above)

4.2.3.5 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:

The survey suggests that users access a range of information at the centers, including information on business, education, health and e-government services. While most of the content at the centers is disseminated through the services offered at the center (i.e. face-to-face), some centers, such as Nanga Vhuthilo, had a well-resourced information section that included a range of pamphlets and other media on health issues. Three of the centers visited had small libraries that were used for OVCs. One center (Friends for Life) had a public internet access terminal, while ad hoc internet access was offered by some centers (such as Ikageng).

Other Content Needed:

A number of the centers did not appear to have well-resourced information programs, or dedicated information spaces at the center. While the loveLife program is information-rich, there were few pamphlets or other printed material evident at the Y-Center in Orange Farm. A number of respondents also indicated that there was a lack of relevant content at non-urban centers. Health information on remedies, disease prevention, children's health, and locating health service providers was considered difficult to find by urban respondents. A similar trend was found in non-urban centers. (See 4.2.3.15 below)

Source: Survey questionnaires

4.2.3.6 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.

A number of non-urban respondents indicated that a lack of information in local languages was an important barrier to accessing information. Generally the demand for materials in local languages varies from location to location. There tends to be a low supply of books and materials in local languages on the shelves and opinions vary as to the need for more indigenous materials. There is a strong drive in government to produce official documents, pamphlets and booklets in many, if not all, of the official eleven languages (language also being dependent on province and region). These are made available through various institutions such as Thusong Centers, libraries and government offices. Topics include: health especially HIV/AIDS, access to government services, careers advice and environmental issues. At the same time, face-to-face services at the centers would be offered in local languages wherever possible.

4.2.3.7 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)?

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

Refer to section and complement here as needed.

The services offered at the centers, such as OVC or home-based care, counseling and support, and educational services are typically tailored around community needs, and there is, as a result, a high degree of use of these services by the community. Walk-in clients at the centers varied from around 10 a day (Thusanang) to as many as 100 a day (Vuselela). Centers with libraries tend to use these for after-school education of OVCs – in one center (Nanga Vhuthilo) around 80 children benefited from a container library situated on the center grounds. Where it is offered, peer education and edutainment is also popular. The loveLife centers offer interesting examples of event-based awareness-raising, which includes community events at the centers, which also have sports facilities (such as a basketball court at the center in Orange Farm).

loveLife reports that in 2006, besides the programs offered at the center, contraceptive services and counseling services were the most used at their centers. Of the counseling services, contraceptives, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections were the most common areas of counseling needed.

The survey suggested that in both urban and non-urban areas information dealing with education, health and e-government services was the most frequently accessed. In non-urban centers information dealing with agriculture was more in demand, while news was in greater demand in urban centers. Business information was in equal demand at both urban and non-urban centers.

When ICT services were available, most e-information was accessed through surfing the web and e-mail. However, a noticeable number of respondents use interactive online vehicles, such as chat, blogs, and even VoIP.

Print information was accessed more or less with the same frequency at both urban and non-urban centers. There was also a high reliance on face-to-face interactions with center staff for information. This was higher in non-urban centers, perhaps a result of a lack of public ICT access at these centers (the lack of computers, internet and ICT literacy scored high as barriers to accessing information at non-urban centers).

4.2.3.8 Number, type, and frequency of users

Refer to section Complement here as needed.

The survey suggested that nearly twice as many women as men tended to visit the center to access its services. These were predominantly young people (below 35 years of age), although a greater number of respondents over 35 were surveyed in non-urban centers. Most of the respondents were repeat visitors, with most respondents in urban centers visiting the centers 2-3 times a month. A high number of respondents visited non-urban centers daily, perhaps indicating a lack of competing infrastructures and projects to access the services, compared to higher density urban environments. Most respondents in both urban and non-urban centers appeared to access services in the morning.

4.2.3.9 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.

The capacity of beneficiaries varies greatly and, given the scope of the programs, cannot meaningfully be described here. The survey suggested that a lack of ICT training was considered a barrier to accessing useful information by a high number of respondents, most notably in the non-urban centers. In general, even disadvantaged communities have a relatively high degree of access to mobile phones, and are fluent in using their basic functionality. In severely disadvantaged areas, exposure to computers tends to be rare, unless it is through a public intervention project. Exposure to the internet is also rare in disadvantaged areas. Public access to ICT initiatives in disadvantaged areas typically needs to include introductory training, mentoring, supervision or similar components for them to be successful. However, the potential for peer-to-peer supervision as a successful way of promoting access is suggested by the loveLife model.

4.2.3.10 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: The nature of the centers means that they generally can be considered orientated towards education, training and skills transfer. Training is typically embedded in the diverse programs offered at the centers, from life skills, to computer literacy, to how to run effective community vegetable gardens. Groundbreakers at loveLife Y-Centers are trained and certified in facilitation according to NQF standards. However, few other training courses appear to be accredited.

ICT specific training courses: Computer literacy courses, as well as radio training is offered at

the loveLife Y-Centers. However, the certificates issued do not meet NQF standards. Ikageng is setting up a computer center where training may be offered.

4.2.3.11 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.

No research was immediately available on this. However, the community-centric orientation of the three programs, specifically regarding location, makes the initiatives accessible to the community. In the case of crèches and after-school care (e.g. to help with homework), the centers are fundamental to the routine of the beneficiaries. At the same time, most of the programs have home-based care interventions as part of their outreach programs. Moreover, loveLife engages youth at schools. All of these help to maximize the reach and impact of the programs, and to integrate them into the daily lives of the beneficiaries. No specific initiatives to integrate technology into the daily routines of the beneficiaries outside of programs run at the centers (e.g. computer classes) was apparent. loveLife was in the process of mapping a mobile strategy.

4.2.3.12 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.

The perception of the centers varies depending on the programs and how they are managed. In general, it may be true to say that the venues are valued more for their practical information and service provision, than for attributes such as ‘coolness’ (particularly outside of the loveLife programs). However, site visits indicated a high degree of use of many of the urban centers by young people. In particular, Friends for Life, which is situated in a government MPCC, was busy. Many young people, some part of the program, were also present at Ikageng, in Soweto. A loveLife Groundbreaker at the Y-Center in Orange Farm reports that he is a role model to young people in his community who say: “I want to be just like you”. He suggests that Groundbreakers are looked up to. However, research has in the past suggested that some young people find the Y-Centers alienating. Some centers, such as Nanga Vhuthilo, have celebratory events when food parcels are handed out. This is apparently well-attended and celebrated by the community.

4.2.3.13 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.

The loveLife radio stations offered the clearest example of the social appropriation of technology in order to produce information. Radio allowed youth to narrowcast to the center, offering them crucial skills and experiential development. At the same time, they produced content - for instance, gathering opinions in the community - that was broadcast on other radio stations. Because the radio had not operated for a year, it was unclear how effective this strategy was at the Y-Center visited in Orange Farm. In general, the staff at the centers (e.g. the Noah arks) are required to use computers for administration, and are trained for this. Besides streamlining communications, this 'force feeds' technology into the everyday processes of the centers.

4.2.3.14 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?

Trust in the services offered at the centers is often dependent on the quality of the individual service providers. Nevertheless, the fact that the services offered are needs-based, and that many take care of children, coupled with evidence of a high user frequency at the centers, suggests a reasonable level of trust in the center offerings. In this context it is worth noting that the services at the centers are *used*, indicating a general level of trust in what is being offered.

4.2.3.15 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)

The availability and accessibility of public information at the centers is a key challenge generally. Government and NGO information is circulated (including holding information-sharing events at some centers). According to a Noah respondent, public information distributed at the arks includes information on social welfare, child care and foster care grants, HIV/AIDS, birth and death certificates and ID documents. However very little print information was prominently displayed at any of the sites visited.

There is generally a gap between government-generated information and the intended beneficiaries on the ground. For instance, part of Starfish's and Noah's mandate is to help identify and register OVCs for the various support grants available, suggesting that this information is not readily available or user-friendly for the vulnerable communities they are intended to reach. Another form of this information gap is market information, such as job opportunities. In particular, youth and older OVCs who are leaving school lack accessible information that can alert them to work opportunities. At the same time, employers reportedly do not realize the potential of the young people who have been trained by initiatives like the loveLife program.

Perhaps due to the beneficiary age groups, information gaps appeared to be primarily educational, and included the need for science and mathematics programs (Noah), as well as interactive entrepreneurial content (Starfish). The Ikageng center felt that what was missing was practical content (e.g. "Business" and "Arts and crafts") to supplement the more general life skills information.

As already suggested, the survey shows that health information on remedies, disease prevention, children's health, and locating health service providers was considered difficult to find by both urban and non-urban respondents.

4.2.4 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)?

HIV/AIDS does have widespread policy support in national and provincial government in South Africa, as well as by the business community and international donor community. It is a highly researched and resourced sector. Negatives include government policy and politicking on Anti-Retroviral Drugs (ARVs), as well as at times poor media coverage of the pandemic. In conjunction with this, both the government and the private sector recognize the need to provide ICT access to under-serviced and disadvantaged communities. Something of this imperative is felt in the programs considered.

4.2.4.1 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 calling out what is specific to this venue)

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

This question is wide-ranging, and has largely been suggested or answered in Part 1 of this document. However, it is fair to say that in South Africa a vibrant business sector, and a well-funded public sector means that the financial resources do exist in both to fund public ICT access initiatives. The key challenge is in accessing and managing those resources effectively.

4.2.4.2 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 calling out what is specific to this venue)

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

The legal and regulatory framework is in line with general public access to information frameworks and policies. As far as can be ascertained, no specific application is relevant to the field of HIV/AIDS.

4.2.4.3 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 calling out what is specific to this venue)

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

The ANC-led government has over the years been accused of a lack of political will to deal effectively with the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and of being inflexible in its health policy considerations, particularly in the area of HIV/AIDS treatment. What has been described as a 'laager mentality' has resulted in various forms of public protest by civil society groups, including legal action against the state. In 2002, after an acrimonious legal battle between the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and the government over the provision of Nevirapine to pregnant women to prevent mother-to-child-transmission (MTCT), the Constitutional Court ordered that the state should make the drug available in institutions where it had the capacity to do so. (www.journ-aid.org). Things have, however, improved. In November 2003, an ARV roll-out program was also developed, and the country's HIV & AIDS and STI National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2007 –2011 was drafted and finalized with active participation of government, the private sector, civil society and development partners. Public funding for HIV/AIDS is over ZAR4.5-billion (about USD 600million).

4.2.4.4 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, telecenter franchise or network, etc)?

The centers are networked according to the programs that run or support them. For example, the loveLife centers are part of the nation-wide loveLife program. Noah arks are networked by virtue of being part of the Noah initiatives. Starfish centers form less of a network, given that they are supported, rather than initiated by Starfish. Within communities and townships, the HIV/AIDS centers tend to self-organize, and there was some evidence of centers being aware of who else operated in the same field in a particular area.

4.2.4.5 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.

The centers survive on a combination of private, donor and government funding. loveLife is said to be 75% government funded. Noah donors include the (US) President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), US-AID, Starfish, Deutsche Bank Africa Foundation, Old Mutual, Barloworld, Anglo American, Transnet Foundation, and De Beers. Starfish partners include MTN and Cell-C, amongst numerous others (see: <http://www.starfishcharity.org>). Major funding for loveLife is provided by the Government and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. The program receives additional support from the Anglo American Chairman's Fund, Avis, ClearChannel Independent, Independent Newspapers, Mondi, the National Lottery, Pick 'n Pay, Primedia, Rapport, the SABC, Southern Sun, Spoornet, Ster-Kinekor and the Vodacom Foundation. (<http://www.lovelife.org.za>) loveLife has or is also exploring a relationship with Microsoft. Various businesses have assisted with computer access at Noah centers, but this has only been tentative. Sasol is funding the computer center at Ikageng.

4.2.5 For publicly funded venues only: Revenue streams

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

4.2.5.1 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 2008/9

Local currency name ZAR

Approximately ZAR170 million (for loveLife)⁶⁵ (about US\$22.4 million)

4.2.5.2 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	ZAR 611-billion	2008/9 figures
Education	ZAR 121.1-billion	2008/9 figures*
HIV/AIDS	ZAR 5.67-billion	2008/9 figures*
Public libraries	R380 million	2006/7 figures**

* Source: www.engineeringnews.co.za

* Source: www.idasa.org.za

** This is the amount budgeted at provincial and municipal levels and does not include the additional national grant of ZAR 1 billion for the period 2006 – 2009.

The above total for HIV/AIDS comprises:

Department of Health (ZAR 3.078-billion)

Department of Education (ZAR 167-million)

Department of Social Development (ZAR 62-million)

Provincial budgets (ZAR 2.359-billion)

4.2.5.3 Sources of funding

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

⁶⁵ <http://www.thebody.com/content/art23663.html>

Sources of funding:	Approximate % of total budget	Comments
Government sources:	LoveLife: 65% Starfish: 0%	
International donors:	loveLife: 30% Starfish: 53.5%	
National donors:	loveLife: 5% Starfish: 46.5% (includes 19% foundation donations)	'In kind' contributions from national media institutions, including the state broadcaster, represent about ZAR40-million annually.
User fees/services:	0%	

* Sources: www.idasa.org; internet research

Other Comments:

None

4.2.5.4 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?

Donor funding for HIV/AIDS is disbursed to beneficiaries in South Africa in two ways: directly to NGOs or aid agencies, or via bilateral funding disbursed by national government. The national government then adds its own funds to the national HIV/AIDS budget. According to the policy think-tank IDASA, bilateral disbursements are often hampered by a lack of implementing capacity in the health sector at the grassroots level, and by the fact that disbursement criteria are narrow, and sometimes clash with government objectives. As a result, unspent bilateral funding has, in the past, been returned to donors. Typically, projects apply for disbursements from bilateral funding. For example, 2005 data shows that a loveLife application for US\$70-million from the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, was granted US\$14-million by National Treasury (the Global Fund withdrew support for loveLife in 2005). National budgetary allocations for HIV/AIDS are made during each year according to standard budgetary processes. Provincial departments are then expected to add to these allocations from provincial budgets, based on specific provincial needs. IDASA reports that national government has set up a Donor Co-ordination Forum to facilitate communication between donors. (www.idasa.org.za)

4.2.5.5 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?

No user fees for ICT access.

4.2.5.6 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)	Lovelifife Y-Center: 18% Center 1: 25-30%% Starfish stipulation: 25%	Starfish requires that 25% of its funding is spent on salaries, and 75% on program implementation. Center 1 is Thusanang.
Building infrastructure	Lovelifife Y-Center: 14% Center 1: 2%	Lovelifife Y-Center: Maintenance Center 1: ZAR12000 for rent & electricity is spent per year.
Utilities/ service and program provision	Lovelifife Y-Center: 40% Center 1: 63-68% Starfish: 75%	Starfish requires that 75% of its funds are spent on program implementation.
Staff Training	Lovelifife Y-Center: 17% Center 1: 0%	Lovelifife Y-Centre: Includes leadership programs
ICT services/computers/ technology	Lovelifife Y-Center: 11% Center 1: 5%	Center 1: Without public ICT access, but does include iBurst broadband. Thusanang estimates that an ICT center would cost ZAR800 000 to set up.
TOTAL	100%	

4.2.5.7 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?

HIV/AIDS funding is often dependent on the strength of the global economy, given that major funds, such as the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Pepfar), are derived from tax revenue. Global HIV/AIDS spend is also politically sensitive, and competes with a range of developmental priorities and needs. As a result, one administrator felt that with the global recession, there was a possibility of a downturn in the availability of global funding for HIV/AIDS. It was also difficult to tell what direction HIV/AIDS funding would take regarding US spend with the recent US presidential elections. Local companies were also found to be more active in the field of HIV/AIDS funding when there were branding opportunities. As a result, sectors such as banking, beverages, and IT were most attracted to funding opportunities. Nevertheless, these funds came mostly through Corporate Social Investment budgets, which often are threatened in economic downturns.

4.2.6 Case example for venue 2: LoveLife Y-Center

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.

The loveLife Y-Center is situated in Orange Farm, about 45 km south of Johannesburg. Orange Farm has a population of about 378 000 (2001),⁶⁶ with an unemployment rate of around 38%. The Y-Center is one of 16 centers across South Africa. The center is a secure complex consisting of a basketball court used for various fitness and sporting activities, and two buildings with offices, several working rooms, clinic facilities, a computer center, and a radio station used for narrowcasting on its premises. The overall aim of the center is to offer an accessible and youth-friendly atmosphere where life skills and other youth development activities can be acquired by young people in Orange Farm in an attempt to help them cope with HIV/Aids, as well as their general socio-economic conditions. Around six programs are offered at the center, each run by a 'Groundbreaker' for a period of one year. These include health and fitness, debate and motivation, sport, recreation (including music and fine arts), radio and computer classes. The Groundbreakers each train 8-9 'Mpintshis' (young volunteers) in the various life skills and program areas. The Mpintshis help implement the loveLife program in Orange Farm, and also help Groundbreakers do outreach at schools and house-to-house in the community. About 250-300 people visit the center each day.

The computer room consists of eight PCs. A specific course running for three weeks is offered for free to the community. This deals with basic computer literacy, and introduces participants to Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint. A manual has been developed specifically for this purpose, and includes a module on surfing the web. However no internet access is currently provided due to the expense of online access in South Africa. Four classes are offered a day (of 2 hours each), Monday-Thursday. The age categories for the classes are 12-17 and 18-25. The center also offers an adult class due to demand. Participants are tested and issued with a non-accredited certificate

⁶⁶ The statistics represented here are from the 2001 census by Statistics South Africa, the official statistics body. The next census is due in 2011. The census groups Orange Farm with Ennerdale, a nearby township.

after the course.

Most of the information provided at the center is imbedded in the life skills courses and training offered. For instance, all of the examples used in the computer course (Cyber-Ys) involve educational material, such as working with HIV/AIDS prevalence figures, or practice writing letters to the Department of Health. The course facilitator is issued with a manual to assist with integrating this information with the course content. The radio station also produces and narrowcasts educational inserts mixed with music to the youth at the center. Besides this, the center distributes loveLife material produced by head office, including the loveLife tabloid newsletter inside out and pamphlets dealing with things like honesty in relationships, HIV/AIDs, abortion, contraception, puberty, self-esteem, confidence, ambition and careers.

loveLife is 75% funded by the government, and there appears to be a bottleneck in the Orange Farm Y-Center's current access to funds and technical support. For instance, the radio had not been narrowcasting for about a year forcing the center to hire sound equipment for events. The center manager said there was also a need for a TV, and kitchen appliances so that food could be offered at the center.

Despite these setbacks, there was a strong sense of activity at the center, with Mpintshis being trained in health and fitness. The Groundbreakers in general come across as motivated and focused young people. They see their work as benefiting the community, and consider themselves role models amongst their peers. However, the center manager also pointed out that a key challenge was finding employment opportunities for the Groundbreakers once they had completed their year at the center. According to one Groundbreaker, as few as 30% of previous Groundbreakers have managed to take advantage of the opportunity.



The loveLife Y-Center in Orange Farm

5 Venue-Specific Assessments

5.3 Venue 3: Telecenters and Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCCs)

5.3.1 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?

The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) is mandated by the South African government to ensure that all everyone, be it citizen or business, has equal access to ICTs. USAASA seeks to provide universal service, which is defined as “a reliable connection to the communication network that enables any form of communication to and from any part of South Africa”, and to provide universal access, defined as “the ability to use the communication network at a reasonable distance and affordable price which provides relevant information and has the necessary capacity - in under-serviced areas”. USAASA also has the responsibility for managing the Under-Serviced Area Licenses (USALs) which are issued to operators in areas with a teledensity of less than 5% who are the obliged to provide telecoms networks in these areas. USAASA is also responsible for the allocation of subsidies that are provided to these operators (ZAR 5million over three years).

As part of its activities USAASA has set up numerous types of telecenters.⁶⁷ They can be found in the government multipurpose community centers (now called the Thusong Service Centers), prisons, as stand-alone telecenters, in containers, women’s organizations, churches, community radio stations, health care centers, homes for the disabled, youth centers, HIV/AIDs centers, ex-combatant centers, rural development centers, etc. Originally targeting a deployment of about 4000 telecenters, USAASA has to date rolled out only 154 telecenters.⁶⁸ There has been much criticism of this lack of delivery. Under the leadership of a new CEO, a new strategic direction has been set and the recently unveiled strategies (December, 2007 and March 2008) show that there has been a change of focus – the short-term strategy has concentrated on the rehabilitation of existing telecenters and school cyberlabs, and a renewed focus on (non-fee) schools, Further Education Training (FET) Institutions, libraries, stand-alone access points and Thusong Centers (government multipurpose community. USAASA is also supporting the development of Community Digital Hubs-community centers which are deployed in presidential nodal areas for rural development. One such example is included as a case study at the end of this section (4.1.6).

USAASA is also responsible for the rollout of School Cyberlabs, of which there are presently 234

⁶⁷ <http://www.usaasa.org.za>

⁶⁸ USAASA press conference presentation, 4 December 2007

throughout all the provinces. These have not however been included in this study since 1) schools are not generally open to the broader public and 2) although some schools do provide wide community access, sources within USAASA and elsewhere have indicated that there is no data available on the status quo of this model in the country. Following the recent formulation of a new strategy, USAASA's focus is now less on direct implementation of 'own-branded' telecenters and more on working in collaboration with partners, and on playing an advisory role, as well as monitoring and evaluating Universal Service Obligations.

5.3.2 Access

2–3 Paragraphs:

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

There are 154 telecenters distributed throughout the country, all of which are situated in underserved areas. According to figures presented by the CEO James Theledi in (December 2007), 127 of the telecenters have internet or phone connectivity and 55 telecenters are to be found in the government-supported Thusong Service Centers. Many of these were found to be non-functioning and 30 have recently been rehabilitated, as have 65 Cyberlabs (Teledi, March 2008). The refurbishment has included the provision of new ICT equipment (computers, printers) and VSAT connectivity.

With the recent power crisis in the country, and with the unreliable and increasingly expensive supply of power, especially in the more remote areas of the country, there is concern that not enough effort has gone into ensuring alternative power supply to these public ICT access points. Since most of the telecenters are dependent on VSAT connectivity, the provision of reliable power supply is a key factor in providing ongoing ICT services.

As highlighted elsewhere in this report, the cost of broadband and Internet access is still too high for the majority of the population, and operational costs have been too high for many telecenters to keep their Internet access functioning. Overall there has also been lack of management skills to ensure long-term financial stability.

5.3.2.1 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.

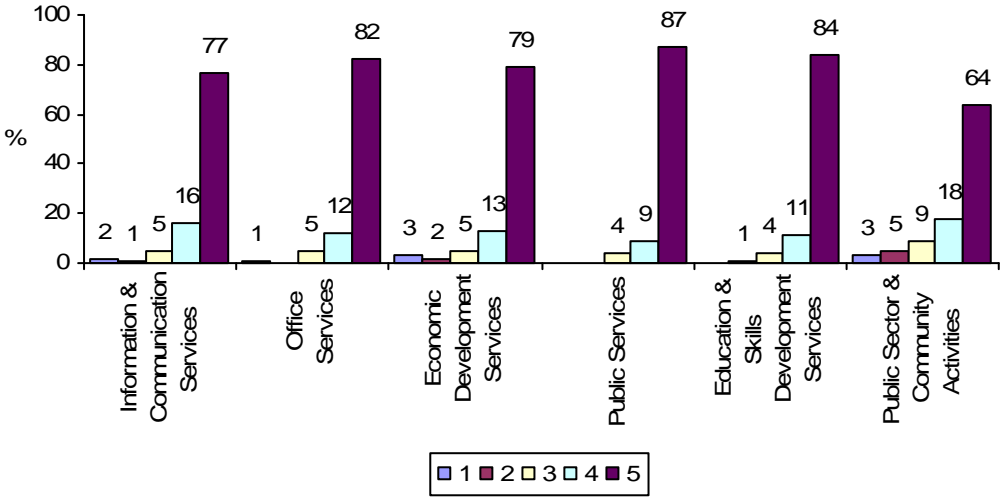
In considering the geo-demographics of public service provision in South Africa, it is necessary to take into consideration the ongoing impact of urban/rural development under the Apartheid regime, along with the employment dynamics created by the concentration of labour intensive mineral exploitation in particular locations. In addition Apartheid policies also concentrated the poor in separate high-density settlements, often quite close to the richer 'white' residential and industrial areas. These factors resulted in a high proportion of migrant labourers, millions of displaced families with little or no connection to the land they were removed to, and thus no tradition of local agriculture and stable social systems. So, in contrast

to most other African and developing countries, there are a high proportion of the public who lack access despite being in what would be considered an 'urban' area

Thusong Centers are often situated in high density areas near to taxi ranks, tribal offices, schools, churches and shopping areas and are largely used by black and colored communities. Many users identify these centers as Home Affairs centers, as places where government services are offered and social grants can be collected. The telecenters in the Thusong Centers are not always visible or well-marketed as people-friendly places, nor are their services well-advertised. The low levels of service delivery, erratic hours and non-functional equipment contribute to the perception that many of these centers are not able to offer sufficient services.

A comment from a Thusong Center user was that the place was only for 'clever people with learning and not for an uneducated woman (like herself)'.

An evaluation of Thusong centers⁶⁹ points to several factors that limit access e.g. long distances to walk / travel to reach centers, unfriendly operating hours for those who are employed, facilities not always in good repair, low levels of awareness of services that are offered by telecenters and poor service delivery often related to poor management. The youth in particular commented that their needs were not being addressed. On the positive side, the general impression was that Thusong Centers could develop a useful service if issues of service delivery were addressed. These findings were also confirmed in an unpublished audit carried out in Kwazulu Natal during 2007.⁷⁰



The figure above, taken from the African Response evaluation, shows the high priority given to

⁶⁹ Presentation made by African Response to the Government Communication Information Service (GCIS) (15 March 2007), on “An evaluation of the sustainability of integrated service delivery in 25 Multi-Purpose Community Centres. Presentation provided by GCIS to the research team.

⁷⁰ Keri Arokium-Gerber (July 2007). *Audit of Telecentres, Cyberlabs and Multipurpose Community Centers in Kwazulu Natal*. Prepared for the Department of Economic Development, Kwazulu Natal, with funding provided by the European Union.

information and communication services in these centers, where 1= not important and 5= very important. The study, which included the use of focus groups, also highlighted the need for improved computer facilities.

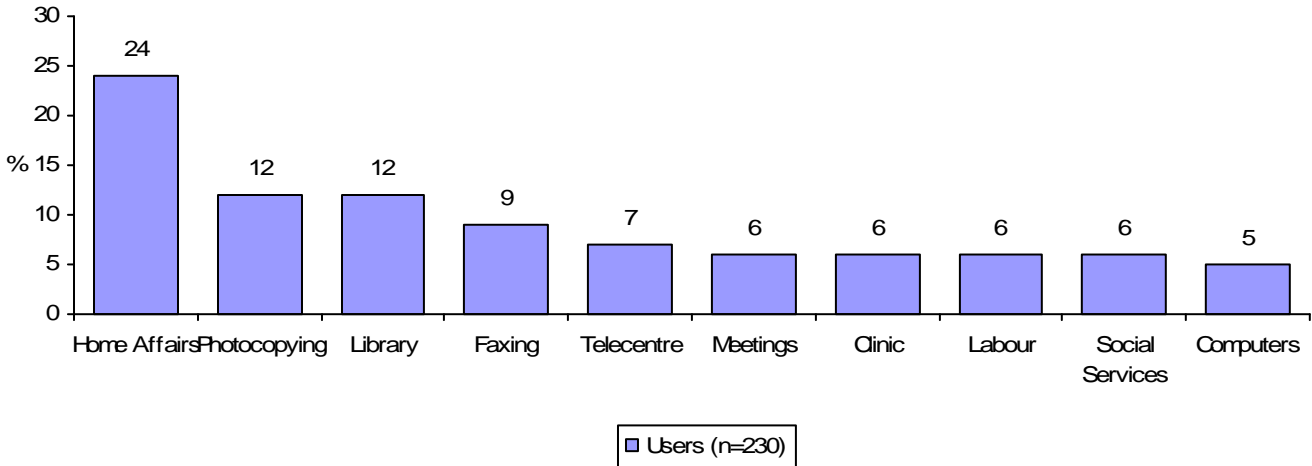
5.3.2.2 Appropriate technology and services

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 user sample for this survey is small (n=160) and youthful (90% under the age of 35 years) and therefore cannot be regarded as fully representative of larger communities and particularly older members in the community. Other research (African response, Kwazulu Natal audit) does however suggest that communities using telecenters or the Thusong Centers are not very aware of what ICTs can offer, although the youth generally tend to be more aware. Existing data does suggest that there is a desperate need for ICT literacy training (46% of users in this survey regarded it as a major barrier, running only second to not having enough services provided (50%)). The pent-up demand for ICT training has become the livelihood of telecenters. The lack of Internet access was also seen as a major barrier (35% of users).

Demand for most ICT services is extremely low, particularly in rural areas. Usage of ICT and related services among residents is limited to photocopying and prepaid telephone services. (Kwazulu Natal Audit, 2007). The results from the African response evaluation indicate that most of the Thusong Centers are used for services provided by the Department of Home Affairs (ID, birth and death certificates, social grants).



There is a need for banking services at the Thusong Service Centers. This need was particularly raised by those receiving government grants.

Users at the Thusong Centers did raise the point that they unaware of operating hours and the presence/absence of Home Affairs staff on particular days – this was particularly a problem due to

staff absenteeism and late arrivals at the centers. Farmers in particular were at a disadvantage due to travelling long distances and then arriving to the government service they have travelled for being unavailable.

Thusong Center managers also felt that telecenters were not able to deliver consistently on their ICT requirements for computer access, photocopying.

5.3.2.3 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.

The high costs of telecommunication and Internet services is well known in South Africa and therefore it is a bit surprising that only 32% of telecenter users surveyed for this study found cost to be a major barrier in using ICTs. Perhaps this proportion is influenced by the fact that not all of the telecenters had connectivity, so their managers could not say that high cost was an issue. However in many communities there is little money to spend on ICTs, generally feedback has been that services are still too expensive.

32% of telecenter users surveyed for this study found cost to be a major barrier in using ICTs. In many communities there is little money to spend on ICTs. Generally feedback has been that services are still too expensive.

5.3.2.4 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?

Costs for services are determined by the telecenter managers. Indicative costs, derived from the cost structure of a rural telecenter in KwaZulu Natal for telecenter services, are as follows:

Indicate amount in local currency	ZAR15 per hour for internet access ZAR2 per photocopy page ZAR5 per fax ZAR250 and more per computer literacy course
Equivalent in US Dollars:	US\$ 2 per hour for internet access US\$ 0.26c per photocopy page US\$ 0.66c per fax US\$ 33 or more per computer literacy course

Date of estimate April 2008

and local currency name ZAR (South African Rand)

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:

The ability to offer computer training would depend on the number of computers available at a telecenter. For example, the Mamelodi Telecenter (in a township area in Pretoria) has 10 computers for ICT training. This brings in more than 63% of its revenue as compared to the income from faxing (6%) and photocopying (9%).

5.3.2.5 Geographic distribution

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

Complement any details not already included in other sections.

Telecenters are located throughout the country, but have specifically been placed in previously disadvantaged, underserved areas. This would include black and colored townships, and rural areas. Telecenters are seen as an integral part of the Thusong Centers. See map below for details.

A list of all the telecenters in the country can be found at

<http://www.usaasa.org.za/index.php?q=servicecenters,1,CommunityTelecentres>

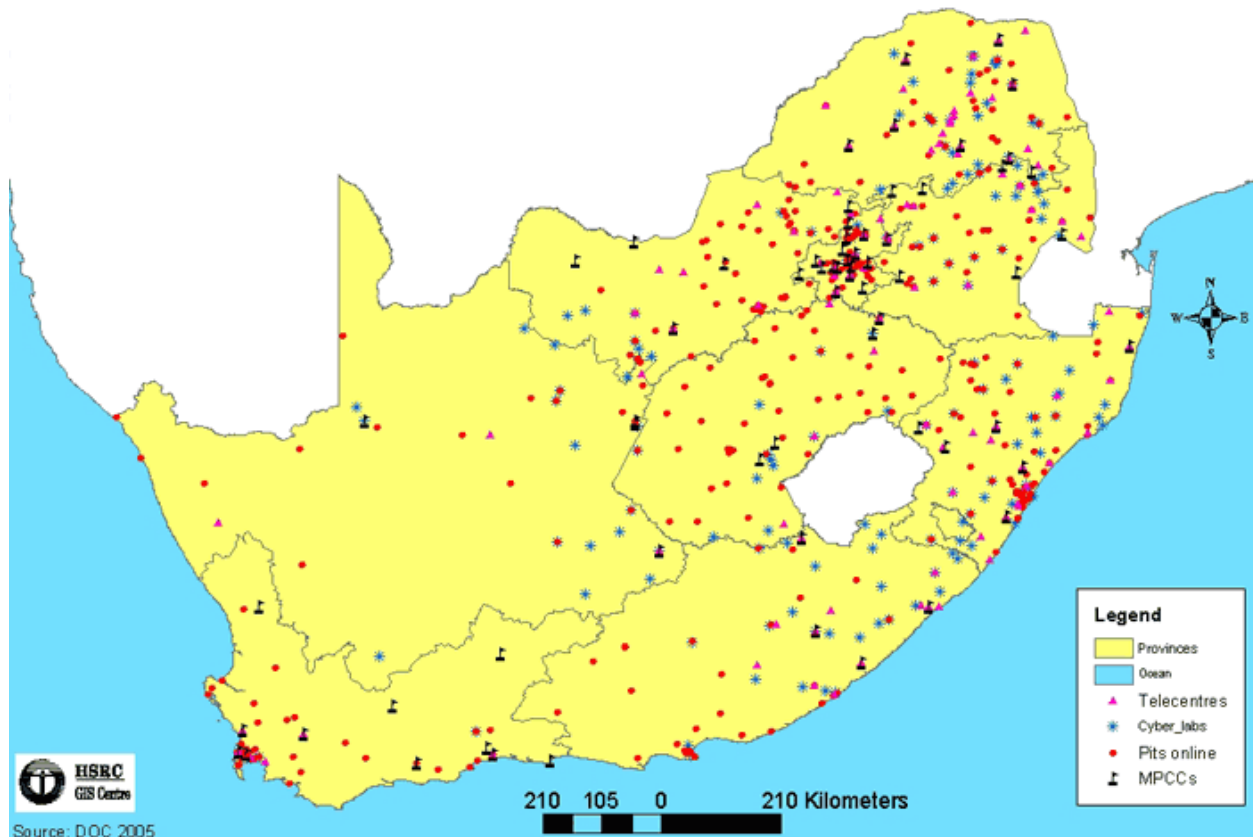
A list of the Thusong Service Centers can be found at

<http://www.usaasa.org.za/index.php?q=con,27,Thusong%20Service%20Centres>

5.3.2.5.1 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).

Spatial Distribution of Telecenters, School Cyberlabs, Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCCs) and Public Internet Terminals (PiTs)



Description of map:

This map was produced by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) for the Universal Service Agency (USA) as part of the final report, *ICT Penetration in South Africa* (February, 2006).⁷¹ The map shows the distribution of various types of public ICT access points throughout the country. Since this map was produced, there has been a change in USAASA's strategy and telecenters are now being placed in the Thusong Service Centers (labeled as MPCCs on the map).

5.3.2.6 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.

Aside from distance to the centre, which can affect the poor, infirm and aged disproportionately to other sectors of society, and the cost of access, which reduces the extent to which access can be

⁷¹ <http://www.usaasa.org.za/index.php?q=projects,1>

used by the poor, there is also the level of education and ICT literacy, awareness of the benefits and the sense of intimidation that some experience for computers.

5.3.3 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)?

USAASA, as an organization, and through the telecenters it has supported, has struggled on various levels to fulfil its mandate of achieving universal service and access. The agency itself has had leadership problems, and as with many other organizations, had difficulties with the capacity of staff to deliver, and as a result, has experienced wide-ranging criticisms for non-delivery. The lack of management and financial control, the lack of workable definitions for needy persons and universal service goals, along with significant skills gaps in its staff to implement telecenter programs have exacerbated the problem.

At the telecenter level, two main factors have contributed to the failure of these ventures – 1) the lack of reliable ICT infrastructure and power supply; and 2) the lack of human managerial and technical capacity in the centers. Skills training has been minimal and has not prepared telecenter managers for the challenging task of promoting their services, or sustaining a viable operation, usually under difficult circumstances, and with a user base with little disposable income for ICTs.

The users in the feeder areas for telecenters are less likely to be educated and will have had minimal exposure to the potential that ICTs can provide, although the country-wide pervasiveness of mobile phones has made a major contribution to raising ICT awareness in rural communities.

There appears to be a huge pent-up (and unmet) demand, particularly by the youth, for ICTs. The new strategy proposed by USAASA – working in collaboration with multiple partners – is likely to yield more promising results in gaining universal access in the country.

5.3.3.1 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.

A typical telecenter may employ between 1 – 4 people, although most would be volunteers. Generally there would be a telecenter manager, with various support staff (admin, training). Larger telecenters such as the digital hubs would employ more than 4 people, particularly where ICT training forms a major component of the services it delivers.

5.3.3.2 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).

(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.

Generally the skills levels of telecenter managers are very low (Kwazulu Natal Audit, 2007; USAASA audit report, 2007) and have little to no basic computer literacy. Financial literacy is also very low, resulting in poor financial reporting and little understanding of cash flow management. This has led to the demise of a number of the existing telecenters. Of interest in the USAASA audit (2007) is that the functional telecenters are those being run by entrepreneurs, whereas those under the ownership of NGOs are struggling. The report states that this may be related to the ability to develop proper business plans. (p. 33).

USAASA, as part of its refurbishment drive, has been working in collaboration with various partners (Microsoft, University of Fort Hare, Department of Communications, Department of Education, ISETT SETA – the government sector education and training authority for ICTs) provide ICT training to telecenter managers. Some managers have also undergone ICDL training (International Computer Drivers' License).

5.3.3.3 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. Faxing	Some telecenters provide faxing through 4-in-1 printers and/or separate fax machines
22. Photocopying	This is a particularly important service at the Thusong Service Centers
23. Computer Literacy Training	Provided if there are training facilities with enough computers. Many courses are not accredited.
24. Internet Access	Few of the telecenters are connected and internet access has been problematic due to power cuts, technical problems, etc
25. Stationery sales	Some telecenters do sell basic stationery such as envelopes e.g. Mamelodi Community Information Centre (MACIS) which is housed in the municipal offices.
26. Word processing/typing	The mainstay of many telecenters. Used to type CVs, application forms, school certificates, programs for events

27.	Provision of government brochures and pamphlets	Some telecenters provide brochures giving information about local services, including government services
28.	Scanning	Some telecenters have multipurpose printers which can also be used for scanning document
29.	Video recording	A very limited number of telecenters, where Infopreneurs have been employed, have been provided with video recorders, which are used for recording personal events such as weddings and funerals. These provide the major part of the revenue for some of the Infopreneurs
30.	Pay Telephones	Call rates are subsidized. Phone services are provided using a metered system.

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

Most telecenters provide only basic services such as telephone, faxing, photocopying and word processing.

5.3.3.4 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.

All of the telecenters are located in areas which are underserved and which would be used by previously disadvantaged communities.

5.3.3.5 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:

USAASA does not involve itself with local content development and relies on partnerships with organizations such as Mindset and other government departments to provide it with content. The user survey at telecenters indicates that users focus their information searching on educational content (69%), government services (52%), personal needs (not specified) (54%) and health (39%).

Other Content Needed:

See Section 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 for an overview of available information and information needs

Local Initiatives to build needed content:

None through the telecenters. See Section 3.3 for general background on local content development.

Source: Internet research, personal communication with USAASA staff.

5.3.3.6 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.

Aside from some information pamphlets and posters produced by NGOs and government departments in local languages, along with a few government web sites, there is almost no available content in local languages available at telecenters.

There is a government policy that government information will be produced in the 11 official languages. Local language requirements vary from area to area depending on the representation of particular ethnic groups. 29% of telecenter users indicated that the unavailability of materials in local languages was a barrier.

The Google South Africa search engine is available in four of the South African languages (English, Afrikaans, Zulu and Xhosa). There are also significant efforts through translate.org.za, a non-profit organization focused on the translation of Open Source software into South Africa's 11 official languages. Telecenters would have access to these tools if they have an internet connection.

5.3.3.7 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)?

(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.

The majority of users make use of the faxing and photocopying facilities in the smaller telecenters, with computer training being very popular (even oversubscribed) and limited due to the lack of sufficient computers for training.

Email and web browsing are the most popular services (61% and 72% respectively). However, 61% indicated that they also accessed brochures and pamphlets at the telecenters. 38% indicated that they used telecenter staff as a source of information.

Health information and government information (40% and 52%) were the most accessed types of information. The highest information use was personal (54%).

5.3.3.8 Number, type, and frequency of users

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

No usage data has been kept by USAASA since 2000. Each telecenter manager assumes responsibility for data collection, should they wish to do so. The recent audit in Kwazulu Natal assessed that most telecenter managers did not keep any records and had little idea of their user base, potential or existing.

The user survey undertaken for this study shows the following about telecenter users:

- Services appear to be used equally by men and women;
- Most users are Black or Colored;
- More than 90% of the users are under the age of 35, with 67% between the ages of 19 and 35;
- 44% of users visit between 1 – 3 times per month, with the majority visiting once a week
- 53% use the telecenters during the week as compared to 22% over weekends (most telecenters are only open on Saturdays);
- Most users visit the telecenter in the mornings.

5.3.3.9 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.

The overall capacity of the population to use ICTs generally low, but is greater among the youth, with most users under 35 years of age. There are very few telecenter users over the age of 45 years (5% in the user survey). 45.6% of users felt that lack of ICT training was a barrier to ICT use.

5.3.3.10 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: None, except as below

ICT specific training courses: Basic ICT literacy training. Most are not accredited courses.

5.3.3.11 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.

Telecenters report that their users tend to be regular visitors, which suggests that ICT use, particularly among the youth, is meeting an integral need for communication (through email and instant messaging) and information (through web browsing). There may also be a social aspect which is met through regular interactions of users at the telecenters.

5.3.3.12 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.

The most comprehensive study on user response is the African Response report (March, 2007) on Thusong Centers, which does refer to the fact that these Centers are large buildings, generally well-signposted and more recently very visibly rebranded. Users did comment on their visibility in the Kwazulu Natal audit, but generally there were low levels awareness of the existence of the telecenters within the Thusong Centers.

When researchers visited some of the telecenters for this survey, they were found to be closed (despite arrangements being made for a meeting). Anecdotal evidence suggests that many telecenters offer low levels of service delivery and this has impacted negatively on user perceptions about the venue.

5.3.3.13 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.

There are no specific products and services within the telecenter environment that indicate new levels of social appropriation. Unrelated to Telecentres, the most significant use of new ICTs is the exploding uptake of voice and text messaging, in particular most recently with MXIT72, which provides a low-cost messaging system by making use of a GPRS connection which reduces the cost per text message from upwards of 50c to 1c. Uptake is largely among the middle-class urban youth, to the point that it has become a problem in school environments where MXIT is being used in classrooms, and has been used for various applications e.g. dating, government youth day drives, downloading MP3 music. The extent to which MXIT has penetrated non-urban environments is not known at this stage.

5.3.3.14 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?

This would depend very much on the location of the telecenters. With the high rate of crime, issues of personal safety are a factor. The presence of telecenters within the Thusong Centers, where there are likely to be more people, and in some cases, a police station, will create a safer environment for users. There is no data available on whether users trust the information that

72 Refer to Section 3.9.4 of this report for more details.

they receive, or their perception of online content. This is partly because of the low levels of exposure to online information and services, especially considering that few would have credit cards for example, or make online payments.

5.3.3.15 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)

There is a particular need for banking services at the Thusong Service Centers. This need was particularly raised by those receiving government grants. However, more research is required on information needs. Users at the Thusong Centers did raise the point that they were unaware of operating hours, or the presence/absence of Home Affairs staff on particular days – this was particularly a problem due to staff absenteeism and late arrivals at the centers. Farmers in particular were at a disadvantage due to travelling long distances and not having flexibility to come back if key government officials were not in the office that day. Thusong Center managers also felt that telecenters were not able to deliver consistently on their ICT requirements for computer access, photocopying.

5.3.4 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 has been strong political will and support in the country for addressing the digital divide, with a number of government departments including this in their strategies. However, efforts in the past have not been coordinated and there has been duplication of effort. In addition the lack of a competitive telecom environment has meant that access costs have remained high, and access has not penetrated significantly into the rural areas. The government drive to establish multipurpose Thusong centers has required higher levels of coordination and joint planning between departments at the national and provincial levels. The ISAD Plan of Action has become the guideline for achieving integration and improved service delivery, which also impacts on the provision of telecenter services.

5.3.4.1 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.

This question is wide-ranging, and has been answered in Section 3.5 above. However, it is fair to say that in comparison to some developing countries South Africa's economic is relatively healthy, and a vibrant business sector, with a well-funded public sector means that the financial resources do exist in both to fund public ICT access initiatives. The key challenge is in developing effective and credible

institutional arrangements for supporting these activities, in accessing and managing resources effectively and developing a skills base with stronger capacity in implementation and project management. In the case of USAASA, for example, for the year 2006/2007, the telecoms operators contributed almost ZAR 152 million to the USAF, with a total cumulative contribution of almost ZAR 455 million since 1999.

5.3.4.2 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.

The Universal Service Agency (USA) was established in 1997 as mandated through the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA), as it is now called, is established under the Electronic Communications Act (ECA) No. 36 of 2005, to promote the goals of universal access and universal service in the underserved areas of South Africa.⁷³ Its mandate is to :

- Make recommendations to the Minister of Communications to determine what constitutes universal access by all areas and communities in South Africa;
- Foster adoption and the use of new methods of attaining universal access and service;
- Encourage, facilitate and offer guidance in respect of any scheme to provide universal access and service;
- Encourage any scheme to provide telecommunications services as part of reconstruction and development projects as contemplated in Section 3(a) of the Reconstruction and Development Programme Fund Act, 1994 (Act No. 7 of 1994); and
- Stimulate public awareness of the benefits of telecommunications services

Strategic Objectives:

- To reposition the Agency as a champion of universal service and access in South Africa
- To reach every South African excluded from universal service and access to ICT and Broadcasting facilities and services
- To effectively and efficiently manage the USAF
- To collaborate with the ICT industry in making ICTs available, accessible and affordable to all South Africans
- To provide rigorous and continuous research regarding universal service and access

The Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF) was established under the Electronic Communications Act (ECA) to fund projects and programs that strive to achieve universal service and access to ICTs by all South African citizens.

In accordance with the ECA, this fund is utilised exclusively for payment of subsidies for:

- Assistance of needy persons towards the cost of the provision to or the use by them of

⁷³ Reproduced from the USAASA website, www.usaasa.org.za Accessed 22 July 2008

- broadcasting and electronic communications services,
- Financing the construction or extension of electronic communications networks in under-serviced areas,
- The procurement of broadcasting and electronic communications network services and access to electronic communications networks for schools and further education and training institutions,
- The establishment and operation of broadcasting services and the establishment and operation of, including training of and the payment of allowances to personnel of centres where access to electronic communications networks can be obtained.

Every holder of a license granted or deemed to have been granted in terms of the ECA is mandated to make prescribed contributions to the USAF.

5.3.4.3 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.

Extensive investment has been ploughed into the creation of the USAASA (previously the USA) since 1997. Funding was created through the Universal Service Fund (and now the Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF)) and the Department of Communications continues to support the needs for such an agency and for telecenters, school cyberlabs and digital hubs as mechanisms to get ICTs to the people. There has however in the past year been much reflection (and acknowledgement) on the part of government about the low levels of success with achieving universal access. Aside from identifying the high cost of telecommunication services, audits were conducted by USAASA and GCIS, which has resulted in both USAASA and GCIS re-evaluating their strategies. This is commendable and indicative of a willingness to address past failures. A new USAASA strategy is now in place, which repositions the agency to play a stronger advisory and facilitating role in universal access rollout rather than as an implementer. This involves a strong move towards collaborative partnerships to ensure implementation. There is also an increased emphasis on ICT training as part of this partnership. USAASA continues to collect funds and manage the USAF. The inclusion of access to broadcasting facilities and services as part of its mandate.

5.3.4.4 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)?

All the telecenters are branded as USAASA telecenters and display the USAASA logo (see case examples). Where telecenters are located inside the Thusong Service Centers, the USAASA branding ranges from visible to not recognized.

The Telecentre Association of South Africa (TASA) is a subscription-based NGO which provides support to existing telecenter managers. The association⁷⁴ is supported by the joint International Development Research Centre (IDRC)/Microsoft funded Telecentre.org agency based in Ottawa. In assessing the state of its telecentre members, TASA discovered many issues, but networking and

⁷⁴ <http://www.telecentre.org>

the absence of national level leadership were identified as the priorities. In addition, concerns of skills training and sustainability featured strongly. TASA recently received funding from Telecentre.org to revitalize its membership, currently standing at about 45 telecenters and this is expected to rise. USAASA and SANGONET, a South African based NGO, both support the national telecenter network organization. All three organizations (TASA, USAASA & SANGONET) are participating and sharing experiences from practitioners around the country and around the world. Microsoft South Africa has also sponsored 40 telecenter managers from across the provinces to discuss issues affecting telecenters. In the next 3 months, TASA will ensure that other stakeholders such as the Shuttleworth Foundation TuXlabs, HP icommunities and others are involved.

5.3.4.5 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 Microsoft South Africa announced a partnership with USAASA aimed at fostering digital inclusion and providing access to technology for citizens. This involves scaling out and expansion of the Digital Inclusion Programme which would take the current 50 Digital Villages into all multi-purpose community centers situated in all 284 municipalities around the country, over the next three years, with Microsoft providing free software, the sharing of its Unlimited Potential curriculum, management and IT training. Microsoft and USAASA also planned to provide training of all telecenter managers both in IT and small business management skills, which includes facilitation of discussions with the community; how to go about raising funds and the practical requirements of running a small business. This has been implemented.
- Department of Correctional Services. USAASA has set up telecenters in two prisons (although with no Internet access upon request) and is also collaborating to set up telecenters in juvenile detention centers.
- In September 2007 the Free State Provincial Government entered into partnership with USAASA⁷⁵ in assisting the farmers in the province to obtain connectivity with support from the Agricultural Department, working with a group of emerging farmers around Qwaqwa/Weltevreden.
- Also in September, a collaboration with Digital Partnership has contributed to the fast track deployment of ICT services in e-school Cyberlabs, with Digital Partnership donating more than 1000 second hand computers.
- A partnership with the Africa Foundation has resulted in the launch of the Mduku ICT Community Centre recently where the agency installed 10 computers, a photocopier, printer

⁷⁵ www.usaasa.org.za

and also a telephone container.

- The Umsobomvu Youth Fund has worked in collaboration with USAASA to set up Youth ICT Centers in Hammanskraal (Lebothoane Thusong Service Centre) and Nelspruit with the intent of providing the youth with ICT skills. USAASA is sponsoring salaries for the telecenter manager.

5.3.4.6 Other environment factors

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

None.

5.3.5 For publicly funded venues only: Revenue streams

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

5.3.5.1 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 2008 (as at 18 March 2008)

Local currency name ZAR amount (local currency) ZAR 22.303million for USAASA operations out of a total of ZAR 56.88 million.

Approx. equivalent in USD 7.48 million based on exchange rate of 7.60 on date 20 July 2008.

5.3.5.2 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	ZAR 611-billion	2008/9 figures
Education	ZAR 121.1-billion	2008/9 figures
Telecenters/Cyberlabs	ZAR 56.88 million	2008/9 figures
Public libraries	R380 million	2006/7 figures**

Other Comments:

Telecenter figures are based on financial budget figures presented to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee: Communications, 18 March 2008 by the CEO. The ZAR 56.88 million comprises 34.588 million for the USAF, and 22.303 million for USAASA's operations. Projects, such as telecenters are funded out of the USAF.

5.3.5.3 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:	100%	Parliamentary allocation for USAASA
International donors:	0	No funds may be received by USAASA from outside donors.
National donors:	0	No funds may be received by USAASA from outside donors
User fees/services:	Not applicable	User fees go directly to the telecenter operators

Other Comments:

USAASA, as a 3a government entity, may not receive funds from outside institutions. This is stipulated under the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA)(1999).

5.3.5.4 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?

The path and flow of resources to USAASA has been problematic since its inception. All telecoms operators in the country have to contribute 0.2% of turnover to the Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF). These contributions are collected by USAASA, and transferred to the National Treasury, who in turn transfer this to the Department of Communications (DoC).

USAASA receives quarterly tranches from the DoC. Since there is no mechanism for tracking the size of contributions, this creates a difficult situation for USAASA in terms of budgeting and cash flow management.

Telecenter managers receive funds through USAASA as part of the USAF allocations. This is done through subsidies as well as through the provision of equipment (ICTs, furniture, etc) to establish a telecenter.

The process is currently under review and a procedure manual is being written to establish transparent processes for USAF applications. This includes subsidy application from USAL operators.

5.3.5.5 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?

Fee structures vary from telecenter to telecenter. USAASA does not prescribe set fees but leaves this decision up to each telecenter. 32% of telecenter users in the survey regarded cost as a barrier. The high cost of Internet access has impacted on increasing usage.

5.3.5.6 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)	52%	Basic salary and commissions and stipends
Building infrastructure	8%	Office rental
Utilities	21%	Phone costs
Staff Training	2%	-
Computers/technology	1%	Capital expenditure generally provided by USAASA
Maintenance	4%	-
Transport costs	1%	-
Office refreshments	1%	-
Stationery	5%	-
Miscellaneous	5%	-
Total	100%	

Other Comments:

The costs reflected above are an indicative estimate based on the figures provided by a telecenter regarded as one of the more exemplary models in the country, and based on an annual income of about ZAR 100k.

At the micro-level the cost structures vary from telecenter to telecenter. Figures from the Kwazulu Natal audit (2007) indicate that each telecenter receives a subsidy of ZAR 600 per month from USAASA. Income per month ranges from as low as ZAR 1000 per month to a high of about ZAR 17 000 in a digital hub or larger telecenter. Many of the small telecenters appear to be running at a loss but lack the financial acumen to adequately track this. Some indicative figures

based on the Kwazulu Natal Audit (2007) reveal the following:

Rural Thusong Centers: Operating budget ranges between ZAR 1 500 – 15 000

Rural Stand-alone Telecenters: Operating budget ranges between ZAR 1200 – 15 000.

Expenditures of ZAR 1 200 and 7 000.

5.3.5.7 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?

Under new leadership and a change in strategic direction, USAASA is re-examining how it accesses government funding and ways in which more funding can be allocated to fund its operations (at present it is not allocated any funding for managing the USAF projects). With the increased emphasis on collaboration, and its stronger role in advising, monitoring and evaluation of USOs (which was part of its original mandate in 1997 when it was established), it remains to be seen whether this will materialize. The USAASA board has been strengthened, and stronger management and financial control has been instituted, all of which are positive signs regarding its future role in achieving universal access.

5.3.6 Case example for venue 2: Telecenters

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.

Example #1: INK Digital Community Hub, Inanda, Kwazulu Natal

The Inanda Ntuzuma KwaMashu (INK) Digital Hub, established in 2006, is located in Inanda, an impoverished area about 30km from Durban. The Isibani.Soluntu Development Trust, (established in 1981) manages the Digital Hub and received assistance from USAASA which donated 28 computers situated in three containers. The Trust uses the facility largely to provide basic computer literacy training to its target audience, potential entrepreneurs. Initially, the need for ICT literacy training arose through its Contractor's Development Programme. The success of this program has triggered a high demand for computer literacy training programs across various sectors in the INK community, and the Hub cannot keep up with the demand for training, or the high demand for Internet access. During an interview with Ms. Nosipho Mbatha, the Centre Manager and Director, the following key success factors were highlighted as critical to the Digital Hub's high level of performance in facilitating ICT diffusion and penetration throughout the INK community.

The Trust has been in the business of providing training to SMMEs for more than 20 years. The need to introduce ICT training emerged out of a growing demand from their target audience to create effective business processes through using ICT training as a developmental tool to promote growth among SMMEs. The facility is 100% utilised and there is currently a problem of too many users and too few resources due to the extensive demand for basic computer literacy training.

Strong leadership and management skills: The Centre Manager and governing body have extensive experience working and living in the communities they serve. Their broader working experience outside the community has proved useful in finding new partnerships and revenue streams for the hub. They are also well-networked politically.

Creating a technical support link: Through the computer refurbishment centre based at the Hub, there is a consistent, reliable and easily accessible source for technical support. Youths in the community have the opportunity to volunteer their services to develop their computer software and hardware skills in troubleshooting at the Digital Hub and in refurbishment of computers on the premises.

Security/Access: Access to the Digital Hub and its satellite office is available seven days per week, from 8:00-17:30. Due to several attempted burglaries, several layers of security have been installed - the presence of guards, an electrical alarm, a plethora of chains with padlocks and a security service provider. In addition, computers are well placed in the facility and are connected via satellite. Connectivity is slow, but is on average very good. Sentech provides good technical support.

Partnerships: Through the leadership provided by the Isibani Soluntu Development Trust, a wide range of partnerships have been explored and relationships developed on a number of initiatives. To name a few: MTN, Vodacom and Cell C; Department of Agriculture (through Cooperatives), INK Area Based Management (ABM), Kubatana, SmartXChange, South African Teachers Union, Clinics in INK area, NETLAN, Bytes, Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), eThekwini.

Funding/Budget: The Digital Hub is sustainable because it is able to create various revenue streams through proactive fundraising initiatives, as well as the running of a phone shop, but largely through its training activities. Very little is generated through its ICT services such as Internet access and office services.



Additional photos of telecenters in South Africa (Photos courtesy of USAASA, 2008)



A Typical Telecenter in a Container



Inside a telecenter.

Case Example #2: The Alexsan Resource Centre

The Alexsan Resource Centre is situated in Alexandra, a



high-density township some 13 kilometers from the centre of Johannesburg. About 500 000 people live in Alexandra, and unemployment is said to be as high as 60%.⁷⁶ Launched in 1992, the centre offers a range of services to the community, including a library (used by some 2500 Alex residents), a computer studio with 36 PCs, a 'Youth Desk' which focuses on career counseling, including skills development, and job placement, and a counseling centre. The centre also lets out office space to a range of tenants, including the local community radio, AlexFM, the Alex Chamber of Commerce, the Alex Tourism Association, and political parties. The centre also offers electricity and rates and taxes pay-points. Besides accessing its facilities, the centre is used by the Alexandra community for public and private meetings, training seminars, and for arts and cultural events, such as drama, singing, music and ballroom dancing.

Several computer courses are run throughout the year at the centre's computer studio, including software training on basic business communication, telephone skills, time management, and basic accounting. Basic computer literacy in programs such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and the internet are also offered.

Compared to other multi-purpose community centers, Alexsan is a well-developed community resource. For instance, its library regularly creates information displays on a range of topics (e.g. HIV/AIDS), and also offers internet access to its users. The library has a children's section and shows education programs to learners. More than 2500 Alexandra residents use the library's services.

Compared to other centers, Alexsan also offers an interesting model for sustainability. The centre is maintained through donor support and corporate sponsorships, as well as through financial support from local government. It offers robust ICT services – such as typing, printing and faxing - which generate significant income, as well as well-established training services. These income-generating services are complimented by letting the premises out to like-minded businesses and organizations.

Case example #3: Photos of various Thusong Service Centers, with telecenters

⁷⁶ www.alexankopano.org.za/



Mohokare Thusong Center, GCIS Website, 2007



Imbabazane Thusong Center, Kwazulu Natal



Interior of telecenter at Imbabazane

6 Success Factors and Strategic Recommendations

6.1 Summary of Lessons in Country

6.1.1 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?

The greatest need at this stage is in the provision of functioning low-cost public ICT access points throughout the country. More local content is required, not only in English but also in local languages, and in a format that is relevant accessible and understandable by underserved communities. Ideally some of this should be provided by communities themselves, which in turn requires higher levels of ICT training and the ability to create content. The replication of the Western Cape's Ubusha program should be considered in other provinces.

The huge demand among users for educational resources should be addressed. More information is needed on what it is that users want to find on the Internet. More schoolbooks and study books should be made available through libraries. The creation of these books in digital format should be encouraged.

The use of libraries as study /reading areas creates an opportunity to expose the youth to ICTs. The need for homework clubs and assistance in doing homework could be addressed through the use of Cybercadets in conjunction with the creation of increased digital content related to the school curriculum. Homework assistance content could be developed to meet the needs of school going children. Besides libraries, this has particular application in after-school care offered by HIV/AIDS centers.

6.1.2 Where people go

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

The Thusong Centers appeared to be widely used and present an opportunity to expand and accelerate the rollout of ICT access points in underserved communities. These Centers already have high levels of 'foot volume' and strengthening the ICT capacity and marketing of telecenters within these Thusong Centers should provide increased ICT access for a broader public.

The HIV/AIDS support network throughout the country is used particularly by the youth and shows great potential for future ICT rollout. Their function and effectiveness could be expanded through the provision of relevant content and the establishment of ICT access points targeting beneficiaries in these venues.

Although not surveyed for this study, the existing network of phone shops, particularly in

underserved areas, do play a role in providing more affordable telephone access for underserved communities. Their expansion to provide Internet access suggests a logical next step.

Libraries appear to be playing an increasingly important role in providing access, particularly for scholars, students and those seeking employment. The fact that libraries are being extended into underserved areas, and the fact that the government has injected financial grants into the library sector for upgrading (including the provision of computers and internet access), indicates recognition of their role in upliftment of communities, particularly as a venue for study and research.

Although schools were not included in this study, the concerted efforts to set up schoolnets in some of the provinces (e.g. GautengOnline and the Western Cape) will result in more young people emerging from the school system with ICT literacy skills. This is likely to increase future demand for ICT-enabled services and content.

6.1.3 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).

Although the explosion in use of mobile phones has given a large proportion of the public at least some access to basic telephony and messaging, overall, government efforts to improve access to more advanced ICTs have not yet had a significant impact on the public. Broadband access is still limited outside major urban areas and Internet access costs are still too high, which was identified as a significant barrier in the user survey.

The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) has not succeeded in meeting its goals in rolling out telecenters, although the recent move towards refurbishing existing telecenters in Thusong Centers may yet see these ICT access points being more functional in the future.

The substantial government funding into public libraries is still in the early stages and the visible impact has yet to be seen on a larger scale, with notable exceptions in some cases in the Western Cape province where ICT access was already a priority prior to national government involvement. The serious under-spend of this funding in all provinces does point to the serious lack of implementation capacity, and the need to drive human capital development more aggressively.

The extensive penetration and uptake of mobile telephony in the country appears to have been largely ignored by government initiatives. The need for more mobile content (in local languages) and m-government services requires attention.

6.1.4 Role of ICT

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

So far, the majority of the public does not use ICT extensively for information and

communication, except for voice calls and text messaging on mobile phones, and listening to radio. Some of the untapped opportunities have already been identified in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 above. In addition to these, better co-ordination among the various efforts by different parts of government to support public ICT access is likely to ensure that available resources are more efficiently used, and thus greater number of facilities deployed.

The use of mobile telephony and text messaging for educational purposes could be more widely exploited, particularly in light of the social network culture already in existence among the youth through text messaging and MXIT applications.

Similarly, use of mobile phones for payments and other financial transactions offers considerable potential. While some innovative mobile banking services have been launched, their adoption could be accelerated through awareness raising, and scope of these services could be expanded.

Use of the various forms of mobile access could also be vigorously explored at HIV/AIDS centers, given that many of the centers offer home-based care services.

A major untapped opportunity exists to introduce further competition into the telecom sector so that access costs are driven down - high access costs are probably the largest barrier to increased use of advanced ICTs by the public.

6.2 Success Factors and Recommendations

6.2.1 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?)

- Aside from the adoption of policies that promote competition in the telecom sector (as referred to above), the rapid expansion of ICT access points into underserved areas through the creation of public-private partnerships with, for example, existing franchise efforts run by the mobile operators. This could also include the expansion of existing networks of self-assisted terminals such as the Digital Doorways, and the expansion of phone shops to incorporate internet cafés. The latter is only likely to take place if Internet access costs can be substantially reduced, through a combination of policies to increase competition in the sector and to effectively use Universal Service Policies and Funds to support access in remote and rural areas which may not be cost-effective for private providers to service on commercial grounds.
- A massive skills training program is required that will operate across all government departments and create a cadre of young Cybercadets that could provide first line assistance and training in various venues.
- Create more community access points at schools, particularly in rural areas where these are generally focal points in the community.

- As has been demonstrated elsewhere, the provision of low-cost wifi broadband access at the village level will encourage the public to purchase laptops and handhelds to gain access to the Internet.
- Leverage already existing initiatives that have established administrative and other infrastructure, such as HIV/AIDS centers, to offer targeted ICT services and content to beneficiaries.

6.2.2 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?

- (ii) Lower cost of access to the Internet, and wider perfusion of broadband infrastructure in rural areas.
- (iii) A stronger focus on service delivery to the public – more awareness raising and public education on the role of ICT, longer operating hours, provision of relevant content in traditional and new media, more local materials to meet community needs.
- (iv) More access points provided by the private sector e.g. mobile operators, franchise internet cafes, self-assisted terminals such as the Digital Doorways, and in collaboration with government efforts.
- (v) Ensuring that there are useful applications and content available, in particular educational and health content and financial applications.
- (vi) Increased collaboration between the various government departments a) to create more public ICT access points in underserved and rural areas; and b) to provide mass ICT literacy training to users and staff of venues providing ICT access.
- (vii) Leveraging the capacity of already-existing and sustainable projects for ICT pilot projects and roll-out.
- (viii) Using ICTs to create practical solutions to practical challenges, or to respond to real opportunities, rather than for their own sake.
- (ix) Avoid the word “roll-out”. Rather encourage “take-up”.

6.2.3 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?

Some of the untapped opportunities have already been identified in 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.4 and 5.2 above. In addition, there is an urgent need to dramatically accelerate the establishment of public ICT access points in previously disadvantaged, underserved areas. The extensive government efforts to provide e-government services will not be effective unless more affordable and accessible ICT access points are established, with reliable infrastructure and

power supply. The user survey results also indicate that the lack of ICT training for users is a major barrier. Mass ICT literacy training, concomitant with increased access to ICTs, is required. This applies across a range of venues and provides an opportunity for collaborative efforts between government departments, NGOs and the private sector to provide accredited ICT training. This should also apply to the upgrading of ICT skills in staff at the various types of venues (libraries, telecenters, phone shops, HIV/Support Centers). Once there is a broad base of ICT skills, the use of self-assisted terminals is likely to be more successful than it has been to date.

Operating hours need to be extended to cater for the needs of the working public. Many centers are not open in the early evenings or over weekends. Service delivery should become more user-centric.

The youthfulness of most users in the surveys also points to the need to focus particularly on this segment of the potential and existing user base – this is in part being addressed through the various SchoolNet initiatives in some provinces, as well as through the HIV/AIDS centers (although only some deal with ICTs). The challenge is to extend this into some of the other provinces where the skills capacity and capacity to implement is less developed.

6.2.4 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.

- (iii) Accelerate the deregulation of the telecommunication sector to encourage competition and thereby reduce connectivity prices and increase accessibility to the Internet. Allow the ISM bands (license-free) in the wireless spectrum to be used for shared and mesh wifi use across land boundaries.
- (iv) Improve the availability, reliability and use of electric power both in rural and urban areas through support for alternative energy systems (subsidies/loans and capacity building), policy support (through Independent Power Producer Policies which allow renewable energy facilities to sell excess power back to the grid) as well as the use of low-power consuming computer devices.
- (v) Collaboration with the local (South African) ICT private sector could help accelerate the government's ISAD Plan of Action. At this stage only the international IT companies, HP, Microsoft, Cisco and NIIT are supporting the Plan which aims to improve access to ICTs for the public.
- (vi) Rationalise the different public access kiosk programs into a unified co-ordinated effort (currently technical, content and application development resources are spread thinly between the PITs, Digital Doorways and Library information kiosks, with a new kiosk initiative being launched through USAASA as well).
- (vii) The scoping of the HIV/AIDS centers strongly suggests that there is an opportunity to explore a programmatic intervention by ICT funders in partnership with one or more of the HIV/AIDS programs discussed. There is both the managerial

framework, and the expressed need for such an intervention.

- (viii) Despite the increased spend in libraries by the national government, there appears to be a considerable need for ICT skills development and capacity building in the libraries. The potential for libraries to play more of a key role in local content development should be further explored. This covers aspects such as website development for local libraries and communities; creation of a national geospatial database showing all libraries with precise locations; archiving local history through capturing local folklore, cultural history and crafts. With so many unemployed youth, this could be an opportunity to create a stronger cultural base, while teaching youth marketable ICT skills in website and database development while also allowing more community interaction between generations.
- (ix) Provide additional technical human resources to municipal and provincial levels of government to help address the severe lack of capacity at this level to deliver public services (capital expenditure programs at the provincial and municipal level are perennially behind schedule due to lack of capacity).
- (x) Support information sharing, peer mentoring and capacity building on connectivity provision options for municipalities - this could include training and circulation of best practices and case studies such as the creation of municipal WiFi networks.
- (xi) Provide information on public access facilities on the government services portal (www.services.gov.za - where currently, searching for 'libraries' or 'telecenters' or MPCCs yields no hits). All public access facilities including kiosks and cybercafés should be displayed on an interactive map with full contact information and precise locations.
- (xii) Accelerate the development of e-government content and applications in order to create a more attractive range of useful services for the general public. This could be done in collaboration with NGOs and the private sector and through proposed e-cadres/Cybercadets in libraries.

7 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.

7.1 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

7.2 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.

7.2.1.1 *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 (telecenters, cybercafés and the like) or without ICTs (post offices, community centers and similar) and are of significant importance in local contexts.

7.2.1.2 *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:

7.2.1.3 *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.

7.2.1.4 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.

7.3 Annotated Country Profile (Form 2)

Annotated Country Profile (Form 2) – previously provided to CIS.

7.4 Self-assisted Kiosks in South Africa

There is evidence of a strong drive towards the installation of self-assisted terminals in South Africa, mostly driven through government initiatives with the intent of reaching underserved and largely rural communities. Two initiatives which have been underway for a number of years are the following:

1. Public Internet Terminals (PiTs)

The South African Post Office (SAPO) and the Department of Communications (DoC) are collaborating to set up a network of Public Internet Terminals (PiTs), robust self-assisted kiosks which have been placed throughout the country.⁷⁷ PiTs are customised computer touch screen Internet kiosks located at selected post offices and some GCIS multi-purpose community centers (Thusong Service Centers) to provide citizens with Internet and e-mail facilities as well as access to government information and services. There are more than 825 PiTs located throughout the country, for which no user fees are charged.⁷⁸ (Refer to section 4.3.2.5 for a map which shows the locations throughout the country as at 2006).

The PiT website is also directly accessible through the Web. SAPO spent ZAR135 million on IT infrastructure during its 2007 financial year and intends to spend ZAR326 million in 2008. This is part of SAPO's increased mandate from government to bring ICTs to the people.⁷⁹

Services on the PiTs include:

- Email and Internet access
- Government Information and Government forms, tenders and job opportunities including a link to the Gateway portal.
- Educational Information and services including a directory of Educational Institutions, Access to Metric results and Bursary information.
- E-Commerce including access to online banking, e-buying and business directory and business referrals for SMMEs
- CV Editor and document viewers
- Advertisements, via banners and screensavers
- Statistics and Data Mining to log and report on usage of the PIT services.

⁷⁷ <http://www.sapo.co.za>

⁷⁸ SAPO Annual Report, 2007, p.23 http://www.sapo.co.za/AboutUs/Post%20Office%20AR%20Front_36432.pdf. Accessed 12 February 2008

⁷⁹ SAPO IT spend increases 140%. Accessed 13 February 2008
http://www.mydigitallife.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4997&Itemid=84

PITs only appear to offer an English interface which may be problematic in rural areas and for those whose levels of English literacy are low. Accessing the PIT website⁸⁰ revealed that there were limited linkages to other websites and that the range of available content was very limited.

2. Digital Doorways

The Meraka Institute (The African Advanced Institute for ICT), which is based at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, has established a network of self-assisted kiosks, based on the Indian Hole-on-the-Wall model.⁸¹ These are called Digital Doorways. Most of the funding (> ZAR 45million) as provided by the National Department of Science and Technology.

More than 200 Digital Doorways have been rolled out throughout the country, mostly in rural areas. The kiosks have been installed at community centers, libraries, schools, churches and Further Education and Training (FET) colleges, and a few in shops. The aim is to provide people in rural and disadvantaged areas with freely accessible computer equipment and open source software, enabling them to experiment and learn without formal training and with minimal external input. The DDs provide access to a multi-terminal multimedia computer system, which provides access to various applications and information. The kiosk consists of a freestanding multimedia computer terminal with a keyboard and touchpad embedded in a robust kiosk accessible to the public 24 hours a day. It is equipped with a satellite receiver and General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) cellular data technology for updating content, real-time monitoring and user feedback (See the photos below). The Meraka Institute used the services of two NGOs companies to install Digital Doorways and satellite dishes. There are no charges for either the DDs or the PiTs. There was an attempt to charge for DD usage but the usage dropped dramatically and user fees were dropped as a result. The costs for the DDs depend on the model: ZAR 75 – 85k per three-terminal model and about ZAR 25k for a single terminal. Installation costs, satellite connectivity and maintenance costs would add another 100% for deep rural areas over a three-year period.

The DDs are primarily a mechanism to advance broad-based computer literacy in developing communities or previously technology-isolated communities. It can also be used for other forms of literacy, such as health- and banking -literacy. The DDs provide a platform for the distribution of information (government/political, company/advertising, educational materials and is a resource for local schools as it gives access to Wikipedia and the content of Mindset, a provider of educational materials. Teachers at nearby schools have been assigning school projects using DD content. The largest use is for locally developed, educational games. It can be used

⁸⁰ www.pit.co.za

⁸¹ <http://www.hole-in-the-wall.com/>

for conducting surveys in rural areas – there is presently particular interest from political parties and leaders to assess opinions. The DDs provide open source content. Dynamic content is updated remotely using GPRS so that the bandwidth costs are minimized.

All DDs have been placed in open, well-lit public spaces which are available 24/7. Experience has shown that placing the DDs in cubicles resulted in lower usage by women who were concerned about personal safety aspects. Due to the noisiness of the activities generally created at the DDs through music and gaming, libraries have not been found to be ideal venues, nor are school environments.

Robust three-terminal Digital Doorway – the ‘mini-DD’⁸²



Adults use the Digital Doorway to learn applications

⁸² Reproduced from the Digital Doorway website, http://www.digitaldoorway.org.za/index_main.php

The DDs make use of keyboards rather than touch screen as evaluations have shown that users prefer to learn keyboarding skills and equate this with learning computer literacy. Although content is available in several local languages e.g. the Ubuntu open source applications software has been developed in over 40 languages including several African languages such as Xhosa. However, unpublished evaluations by Meraka have shown that many users prefer to use the English language and see that DDs will improve their language proficiency, making them more marketable in the workplace.

First level community champions were identified and trained to deal with minor problems and to provide feedback on the functionality of equipment. They are paid a small stipend for delivering this service. Technical support and installation is done through two NGO black-empowerment companies. The DDs have been designed to be very robust in terms of the physical structure as well as hardware and software.⁸³ Erratic power supply has however been a problem.

Initial evaluations have revealed the following user patterns:

- In an average village of about 5 000 people, about 25% would access the DDs.
- Generally the DDs are used more by men, but there is a slight predominance of young women (18 – 26) who also use the system. Amongst schoolchildren the gender balance is about 50:50.
- Users of all ages are using the DDs, but schoolchildren predominate.
- There are variations in user patterns. For example, in the very early morning hours, usage is generally by local security guards (4-5 am), followed by adults. During school hours some DDs are closed down to prevent children from skipping school. In the afternoons, usage is dominated by schoolchildren. Some use the DDs to carry out assignments using the available educational content. Later in the evening most users tend to be adults. The DDs are therefore in constant use from 4am till about midnight. Usage is lowest on Saturdays and highest on Fridays (due to schools closing early).

3. Vuvuzelas

A third initiative was recently launched by the Universal Service and Access Agency (USAASA) for the rollout of self-assisted terminals, called the Vuvuzela terminals. The terminals will be run on a franchise basis and will be able to deliver the following services: Internet access, email, SMSs, printing, copying, faxing, gaming, advertising banners, office applications, surveys, CV wizard, Community banking services, trading portal and e-governance.

⁸³ To date, only one has been damaged and that was due to fire. Another withstood substantive rioting.

7.5 Phone Shops in South Africa

Community phone roll-out programs have been set up in South Africa by the mobile service providers as part of their community service obligations (CSOs). The CSOs stipulate that they set up the phone shops in under-serviced areas but did not stipulate where the phones were to be allocated. This led to some criticism that phone shops were established mostly in urban areas. The location of the phone shop is an important concern. While the entrepreneur applying for the phone shops suggests a venue, the final decision appears to be at the discretion of the mobile provider as well as ICASA. Some requirements include that the phone shop must be located in a relatively densely populated disadvantaged area; that the location must have a 'high profile' (i.e. be along a major road, or near a taxi rank); that it must be at an acceptable distance from other phone shops; and that it must have access to electricity.⁸⁴

Given the roll-out of broadband in South Africa and lower connection tariffs, the potential for land-line online connectivity (as opposed to GSM connectivity) is more attractive now than it was in 2001. As a result, the potential for Telkom phone shops to effectively offer public access to information should be borne in mind.

The table below details the Community Service Obligations of the three mobile service providers in South Africa.⁸⁵

Operator	CSO obligation	Status
Vodacom	Had to establish 22 000 community service lines (beginning 1993).	Vodacom phone shops ⁸⁶ established. Targets met easily. 133 757 lines established by Sept. 2007.
MTN	Tasked with established 7 500 lines.	Targets met easily. 14 742 lines established by Sept. 2007.
Cell-C	42 000 community phones need to be installed.	Cell-C had deployed approximately 42000 lines as of 30 June 2006. Has now met obligations. ⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Reck, J. & Wood, B. (2003) *What Works: Vodacom's Community Service Phone Shops*. World Resources Institute, United States. The placement of phone shops can lead to disputes between the mobile providers. For instance, Cell-C determined potential locations for the placement of phone shops with reference to a study of countrywide fixed-line teledensity, which was approved by ICASA. However, MTN alleged that Cell-C had rolled out the phone shops in areas that did not fall within the ambit of under-serviced areas.

⁸⁵ Benjamin, P. (2001) *Telecentres and Universal Capability. A study of the Telecentre Programme of the Universal Service Agency in South Africa, 1996-2000*. PhD Thesis. Aalborg University and Esselaar, S; Gillwald, A.; Stork, C. (2006), *South African Telecommunications Sector Performance Review*. Link Centre Public Policy Research Paper No. 8. Link Centre, Wits University, Johannesburg.

⁸⁶ The term "phone shops" is used here loosely for all forms of community service telephones offered by the mobile providers.

The Table below illustrates the number of phone shops established in each of the Provinces:

Province	Number of phone shops	
Gauteng	Vodacom: 7818	MTN: 4242
North West	Vodacom: 2322	MTN: 1068
Limpopo	Vodacom: 2316	MTN: 2415
Mpumalanga	Vodacom: 2355	MTN: 908
Free State	Vodacom: 2506	MTN: 774
KwaZuluNatal	Vodacom: 6036	MTN: 2646
Eastern Cape	Vodacom: 5013	MTN: 1735
Western Cape	Vodacom: 3777	MTN: 915
Northern Cape	Vodacom: 315	MTN: 39
Unable to allocate	Vodacom/Cointel lines (101199) are not provincially allocated. Recent Cell-C data was not available.	

Services Offered

All of the phone shops offer telephonic services. Vodacom offers the possibility of expanding to telecenter services and Cell-C offers the possibility of phone shop operators offering fax services. In 2006 MTN piloted a 'Shared Access to Data' project in eight sites in townships outside Johannesburg. These sites offered internet and e-mail services. However, mobile providers were unable to offer an account of the success of these extended services.

The following services are offered by community phone shops:

⁸⁷ Esselaar, S; Gillwald, A.; Stork, C. (2006), South African Telecommunications Sector Performance Review. Link Centre Public Policy Research Paper No. 8. Link Centre, Wits University, Johannesburg.

Services Offered	Comments
Telephonic access	The primary aim of the phone shops is for the mobile providers to meet their Community Service Obligations (CSOs). As Vodacom has found, this has turned into a profitable venture (see case example below).
Internet access	GSM internet and e-mail services were piloted by MTN at several sites in 2006 (each site was equipped with 2-3 PCs). The operator was unable to say how successful this initiative had been.
Telecenter services	Vodacom offers additional services including fax, scanning, photocopying and internet services. Cell-C phone shops can offer fax services.

Telkom, the fixed-line national operator, launched its own (re-configured) ambitious phone shop program in 2001, with the installment of 1000 community phone outlets. Like the mobile phone shops, these were to be housed in old shipping containers, and include eight coin-operated and two card-operated phones, as well as fax and photocopier facilities.⁸⁸ However, it appears that this project has not been sustained, and there is little easily accessible information detailing its success. Similar Telkom initiatives are evident in disparate urban centers, and it is likely that the mobile roll-out of community phone shops overtook demand for the original Telkom product.

The overwhelming success of the phone shops (Vodacom has far surpassed its Community Service Obligations) suggests their appropriation by the community as a viable business venture.

The phone shops could potentially act as vehicles for accessing government information. However, aside from the potential of MTN's internet pilot initiatives, no widespread efforts to offer targeted information through the phones shops was immediately evident. Like telecenters, and given the skills, know-how and resources, there is little reason why phone shop entrepreneurs could not actively package and bundle public information for the community's use (e.g. downloading and printing tender documents off the internet for resale). Typically users have no problem accessing the telephonic services. However, computer and internet access, as well as some telecenter-like services, would need to be moderated.

⁸⁸ <http://www.busrep.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=563&fArticleId=112330>

Startup Costs

Application fees⁸⁹ differ depending on the mobile provider. For Vodacom, start-up costs are ZAR1732 for phone and remote unit. If five phones are purchased, Vodacom provides a container depending on availability. In addition, ZAR100 minimum airtime must be bought.

The Cell-C start-up costs for a five-set 'Community Chat with Container' are ZAR22 500, which includes ZAR7 500 of airtime, five phones and SIM cards, one "Management Chat Phone" and SIM card, five batteries and charger kits and one branded container. The SIMS and the container remain the property of Cell-C.

MTN asks a start-up fee of ZAR30 000 for six phones (ZAR15 000 for the phones and ZAR15 000 for airtime) or ZAR16 000 for three lines (ZAR6 000 for airtime).⁹⁰

The biggest inhibitor is the cost of access. However, the relative success of the phone shops as entrepreneurial ventures suggests that they offer a credible business model for entrepreneurs starting out in disadvantaged areas. In the case of Vodacom at least, the phone shop initiative appears to be financially sustainable and growing (the mobile provider has far surpassed its CSOs). The phone shops also appear to meet the economic constraints of the communities they serve.

User Fees

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) has set the selling price per minute of airtime at 90c for phone shops. Both Vodacom and MTN sell airtime to the franchisee at about 60c a minute – 30c profit is made by the franchisee with each minute-long call.⁹¹

At the same time, a study conducted in 2005⁹² suggested that some telecenters were offering local calls at a rate of 85c per unit. The table below (based on 2005 data from the report) suggests something of the complexity of the equation:

⁸⁹ All currencies are South African Rand (ZAR), as of February 2008.

⁹⁰ Source: www.cellc.co.za; www.mtn.co.za; www.vodacom.co.za

⁹¹ Because of a dispute over placement with MTN, MTN has charged Cell-C the commercial interconnection rate of R1,25 per minute during peak periods and R0,77 per minute during off-peak periods.

⁹² Open Research (2005) *Community Access Initiatives in South Africa* – potential strategic interventions. Open Society Foundation – SA, Cape Town

Network carrier	Technology	Cost/unit (peak)	Cost/unit (off peak)
<i>Telkom Pre-paid (or normal)</i>	<i>PSTN</i>		
Telkom to Telkom (Local)		0.59	0.59
Telkom to Telkom (National)		0.89	0.89
Telkom to MTN		1.89	1.17
Telkom to Vodacom		1.89	1.17
Telkom to Zimbabwe		1.66	1.3
<i>MTN Pre-paid</i>	<i>GSM cellular</i>		
MTN to Telkom		2.6	1.45
MTN to MTN		2.6	1.45
MTN to Vodacom		2.85	1.6
MTN to Zimbabwe		3	3
<i>Vodacom Pre-paid</i>	<i>GSM cellular</i>		
Vodacom to Telkom		2.55	1.4
Vodacom to MTN		2.85	1.65
Vodacom to Vodacom		2.55	1.4
Vodacom to Zimbabwe		5.5	5.5
<i>Skype Out Pre-paid**</i>	<i>VoIP</i>		
Skype to Telkom		0.62	0.62
Skype to MTN or Vodacom		1.65	1.65
Skype to Top 20 countries		0.12	0.12
Skype to Zimbabwe		0.63	0.63

**All units are calculated as 1 minute talk time. ** Skype fee does not include internet charges for connectivity or pro rata bandwidth consumption.*

The affordability of the 90c per minute tariff for national calls depends on variable factors, such as the current rate charged by Telkom for landline calls (including payphone landlines), and the different packages offered by the mobile providers, in particular pay-as-you-go costs. These change from time to time. Typical users are generally classified as being part of Living Standards Measure (LSM) categories 1 – 6, with an income of less than R4000 per month.

At the same time, international calls from a phone shop vary. Cell-C for instance, sets the tariff at anything from R3-R15 per minute. This is clearly a concern given the number of foreign nationals who live in disadvantaged communities in South Africa.

Case Example

Vodacom Phone Shops were established as part of the mobile provider's Community Services Obligations. Beginning in 1993, the roll-out target of 22 000 lines was easily met by Vodacom. By September 2007 it had established 133 757. The technology to run the phone shops appears to be robust, and easy to use. Typically the phones consist of a handset, cradle and number pad which the user uses to dial their number. These are connected to a small unit which records how much time is left for a call. These are connected to another unit which allows the person operating the phone shop to punch in the amount of call-time paid for. The phones are connected to an antenna, which then transmits the calls using the GSM network.⁹³ The main idea behind the phone shops is to offer affordable telecommunications to disadvantaged areas. In line with operators like MTN, Vodacom also offers additional services including fax, scanning, photocopying and internet services. These 'telecenter' services were recently relaunched, but the provider did not say how successful they had been. While offering cheaper phone rates for disadvantaged communities, the phone shops have been a highly successful venture for the cellular provider. A 2003 study⁹⁴ shows that revenue from the phones shops amounted to some 3-4% - or R745-million - of Vodacom's total group revenue in 2002.



Vodacom phone shop in Tembisa, Gauteng

⁹³ This is a slight paraphrase of a useful description offered by Reck, J. & Wood, B. (2003), p8.

⁹⁴ Reck, J. & Wood, B. (2003) *What Works: Vodacom's Community Service Phone Shops*. World Resources Institute, United States.