



Digital Inclusion and the Digital Divide in Rural Mauritius: An Action Research Study

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Published: 27 February 2004 | **Received:** 20 November 2003 | **Accepted:** 03 January 2004

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18795172](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18795172)

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Abstract

In rural Mauritius, there is a notable digital divide characterized by disparities in access to technology, internet connectivity, and digital literacy among different socioeconomic groups. An action research study was conducted involving interviews with community leaders, surveys of households, and focus group discussions among youth and adults. Data analysis employed thematic coding to identify patterns and themes related to digital inclusion efforts. The findings reveal that while internet access has improved in rural areas, there is still a significant disparity in the use of technology for education and employment opportunities, particularly affecting women and younger generations who are less likely to be digitally literate or have access to devices. Digital inclusion efforts must focus on enhancing digital literacy programmes and providing affordable internet connectivity solutions to bridge the existing gap. Integrate digital literacy training into community development projects, prioritise rural areas in infrastructure investments for internet accessibility, and foster partnerships between the private sector and public institutions to promote inclusive digital technologies.

Keywords: *African geography, digital divide, inclusivity studies, participatory action research, socioeconomic disparities, technology access, rural development*

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