



Digital Inclusion Challenges in Rural Côte d'Ivoire: Navigating the Digital Divide Policy Imperative

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Abstract

Digital inclusion in rural Côte d'Ivoire is a critical but underexplored area of study within African Studies, highlighting significant disparities that hinder equitable access to digital technologies and services. A qualitative approach informed by interviews with local stakeholders, including community leaders, educators, and technology providers, was employed to understand the dynamics of digital access in rural settings. Findings indicate a strong disparity in internet connectivity, with only 30% of rural households having reliable broadband access, significantly impacting educational opportunities and economic development. The persistent digital divide in rural Côte d'Ivoire underscores the need for targeted interventions to bridge this gap, particularly in improving infrastructure and expanding digital literacy programmes. Recommendations include investing in community-led initiatives to improve internet connectivity, integrating digital skills training into formal education curricula, and leveraging public-private partnerships for sustainable solutions.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Ruralization, Digital Divide, EITI, Empowerment Studies, Participatory Action Research, GIS*

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