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| **Increasing skilled internet users** **in rural Nepal** |

**Summary of findings and recommendations**

This study concluded that there is a significance need to increase skilled Internet users in Nepal’s rural area. Following recommendations are made based on the findings.

* ICT volunteer networks should be formed
* Training and deployment of government staffs for internet skill
* Establishing and upgrading community ICT learning centers

**Introduction**

2011 National census shows 83% of population live in rural area. But internet access and number of users in rural is quite low (CBS, 2014/15). Only 7.28% rural people use the Internet. This figure clearly indicates significant effort is needed to improve the situation. Literacy rate is considered one of the major constraints along with geography, affordability, language and accessibility. The country has only 65.9 percent literacy rate. And rural area has worse situation then average. A previous study concluded the urban people have higher education than rural area (Panthhe, 2015).

Figure 1: percentage of rural and urban population comparing to Internet users in Nepal

**Discussion**

The National Broadband Policy, 2071 and Information and Technology policy 2071 mainly deal with improving digital literacy and formation of skilled users. But existing policies somehow lack to address for wider and rapid change need.

This study discusses how some strategies that can help to get people internet skilled in the context of Nepal.

**Formation of ICT volunteer networks:** There have been various experiments to deploy ICT volunteers at local, national and international level. And there are lots of evidences of success. Time between 2011 to 2014 Indonesia deployed more than 6000 ICT volunteers across 34 provinces (Sagena, 2015). We should deploy volunteers at community level by providing training to high school pass outs and other youth. Establishing networks between them, sharing experiences and replicating success stories from one community to other can improve situation quickly.

**Deploying government staffs:** Government of Nepal has strong networks at community level for various service deliveries. If trainings and instructions are provided to government staffs working at community level, they can actively involve in skill formation process.

35,223 schools across the country have 292,845 teachers (Ministry of Education, 2014). According to Ministry of Health more than 5000 health service centers are established. These human and institutional resources can help to achieve goal in a cost effective way.

**Community ICT Learning Center:** Nepal has 13 years of experience of having community Tele Centers (Lee, 2014) . There are 525 Tele Centers currently are in function. Reports say must of them are using outdated technologies and that should be upgraded (Gautam).

These centers should not be limited only for providing Internet services but also need to extended as skill sharing and training centers.

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