Bridging the Digital Divide:
Possible Ways

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What constitutes digital divide?

The gap between people having access to and the people lacking access to the following, in general, is perceived as digital divide:

• Hardware
• Internet Connectivity
• Software
• Digital Content
The Present Trend

When talking about digital divide, a significant portion of focus largely revolves around providing:

- Hardware
- Internet connectivity

Whereas the real focus should be on the soft aspect of providing content that everyone in Nepal can benefit from

- Digital media without relevant content is as good as useless
- Relevant content is what drives the utilization of ICT
  - Smart phones need apps
  - TV & Radio channels need programs
  - Computers need software
  - Internet needs useful sites
Local Digital Content

• Language has been one of the main barriers
• Very little digital material in Nepali language found
• English language content relevant to Nepal is also limited
• Knowledge of English language is a pre-requisite to use ICT and this, in turn, drastically cuts down the percentage of Nepali population who can reap the benefits of ICT
• Demand for ICT will grow when people can
  1. Understand the language of instruction and delivery
  2. Find meaningful content and useful purpose
Possible Way Forward

• Nepali Wikipedia
  ○ Great source of knowledge for Nepali-speaking population
• Localization of Free/Open Source programs and content
  ○ Khan Academy, CK-12
• Nepali Language tools
  ○ Unicode typing (input engine, keyboard, fonts)
  ○ Nepali Linux
  ○ Nepali Spell/Grammar Checker
• *E-Pustakalaya & E-Paath*: Educational tools
  ○ Enable students from early grades
  ○ E-Pustakalaya content available online on www.pustakalaya.org
  ○ Also available in low-power, low-cost offline servers
Thank You!

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