

Internet Inclusion: Advancing Solutions
Working Group Outcome Document
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Working Group Name: Digital Skills (formerly Digital Literacy)

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Achievements to date including launches, agreements, and commitments:

- Literature review, covering over 70 different definitions of digital literacy, with the finding that the DQ Institute provides a basic framework to build upon that can be applied universally regardless of socio-economic status, culture, language, or technical competence.
- Engagement in WEF Internet for All programme, and the work that has been taking place there
- Launch of IEEE standard-setting process

Key Discussion Points:

- We explored the eight buckets of skills highlighted by the DQ institute, looking to understand what they mean in reality. We highlighted the need to include a ‘basic skills’ box – understanding what a device is, how to interact with it, and how technology can increase livelihood and agriculture, small business, healthcare, education, and entertainment outcomes.
- We looked also at the boundaries of what can be resolved by digital skills initiatives. Many issues rely on success in the areas covered by the other groups (connectivity, gender balance), and others on work elsewhere (basic literacy). Digital skills were a necessary, but not a sufficient condition.

- The group reaffirmed the difference between fundamental skills, as set out by DQ, and outcome/livelihood-focused skills. The fundamental skills were all needed, to varying levels, to make use of the internet, and also allow people to move between sectors and ideas. The outcome focused ones could depend on the situation of the individual, linked to questions around livelihood, personal or social characteristics, and geography.
- We also differentiated between primary needs and those further down the road, the sort of skills that could help people improve their lives today, and those which could help them to improve their long-term chances. There is a big question about how to introduce new opportunities and ideas to people who may not initially be aware of them.
- In terms of personas, we explored different ideas around agriculture. Within this theme, we reflected on the needs of female and male farmers, developed and developing country people, and those whose job was to support farmers. It was important to be clear about our assumptions.
- We also evaluated the hierarchy of basic skills, as defined by DQI, to determine which ones might need to be approached first – critical thinking for example.

Outcome of Discussion including Key Messaging points:

- Digital skills – and in particular knowing when and how digital technology might help – can play a central role in improving people’s lives and livelihoods. In developing countries, we cannot underestimate the fact that many people may only have very limited access to an internet-connected device, and work more through personal contacts, or someone else’s access.
- There are both common skills that are applicable for everyone, but also specific variations linked to a person’s specific situation. These could overlap, but by thinking about outcomes and livelihood improvements, we can make skills more ‘real’ for people.
- We identified a number of other areas for the development of personas in the coming weeks and months. These could potentially be set out as a matrix, with overlapping elements building a more sophisticated picture. This approach, once developed, could be used to inform engagement and investments by public and private actors.

Notable Projects and Upcoming Events:

- WEF Internet For All initiative
- EveryoneCodes (Microsoft), as well as investment in rural, vets, and tribal internet inclusion
- Meetings (as below)

Next Steps:

- Continued engagement with WEF initiative, and efforts to refine the DQ Institute framework and underline its value as a basis for thinking about digital skills. In particular, an OECD meeting has been planned in Paris from 14-16 May.
- Use panels and broader communications at relevant meetings (we have a list, including IGF meetings, RightsCon) to engage partners and seek further views on the framework adopted.