NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

COURSE CODE: LIS 215

COURSE TITLE: RURAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS, SERVICES AND INFORMATION REPACKAGING

Course Guide

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Course Title: RURAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS, SERVICES AND INFORMATION REPACKAGING

Course Developers: PROFESSOR E.M.K. DAWHA

Department of Library and Information Sciences,

University of Maiduguri

YAHAYA ALIYU PhD

Department of Library and Information Sciences,

University of Maiduguri.

Course Writers: PROFESSOR E.M.K. DAWHA

Department of Library and Information Sciences,

University of Maiduguri

YAHAYA ALIYU PhD

Department of Library and Information Sciences,

University of Maiduguri

Course Editor: AILAKHU, UGONNA VIVIAN PhD

Department of Library and Information Sciences,

NOUN- Abuja.

Course Coordinator

Programme Leader

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Rural Community Information Systems, Services and Information Repackaging

Introduction

Welcome to **LIS 215:** Rural Community Information Systems, Services and Information Repackaging. This Course Guide is a brief description of what the course is about and the course material will give you the contents of what you are expected to learn in this course. It also contains some general guidelines on the amount of time you are expected to spend on each unit of this course in order to successfully complete the course. There is a separate Assignment File which contains detailed information on tutor-marked assignments that you are expected to answer at the completion of each unit.

What You Will Learn In This Course

This course will give you a brief awareness of the importance of Rural Community Information Systems, Services and Information Repackaging in library and information science. The course will introduce you to the definition of concepts; importance and types of community information systems and services; community analysis; information needs and characteristics of rural communities; philosophy of information services to rural communities in Nigeria.

Course Aims

The aim of this course is to prepare you towards the application of rural community information systems, services and information repackaging in library and information science. This will be achieved by:

- Introducing you to rural community information systems, services and information repackaging class.
- Helping you to appreciate the information needs and characteristics of rural communities
- Outlining the importance and types of community information systems.
- Clarifying some basic problems and challenges associated with development of community information services and information repackaging in Nigeria.

Learning Outcomes

To achieve the above aims, some general objectives are set for the course. The course is divided into units and each unit has specific objective at the beginning. You may want to refer to them during and after you might have

completed a unit to check the pace of your progress. The general objectives set below cover the whole course. By meeting these objectives, you should have achieved the aims of the course.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to

- Define and explain the meaning of Information Systems
- Explain rural information repackaging
- Describe principles of rural community information repackaging; process of information repackaging

Working through the Course

To complete this course, you are advised to read each study unit of this study material and read other materials, which may be provided by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Self-assessment exercises are included in each unit and you will be required to submit tutor-marked assignments for assignment purposes. There will be a final examination at the end of the course. The course will last for 22 weeks. The course will be divided into learnable units and you can allocate your own time to the units so that you can complete the course at a record time. You are advised to utilize the opportunity of tutorial sessions for comparing notes and sharing ideas with your colleagues.

Course Materials

Major components of the course are:

- The Course Guide
- Study Units
- Assignments
- References /Further Reading
- Presentation Schedule

Study Units

There are 9 study units divided into four modules in this course. The modules and units are presented as follows:

Module 1 Rural Community Information Systems, Services and Information Repackaging

Unit 1: What is Information?

Unit 2: What is Community Information Services (CIS)?

Module 2 Types of Community Information Systems and Services

Unit 1: Types of Community Information Systems and Services

Unit 2: Community Needs Analysis

Module 3 Information Needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria

Unit 1: Information Needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria

Unit 2: Proposed Model of Information Services to Rural Communities in Nigeria

Module 4 Information Providers in Rural Communities

Unit 1: Information Providers in Rural Communities

Unit 2: Process of Rural Community Information Repackaging

Unit 3: Problems and Challenges Associated with Development of Community Information Repackaging in Nigeria.

Each unit consists of table of contents, introduction, statement of objectives, main content, conclusion, summary and references. There are activities at every point that will assist you in achieving the stated objectives of the individual units of this course.

Presentation Schedule

Your course materials will spell out the important dates for early and timely completion and submission of your Tutor-Marked Assignments and for attending tutorials. You should bear it in mind that assignments should be submitted at the stipulated time and date. Make sure you do not lag behind in your work.

Assignment File

There are at least seventeen assignments in this course, that is, at least one assignment per unit. The assignment file contains all the works you are to submit to your tutor/facilitator for marking. Your assignments are as important as your examinations and they carry 30% of the scores earmarked for the course.

Assessment

Assessment method will be two-folds. These are assignments and written examination. The course materials are prepared to assist you to do the assignments. You are expected to utilize the information and knowledge from the recommended texts at the end of each unit. The assignments will carry 30% of the total marks while the final examination of about three hours duration will be written at the end of the course and this will carry 70%.

Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)

The Tutor-Marked Assignment is a continuous assessment component of your course and it accounts for 30% of the total score. You are required to submit at least six (6) TMAs before you are allowed to sit for the end of course examination. Your facilitator will give you the TMAs and you are expected to return same to him/her as and when due.

Your assignment file contains the assignment questions for the units in this course. The information and materials contained in your reading, study units and references will assist you in completing your assignments. You should demonstrate that you have adequate knowledge of the materials read and that you have equally made further research into other references, which will give you a wider viewpoint as well as provide you a deeper understanding of the subject.

Ensure that each tutor-marked assignment reaches your facilitator on or before the deadline stated in the presentation schedule and assignment file. In case of any unforeseen circumstances that may hinder you from submitting your assignment before the due date, contact your facilitator before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extension will not be granted after the due date.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination for LIS 215 is about three hour's duration and it has a value of 70% of the total marks. The examination questions will reflect the type of self -testing, practice activities and tutor-marked assignments/problems that have previously been encountered in the course. All areas of the course will be assessed.

You could form a discussion group with a considerable number of your colleagues and practice or discuss the activities and assignment written in each unit before the examination period.

Course Marking Scheme

Assessment	**Marks**
Assignment 1-21 (best 3 out of all the assignment submitted)	Three assignment marked, each 10% totaling 30%
Final Examination	70% of Overall Course Score
Total	100% of Course Score

How to Get the Most from this Course

1) In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecturer. The advantage is that you can read and work through the course materials at your pace, time and location or environment that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. Just as the lecturer might give you in-class exercise, this study unit provides appropriate exercises that will keep you abreast the pace of your progress in the course.

2) Each study unit is designed in peculiar format that will facilitate your learning. It starts with an introduction to the subject-matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. This is followed by the objectives. These objectives will let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. Use the objectives to assess your progress at the end of every unit.

3) The main body of the unit will serve as a roadmap that will guide you through the required reading from other sources. This is usually from either your references or from a reading section.

4) Self-activities are entrenched throughout the units and going through them religiously will help you to achieve the objectives of the unit and prepare you for the assignment and

examination. Equally, go through each self-activity as you come across it in the study unit.

5) You can follow this practical strategy for working through the course. In case you run into problem, do not hesitate to telephone your tutor/facilitator or visit the study centre nearest to you. Note that your tutor/facilitator's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor/facilitator to provide it.

Read This Course Guide Thoroughly, It Is Your First Assignment.

1) Organize a Study Schedule - Design a 'course overview' to guide you through the course. Take note of the duration of every unit and the assignment related to it. Keep a diary of important information, e. g., details of your tutorials, duration of a semester, when you are to submit your assignment, etc. Map out your own schedule of work for each unit.

2) Once you have mapped out your study schedule, follow it religiously and stay focused. A major cause of failure is not keeping abreast with the schedule of work. If you get into any difficulty concerning your study, inform your tutor/facilitator on time.

3) Read the introduction and objectives of every unit before working through it.

4) Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need is given at the beginning of each unit. You will always need both the study unit you are working on and one of your textbooks on your desk at the same time.

5) Study critically the course information that will be continuously posted to you and do not fail to visit your Study Centre for up-to-date information.

6) Before the due dates (at least 4 weeks before the dates), visit your Study Centre for your next required assignment. Be assured that you will learn a lot by doing your assignment meet the objectives of the course and will definitely help you to pass your examination. Make sure your assignments are submitted not later than the due dates.

7) A revision of each study unit objectives will assist you to confirm whether you have achieved them. In case you are not sure whether you have achieved the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor/ facilitator. When you are sure that you have achieved the unit's objectives, you can proceed to the next unit. Go through the course unit by unit and ensure that you space your study in a manner that you can keep to the schedule.

8) Do not wait till your tutor return the submitted assignment before you proceed to the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When your assignment is returned, take note of your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also the written comments on the assignment. Consult your tutor/facilitator if you have any problem or questions.

9) After completing the last unit, review the course and get prepared for the final examination. Ensure that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed on the Course Guide).

Facilitation/Tutor and Tutorials

Facilitation/Tutorials shall be provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and locations of these tutorials as well as the names and phone number of your facilitator, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group.

Your tutor/facilitator will mark and comment on your assignment, keep close watch on your progress, on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. Ensure that you submit your tutor-marked assignments to your facilitator before the due date; at least two working days are required. Your assignments will be marked and returned to you as soon as possible. You can contact your facilitator on telephone, e-mail and discuss your problems whenever you need assistance. You may need to contact your facilitator if:

- you do not understand any part of the study or assigned readings.

- you have difficulty with the self-tests or activities.

- you have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments or with the grading of an assignment.

Make it a point of duty to attend your tutorials regularly. This will afford you the opportunity of face-to-face contact with your course facilitator and to ask questions which are instantly answered. You can equally discuss any problem encountered in the course of your study. For maximum benefit from course tutorials, you can prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in active discussion.

Summary

This course will bring you the importance of rural community information systems, services and information repackaging to library and information science. At the end of the course you will achieve the objective if you follow the instructions and do what you are expected to do.

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Unit 1: What is Information?

Unit 2: What is Community Information Services (CIS)?

Module 2 Types of Community Information Systems and Services

Unit 1: Types of Community Information Systems and Services.

Unit 2: Community Needs Analysis.

Module 3 Information Needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria

Unit 1: Information Needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria.

Unit 2: Proposed Model of Information Services to Rural Communities in Nigeria.

Module 4 Information Providers in Rural Communities

Unit 1: Information Providers in Rural Communities.

Unit 2: Process of Rural Community Information Repackaging.

Unit 3: Problems and Challenges Associated with Development of Community Information Repackaging in Nigeria.

MODULE 1: RURAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS, SERVICES AND INFORMATION REPACKAGING

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to rural community information systems, services and information repackaging class. In this module we are going to learn the basic concepts of rural community information systems, services and information repackaging. What does rural community information systems, services and information repackaging have in common with us as librarians, information professionals?

UNIT 1: WHAT IS INFORMATION?

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Learning Outcomes

1.3 Main content

1.3.1 Definition of Information

1.3.2 Definition of Information Systems

1.4 Community Information (CI)

1.4.1 Need of Community Information

1.5 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1.6 Summary

1.7 Glossary

1.8 Reference/Further Reading

1.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Information is power. Information is needed for making choices, for behavior change and for decision making. Every individual, group or community (rural and urban) needs information regardless of the social status. Information brings new opportunities to people and it brings about personal development. It is needed in every situation in life. Information is an indispensible resource for human survival and development. Information may be defined as any stimulus that reduces uncertainty. Information is

an essential resource in all human activities. Though it is a term that is difficult to define because it has several dimensions, hence information means many things to different people. Information to some people means news, while to others it means facts and yet to others it is data. Therefore, information is used interchangeably as news, facts, data and knowledge. Buckland (1991) in Aina (2003) characterized information as a process, knowledge and as a thing; depending on the context it is used. It is also seen as a process when it performs a function of communication, when information is passed from one source to another. Information is regarded as knowledge when it is applied by an individual to reduce ambiguity, for development or to produce a change in behavior. People need information at one point for survival.

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the term Information
- understand why the term information is difficult to be defined.
- define what information system is?
- explain the differences between information systems and information technology
- identify the components of information systems
- explain the relationships between the components of information systems
- understand the reasons for having an information system

1.3 MAIN CONTENT

1.3.1 Definition of Information

What is Information?

Information is severally defined. According to Machlupard & Mansfield (1983), Information is used interchangeably as news, facts, data and knowledge. Additionally, information is defined thus; "Increasing the state of knowledge of a recipient", "Resolving uncertainly". Aguolu &Aguolu (2002) further stated that information is a message of human experiences in other words it is what is transmitted as a signal or a stimulus. It assumes a response in the receiver and therefore possesses a response potential. Thus, information should be understood from two perspectives: first from the viewpoint of its content- its intellectual essence and secondly, from the point of view of its processing and transfer-that is the means we use to produce, publish, organize, store, retrieve and communicate information.

It is essentially a neutral entity that denotes removal of uncertainty. Information can be transferred physically or electronically. It could be in any medium or format; in any language or on any subject matter. Information can be stored in books, periodicals, newspapers, journals, reports, pamphlets, posters, photographs, audio-visual media, information and communication technologies, and in many other formats.

Therefore, the term information could be defined as anything adds to our knowledge or understanding of issues, topic, problems or events. Similarly, information is

variously perceived as facts, data, news or knowledge essential for decision making and reducing uncertainty among the recipients of the information.

1.3.2 What is Information Systems?

An information system is designed to gather, process, store and disseminate information. Although the information systems may not be computerized yet the Information Technology (IT) has a vital role to play in organizations because of the fast pace of technological innovation. For you to understand what an information system means there is need to clearly differentiate it from information technology because both terms are often used but have different meaning. An information system needs not to use computers. However, modern organizations increasingly rely on information technology as the core of their information systems. We can define information technology to include hardware, software and telecommunication equipment that is used to collect, process, store and disseminate information. The components of information systems are:

The Hardware: is the physical equipment which we can either touch or feel with our bare hands example of hardware includes: your laptop, desktop, keyboard, mouse, a portable computing device, and even a modern cell phone – used to process information.

The software: is the set of coded instructions (programs) that direct the hardware to perform the required tasks. The software can neither be touched nor felt. They are instructions given to the hardware to perform a task. A typical example is Microsoft.

Telecommunication systems: are the networking equipment which enables the users and devices to communicate. An example of a telecommunication system is a telephone network, which allows two callers to interact by voice over a distance. These three elements – hardware, software, and telecommunication systems – comprise the IT component of an information system. For example, the technology components of the automated payroll system mentioned in the first example include: hardware – computers and printers software – the accounting software application designed to keep track of the salaries and the staff scheduling system designed to keep track of hours worked and how much each employees should be paid.

People: The people component of an information system comprises all those individuals or persons who are directly involved with the system. These people include the managers who define the goals of the system, and the users.

Boel & Cecez-Kecmanovic (2015) shed light that information systems (IS) involves a variety of information technologies such as computers, software, databases, communication systems, the internet, mobile devises and much more to perform specific tasks, interact with and inform various actors in different organizational or social contexts. General interest to the field is therefore all aspects of the development, deployment, implementation, use and impact of information systems in organizations and society. However, the information systems field is not primarily concerned with the technical and computational aspect of information technology

rather how technology is appropriated and instantiated in order to enable the realization of information systems that fulfill various individuals, groups or organizations' information needs and requirements in regards to specific goals and practices.

Oyedum (2007) posits that information systems are those systems that provide information to information seekers. This therefore does not necessarily refer to only a library or an information Centre rather it refers to various systems through which information is disseminated to various information seekers. In the library context, it is regarded as information and bibliographic tools usually used by the librarians to provide adequate information services to their users. Some of these tools are the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the library, retrieval devices, library collections etc.

Therefore, the term information systems refer to the systems that provide information or an information centre for generation, processing, storage and dissemination of information to its numerous users. Information Systems are the various retrieval tools through which information is disseminated to information seekers by a library or community information centre.

1.4 COMMUNITY INFORMATION (CI)

Community information is the combination of two terms "Community" and "Information". It could be referred to as the type of information needed by the members of the community for effective use of available resources to solve their day-to-day problems. Community Information is considered to be that information required by members of the public (or these acting on their behalf) to make effective use of the resources potentially available to them in the communities in which they live. Such information may be needed to help solve problems in the fields of housing, disability, household finance, marriage, employment and so on.

1.4.1 NEED OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION

The information need of urban people differs from the information need of rural people. The rural people common information needs requires assistance for the following types of information:

1. Agriculture and related issues
2. Education
3. Employment
4. Health
5. Self-Employment
6. Animal husbandry
7. Financial assistance
8. Government programmes
9. Legal aids
10. Social welfare
11. Cottage industries

12. Housing
13. Horticulture
14. Local and political news

1.5 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Define Information as a term?
2. What is Community information?

1.6 SUMMARY

Generally, information services are products of information systems because an information system is a set of resources-such as, library staff, materials and procedure designed to attain information goals within a particular information environment which produce and utilize the system as a tool to provide information to their users. In this unit you have learnt the definition of the term information, why it is essential for decision making.

Information is an essential resource in all our activities as human beings. From the unit we learnt that information means news, fact, data and knowledge that help us to make decision in our day to day activities. Information is an essential resource in all human activities. Though it is a term that is difficult to define because it has several dimensions, hence information means many things to different people.

1.7 GLOSSARY

CI - COMMUNITY INFORMATION

IS – INFORMATION SYSTEM

1.8 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

Aina, L.O. (2003). *Library and Information Science Text for Africa.* South Africa.

Aguolu, C.C, & Aguolu, I.E. (2002). *Libraries and Information Management in Nigeria.* Jos: El-Inform Services.

Boel, S.K & Cece-Kecmanovic (2015) what is an Information System? 48th Hawai International Conference on Information Sciences.

Machlupard and Mansfield (1983) In: Aina, L.O. (2004) Library and Information Science Text for Africa. Ibadan: Third World Information Services Ltd. P.2

Oyedum, G.U. (2007). *Information Management in Librarianship.* Minna: Mairo Press and Computer Centre.

1.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Information is regarded as knowledge when it is applied by an individual to reduce ambiguity, for development or to produce a change in behavior. People need information at one point for survival.

2. Community information is the combination of two terms "Community" and "Information". It could be referred to as the type of information needed by the members of the community for effective use of available resources to solve their day-to-day problems.

UNIT 2: WHAT IS COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE (CIS)?

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Learning Outcome

2.3 Main content

2.3.1 Definition of Community Information Service

2.3.2 Importance of Community Information Services

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

2.5 Summary

2.6 Glossary

2.7 Reference/Further Reading

2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Community information service (CIS) is not an entirely new phenomenon. It is also not a service that is entirely in the realm of libraries. Since the dawn of human civilization and formation of larger societies, the human beings have been faced with

community information (CI) needs and such information flowed to the needy through various channels, unmediated by librarians through informal networks. The concept of community information service (CIS) is a public- library based activity aimed at meeting the daily information needs of the general public particularly the rural dwellers and the disadvantaged people in the community. Community information services (CIS) is one of the major services through which a public library provides required information to the community by helping people in solving their daily problem(s) and at the same time raising the quality of their lives. Hence, the importance of community information services to rural dwellers in particular cannot be overstated. Thus, in this unit we will examine the importance of community information services.

2.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- define what the term community information service
- identify the categories of beneficiaries of community information service.

2.3 MAIN CONTENT

2.3.1 The Definition of Community Information Service

What is Community Information Service?

Community information is the information that individuals need or want in order to live their everyday lives. It enables people or groups to make informed decisions about themselves and the communities in which they reside. Community information service is a concept usually designed by public libraries to assist individuals and groups in rural areas in solving their information needs through the use of quality information or by linking them to relevant information provider agencies where they can access reliable information. Kempson (1990) defined community information services as information services which assist individuals or groups with daily problem solving. The services concentrates on the needs of those who do not have ready access to other sources of assistance and on the most important problems that people face dealing with their homes, jobs and rights as citizens.

Similarly, Rasmussen (1979) defined community information service as a service meant to satisfy citizens' requirements for information for their economic, social, cultural and leisure activities. The crucial point of such services is to connect a citizen with a need to service or resource which will satisfy that need. Provision of quality information is an essential resource particularly to rural communities because of its value in improving their living standards. Thus, community information services programmes remain the only avenue for providing the right kind of information and at the right time to the people in order to achieve a meaningful livelihood.

There are two types of information are needed by any community:

● Survival information on health, housing, income, legal protection, economic opportunities, political rights, civil rights;

● Citizen action information which are needed for effective participation as individuals or as members of a group in the social, political, legal, and economic process.

There are two types of information are needed by any community:

● Survival information on health, housing, income, legal protection, economic opportunities, political rights, civil rights;

● Citizen action information, needed for effective participation as individuals or as members of a group in the social, political, legal, and economic process.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION CENTER (CIC)

A community information center (CIC) is known as an organization which disseminates Community Information. The library situated within the community is referred to as the Community Library which is used in providing such information. The community information center/service is now known by various other such as: community based information center, community resource center, citizens' information bureau, citizens' information center, citizens' information service, community information support service, community information and referral service, community resource and information service, community information services and center, center for information and community services, citizens' information board. In United States of America, community information center is popularly known as information and referral service. Besides, there are also specialized information services/centers for different types of communities (such as senior citizens' information service, rural information center) and for different types of CI (such as health information service, educational information service). community information center sometimes serve as composite units providing other community services along with information needed by the community concerned.

Transformation of community information center

With the growths in Information Communication Technology, the community information center have transformed into more dynamic centers from time to time. Initially, the focus of CICs was on acquiring, processing, storing, and disseminating the information that was needed by the community that they served. "During the 1980s, the nature of community information centers began to reflect the growing importance of information and communication technology in creating, storing, transmitting, and communicating information. 'Tele-centers' and 'Community IT Centers' became the new buzz-words….. As the 1990s concluded, a new designation began to be used—Multipurpose Community Tele-centers. It reflected the way that technological change, particularly the development of the Internet, had greatly extended the range of activities that could be undertaken by tele-centers….. Since the millennium, a further function has been added which is community broadcasting". Consequently, these centers have become community multimedia centers.

Nevertheless, the first generation community information centers are still functioning in many countries.

CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE(CIS)

The information service through which community information is provided to the members of a community can be called community information service. The term community information service was first advocated by Durrance, who called it "an umbrella term which included provision of information for everyday participation in the democratic process. Community information centers, according to the Library Association (now CILIP)'s Working Party on community information center, are those services "which assist individual groups with daily problem solving and with participation in the democratic process. The services concentrate on the needs of those who do not have ready access to other sources of assistance on the most important problems that people have to face, problems to do with their homes, their jobs and their rights" It is different from other two similar concepts, which are the public information work, and local information service, in the following way.

Public information work	Local information service	Community information service
A general information service, which makes no discrimination in favor of specific groups	An information service on purely local matters. It will involve building-up detailed local information and publishing directories and also acting as a sign-posting agency to other local services	A positive decision support system which concentrates on enabling people, particularly those in lower socio-economic groups, to act either individually or collectively on their problems in the fields of housing, employment, family, personal matters, consumer affairs, household finance, education, welfare rights, and civil rights

Need for community information service

The dynamics that call for provision of community information centers, especially in rural areas includes the following:

● Disadvantaged users: Right to information is the key to the progress of any society. Unfortunately, persisting inequalities in the society due to various factors such as social and economic status, physical and mental condition, literacy, and educational level, lack of fluency in language used by the dominant culture, all members of the society do not have equal opportunity to access all the information needed by them.

CIS can be developed as an effective tool for providing equal opportunity to every member of the society to access his or her required information.

● Information deprivation: There is a close relationship between lack of access to information and its deprivation. The success of various social welfare schemes depends to a great extent on the supply of information about how to utilize them to the target group. The restricted opportunity to get and use information is one of the major causes of deprivation. Community information center is aimed to minimize this kind of deprivation for the person who requires such information urgently.

● Scattering of government information: Governments at all levels are the largest producers of information. But these are highly scattered information sources and difficult to acquire through normal publication channels. Community information center must be developed to collect, organize, and disseminate this information for the target groups.

● Social changes and democratic values: Democracy needs informed citizenship. If people are to make informed decisions, they require accurate information at the time of need. Community information center may help people to take part in the democratic process by organizing a maze of information sources.

Characteristics of Community Information Service

The characteristics of community information center includes the following :

● It provides information in the community to help people with daily problem solving or in raising the quality of their lives;

● It is concerned with a specific group of clientele, namely, those who belong to the lower socioeconomic groups or are disadvantaged through an inability to obtain, understand, or act on information that affects their lives.

● CIS offers materials that are different in both context and nature. The subject matter deals directly with the lives of people and the materials are often ephemeral, consisting of newspaper cuttings, pamphlets and leaflets. There are virtually no established library procedures for either obtaining or organizing this type of material.

● In CIS, the degree of interaction needed to establish the user's problem is greater than that usually engaged in traditional public librarianship.

● CISs rely on close links with other agencies. It is part of an overall network of information and advising agencies. A CIS cannot operate in isolation. It will depend on other agencies/groups for information gathering and will need to refer the users to them. ● CISs are based on the principle that everyone has a right to equal access to information and to the nation's resources. In this sense, it is not a service but an aid to making democracy work. This point truly characterizes CIS.

Advantages of Community Information Center

The advantages of Community information center are quite numerous. Information is the day's currency. It is indispensible for the development of any community. The following are some of the advantages of Community information center:

- Community information center may help the members of a community, especially a deprived community or locality, to obtain and have access to necessary information by reducing the barriers to information access (such as economic barrier, geographic barrier, technological barrier, psychological barrier, language barrier).
- CIS also helps to achieve the following goals :
    a. Expanded social interaction;
    b. Decreased transaction cost; Employment and educational gains;
    c. Increased information exchange;
    d. Greater skill and confidence building;
    e. Increased knowledge of the community;
    f. Increased access to quality information;
    g. Ability to identify/share trusted information.

2.3.2 Importance of Community Information Services

The importance of community information services includes acquiring, storing and disseminating information that are needed for the survival and growth of the community especially the information required by members of the community to make effective use of the available resources around them.

Community information services help in meeting the distinct information needs of rural communities be it on education, political, business, occupational, health, housing, legal assistance, financial assistance etc. by serving them with the exact information they need to improve their quality of life. It provides information to agencies responsible for rural development programmes such as community development workers, agricultural extension workers, healthcare workers, social welfare workers, etc. thus, community information services provides information to rural development agencies. Community information services serves as a communication bridge between the government, development agencies and the rural dwellers in particular.

Community information services serves as a source of occupational based and general information to the community. It contributes to the socio-economic regeneration of the locality. Serving the community with the information they may need in their local language, by packaging the information they need in media tools and information resources that will assure their quick comprehension. Through community information services particularly to rural communities, equal access to information may be achieved or at least to reduce levels of information neglect and deprivation in rural areas in contrast to its urban counterpart.

Community Information Services through Public Libraries and Information Centres

You would agree without doubt that presently information is a basic need of an individual's life, which helps to ensure that other needs such as food; shelter, good water, health services, education and other amenities are available. In other words, we can say that without information, survival and development of human life is not possible. Information is todays 'currency which accelerates the pace of development of society as well as the development of nation including the rural communities. Community Information Service (CIS) is performed by many which include governmental, non-governmental voluntary organizations in their operative areas by their own ways. As such a public Library is one which tends to enrich the lives of rural or community people through access to the ideas, information and entertainment available from books as well as from a variety of other resources.

Information Support to Community Development

The efficient and effective functioning of a community development system calls for the effective utilization of information resources as mandatory support to all the sphere of the life of a community.

Public library and other information centers in the rural communities can create awareness through information support and motivate the local community to take responsibility for their development. Librarians of such public libraries need to explore how their libraries can support the communities they serve with the resources available.

The following are types of information support to be given for community development:

Community information services;

Development of as area profile;

Involvement in community planning process;

Support to the preservation of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices;

Marketing and promotion of information literacy programmes;

Information support to community self-help; and

Collaboration and partnership with local Government and Nongovernment agencies.

Challenges Encountered by Rural Libraries in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the public libraries situated with the rural community have been challenged with numerous challenges problems. Opara (2008) examined the state of public libraries in Nigeria and had observed that the pace of public library development in the country in the years post the independence the Nigerian civil war could not be sustained due to inadequate financial support by the establishing authorities. He identified the challenges that rural community libraries in Nigeria face to include but not limited to inadequate funding, demoralized and inadequate workforce, inadequate accommodation. Information hunger is prevalent and biting

hard on our rural communities, which has resulted in poor living conditions, illiteracy, and poverty. The inhabitants of the rural communities in Nigeria are majorly characterized by the state of their poor living conditions such as the absolute poverty and absence good and adequate amenities of life especially good road network, good drinking water, well equipped health centres and due to these challenges the farmers harvest their crops but find it difficult to transport them to the urban centers or even a close rural community because of bad road network which the drivers of the buses use as an excuse to inflate the transportation fares and also mortality rate is poor all because the health centres in the rural community is not equipped with qualified workforce and this tends to affect the information transfer . The literacy in Nigeria is about 35-40 percent, but is much lower among women and in rural communities. Report of scarcity of learning facilities, including basic textbooks and journal, in school and libraries including academic libraries, show a critical situation. The information needs of the teeming majority are not provided for, which constitute the major reason for the underdevelopment. Rural dwellers need relevant, efficient, and current information. This poses a big challenge to the librarians and libraries in meeting the information needs of the people in the rural areas.

Strategies to Overcome Challenges faced by the Rural Communities' Libraries in Nigeria

Fortunately, efforts are been made by the librarians and other information professionals in public libraries in the collection and dissemination of information to the rural areas in Nigeria through adequate documentation, nevertheless, Momodu, (2012) observes that adequate attention has not been paid to library services in the rural areas of Nigeria. It is very important for the librarians in charge of the rural libraries to educate the rural populace on the need and the importance of the libraries. The rural populace needs to be told the types of information they can get from the library. For instance the greatest area of information needs by rural Nigerians is in agriculture and such information needs include planting treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plants and animal diseases, fertilizer application, farm machineries, recommended thinning practices, proper storage of farm products, marketing techniques, cooperative activities and other agro-cultural activities. Though librarians may not be agriculturists but they are usually equipped to provide technical information services to experts in other fields using the language they understand most. Education: It has long been established that most 'ruralists' or community-residents are poor, semi-literates, absorbed in the daily struggle for economic survival and unaware of the information services which could assist them in that struggle (Chijioke, 1995). Thus, education can enhance the social status of ruralists or community residents. There are various ways the library can enhance the educational development of a rural community. Rural libraries could be best used as information centre for effective use in adult education and development plans of the country. Adult literacy classes to fulfill its roles on the federal government programme on adult literacy campaign, services of retired teachers in the community can be used. Materials like books on alphabets and numbers, pictures, posters and artifacts are very relevant for this group of the rural dwellers. Documentary films and recorded cassettes in local and English languages would be quite useful. Story hour for children is an

important function of the library. Pictures, easy to read picture books, simple story books could be found exciting by the children. This will help develop their interest in reading and library usage. The rural community needs information on health which includes how individuals can prevent different diseases that affect them; the healthcare delivery services available to them and what it costs. The library can collect information from state and federal ministries of health about various programmes dealing with health matters. Liaising with other agencies like the community health care centers, can also help in disseminating information to the rural dwellers. Lectures by community health workers on good environmental sanitation/diets and the importance of antenatal and post-natal health care to pregnant women, will surely go a long way in getting them informed. HIV and AIDS seminars can also be held for the youths especially. Information on politics is also needed. The rural inhabitants require information on political rights of the people and how they can exercise such right (Harande, 2009). The library can collect information on government policies and political situation in the country from radio, newspaper magazine as well as party agents. Information got from these sources can be translated and disseminated to the rural dwellers orally or in written form. Pamphlets, leaflets in English and vernacular can also be used to give information. In addition to radios and televisions, lectures are always interpreted to their local dialect in order to reach a wider audience. Other information needs includes: Socio-Economic Information, Issa (1998) had observed that "the rural populace suffers from social and economic retrogression. In line with this, Disco (2005) commented that "the structural and infrastructural problems, official corruption, and economic policies growing insecurity, and unstable power supply hamper this development". In this regards, Harande (2009) reported that rural inhabitants in the present day Nigeria are not reaping from the fruits of the enormous wealth the country has. Reason being the fact that information services that will greatly enhance their productivity, transform their community into a lively and enlightened one, and empower their economic base, is not effective and relevant and the service is not fashioned towards it. Culture and Recreation: The rural dwellers have great interest in the preservation of their culture. In this regard, several conferences and workshops have been organized to raise the consciousness and awareness of stakeholders in developing countries towards the appreciation and utilization of information in their planning and decision-making processes (Kegan, 1999). However, these efforts to entrench information on culture seemed to have failed to achieve the desired result (Admorah, 1983). The function of the library to expose the people to the culture 10 and traditions of other people through film shows, displays of photographs, posters and paintings is therefore attracting attention. Recreational needs of the rural dwellers can be met through the provision of recreational materials like games, story books, especially fictions and humorous films by the rural libraries. Organizing play and drama on areas like past history of the community could also be another way of relaxation.

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Explain the term community information service

2. Are community information services important to rural communities in Nigeria? Discuss

2.5 SUMMARY

The importance of community information services includes acquiring, storing and disseminating information that are needed for the survival and growth of the community. The importance of establishing community-based information systems and services in rural areas would strengthen and empower rural dwellers with practical and useful information that would improve their quality of life and livelihoods.

Community information service is a service provided by public libraries/rural community information service centres to satisfy the information needs of users in a community. Through community information services particularly to rural communities, equal access to information may be achieved or at least to reduce levels of information neglect and deprivation in rural areas in contrast to its urban counterpart.

2.6 GLOSSARY

CIS - Community Information Service

CIC - Community Information Center

2.7 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Kempson, E. (1990). Rural Community Information Services: Guidelines for

Researching Needs, Setting up Services and Evaluating Performance. *IFLA Journal*, 16(4), 429-439.

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Alternative Futures. Proceeding of 20th Biennial Conference of the Library Association of Australia, held on 26-30 August, 1979.84-111.

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2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Community information is the information that individuals need or want in order to live their everyday lives. It enables people or groups to make informed decisions about themselves and the communities in which they reside. Community information service is a concept usually designed by public libraries to assist individuals and groups in rural areas in solving their information needs through the use of quality information or by linking them to relevant information provider agencies where they can access reliable information. Kempson (1990) defined community information

services as information services which assist individuals or groups with daily problem solving. The services concentrates on the needs of those who do not have ready access to other sources of assistance and on the most important problems that people face dealing with their homes, jobs and rights as citizens.

2. **Importance of Community Information Services**

The importance of community information services includes acquiring, storing and disseminating information that are needed for the survival and growth of the community especially the information required by members of the community to make effective use of the available resources around them.

Community information services help in meeting the distinct information needs of rural communities be it on education, political, business, occupational, health, housing, legal assistance, financial assistance etc. by serving them with the exact information they need to improve their quality of life. It provides information to agencies responsible for rural development programmes such as community development workers, agricultural extension workers, healthcare workers, social welfare workers, etc. thus, community information services provides information to rural development agencies. Community information services serves as a communication bridge between the government, development agencies and the rural dwellers in particular.

Community information services serves as a source of occupational based and general information to the community. It contributes to the socio-economic regeneration of the locality. Serving the community with the information they may need in their local language, by packaging the information they need in media tools and information resources that will assure their quick comprehension. Through community information services particularly to rural communities, equal access to information may be achieved or at least to reduce levels of information neglect and deprivation in rural areas in contrast to its urban counterpart.

MODULE 2: TYPES OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Community information service has been referred to as the information for survival and growth of the community and that information is required by the members of a community to make effective use of the available information resources around them, to help them solve their day to day problems related to survival such as health, education, agriculture, housing, legal rights, marriage, political rights, socio-economic development among others with the view to help them participate in social, political, cultural, legal and economic progress of their society either individually or collectively. In this module, topics to be discussed includes types of community information systems and services and community needs analysis.

UNIT 1: TYPES OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

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1.1 Introduction

1.2 Learning Outcomes

1.3 Main content

1.3.1 Types of Community Information Systems and Services

1.3.2 Community Needs Analysis

1.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1.5 Summary

1.6 Glossary

1.7 Reference/Further Reading

1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Generally, members of communities globally have their varying information needs which are met formally and informally through services provided. The Librarians' Glossary (1977) defined information service as "a service provided by or for a special library which draws attention to information possessed in the library or information department in anticipation of demand; this is done by preparing and circulating news sheets, interaction surveys, reading lists abstracts, particulars of articles in current periodicals etc. which it is anticipated will be of interest to potential users of the service.

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- know and identify the two types of community information services provided by public libraries to its users.
- understand the meaning of the term community needs analysis
- procedure of conducting community needs analysis for the purpose of improving information provision and/or establishing community information service centre.

1.3 MAIN CONTENT

1.3.1 Types of Community Information Services

Basically there are two (2) types of community information services namely;

(a) General community information service (GCIS) which is anticipatory in nature,
(b) Specific community information service (SCIS) which is responsive in nature based upon the information needs of the community.

General Community Information Service (GCIS)

General community information service provides information common to all and help people to solve their day-to-day problems. For instance, information on health, agriculture, education, transport, employment, consumer problem, entertainment, housing, banking system, governmental agencies, legal information, among others are provided under the general community information service which help improve the quality of lives of rural communities generally.

Specific Community Information Service (SCIS)

Specific community information service is concerned with specific target groups such as those belonging to the lower socio-economic groups, the disadvantaged or person with information needs on a specific problem. For instance, an individual's information needs based on a specific problem on agriculture or on animal husbandry or on establishment of small scale industry, etc. This service can be provided by various methods such as counseling, referral, practical help, advice, community education, self-help, liaison with different governmental and non-governmental information provider agencies.

Other types of Community Information Services provided by the public library includes:

1. Information regarding livelihood
2. Health information
3. Drinking water
4. Transport
5. Emergency services
6. Education
7. Government information and publications
8. Self-help programmes
9. Rights and duties
10. Consumer information
11. Environment pollution
12. Employment
13. Travelling
14. Recreation
15. Internet services
16. Social programmes of different NGOs
17. Blood donation and health camp
18. Legal aids

1.3.2 Community Needs Analysis

The term community analysis refers to the process of collecting information about a library and its community members usually information about the community should include demographic and socio-economic profile about the inhabitants of the community for the purpose of establishing a library or community information service centre in the community.

Kempson (1990) stated that in analyzing community needs, the first stage in the establishment of a rural community information service is to examine a thorough analysis of the needs within the community. If the service is to be successful, it is necessary to spend a considerable amount of time and effort working with the community to identify what its needs are. The nature of the information needed in rural areas varies from community to community and in most cases people meet their information needs by talking / discussing with friends, neighbors and relatives. This does not provide sufficient detail to enable the services to be planned and it needs to be supplemented by the collection of detailed local information.

Thus, to collect the detailed information it is necessary to build up a picture of:

- The community to be served-the community profile
- The primary information providers in the community-the information providers' profile
- The information needs of people in the community and the extent to which they are being met-the information needs profile.

1.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Mention and explain the types of community information services you have studied.
2. What is community needs analysis? Outline the procedures to follow in conducting a community needs analysis?

1.5 SUMMARY

There are two types of community information services commonly provided by public libraries/community information service centres to rural communities. Community needs analysis is an important aspect to be carried out by a library or community information service centre for the purpose of determining the information needs of a community for effective provision of information to members of the community. The purpose of community needs analysis is to gather information that will help you understand the socio-economic structure of a community, its traditions, local history and indigenous knowledge systems, vis-à-vis the major information needs profile of the local community and information resources needed in a rural community

information service, for effective provision of information to members of the community.

You have learnt two types of community information services provided by public libraries or the community information service centres. In this unit you have also discussed the meaning of the concept community needs analysis and the procedures to follow in determining the community need analysis for the purpose of satisfying information needs of members of a community.

1.6 GLOSSARY

GCIS - General community information service

SCIS - Specific community information service

1.7 REFERENCES /FURTHER READING

Harrod, L.M. (1977). *The Librarians' Glossary and Reference Book.* (4th edition).

Kempson, E. (1990). Rural Community Information Services: Guidelines for

Researching Needs, Setting up Services and Evaluating Performance. *IFLA Journal*, 16(4), 429-439.

1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Types of Community Information Services

Basically, there are two (2) types of community information services namely;

(a) General community information service (GCIS) which is anticipatory in nature,
(b) Specific community information service (SCIS) which is responsive in nature based upon the information needs of the community.

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General community information service provides information common to all and help people to solve their day-to-day problems. For instance, information on health, agriculture, education, transport, employment, consumer problem, entertainment, housing, banking system, governmental agencies, legal information, among others are provided under the general community information service which help improve the quality of lives of rural communities generally.

Specific Community Information Service (SCIS)

Specific community information service is concerned with specific target groups such as those belonging to the lower socio-economic groups, the disadvantaged or person with information needs on a specific problem. For instance, an individual's information needs based on a specific problem on agriculture or on animal husbandry or on establishment of small scale industry, etc. This service can be provided by various methods such as counseling, referral, practical help, advice, community education, self-help, liaison with different governmental and non-governmental information provider agencies.

Other types of Community Information Services provided by the public library includes:

19. Information regarding livelihood
20. Health information
21. Drinking water
22. Transport
23. Emergency services
24. Education
25. Government information and publications
26. Self-help programmes
27. Rights and duties
28. Consumer information
29. Environment pollution
30. Employment
31. Travelling
32. Recreation
33. Internet services
34. Social programmes of different NGOs
35. Blood donation and health camp

2. Community Needs Analysis

The term community analysis refers to the process of collecting information about a library and its community members usually information about the community should include demographic and socio-economic profile about the inhabitants of the community for the purpose of establishing a library or community information service centre in the community.

Kempson (1990) stated that in analyzing community needs, the first stage in the establishment of a rural community information service is to examine a thorough analysis of the needs within the community. If the service is to be successful, it is necessary to spend a considerable amount of time and effort working with the community to identify what its needs are. The nature of the information needed in rural areas varies from community to community and in most cases people meet their information needs by talking / discussing with friends, neighbors and relatives. This does not provide sufficient detail to enable the services to be planned and it needs to be supplemented by the collection of detailed local information.

UNIT 2: INFORMATION NEEDS

CONTENTS

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Learning Outcomes

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2.3.1Information needs

2.3.2 Rural community

2.3.3 Characteristics of rural communities

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2.7 Reference/Further Reading

2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Community information service centres or libraries exist to satisfy the information needs of their users. It is always essential to know the information needs of the community dwellers or users; this can be easily achieved through interaction with the users by interviewing them from there you would be able to provide the right information resources and services that would satisfy their information needs.

2.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- define the term information needs
- understand how to determine information needs of users
- what is meant by a rural community
- understand the characteristics of a rural community

2.3 MAIN CONTENT

2.3.1 Definition of Information Needs

Information needs can be defined as a gap in a person's knowledge. When experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued with diligence until the desire is fulfilled. Persons with information needs often end up at the reference and information service desk of a library or community information service centre where it is the responsibility of the reference librarian to determine the precise nature of the need usually by conducting an information reference interview as a basis for recommending relevant information sources that would satisfy the need of the user. Also, according to Oyedum (2007), information needs occur when an individual or person or a community perceives that the current state of possessed knowledge is less than what is needed to deal with some issues or problems.

To determine the specific information needs of users is necessary to the management of any library or community information service centre; this is because by knowing the information needs of users one can improve the scope and efficiency of information services and encourage users to make best use of them. Therefore, libraries or community information service centres are expected to anticipate the information needs of its users, sometimes with the aids of survey research and interviews, in order to select information resources that would meet those needs. Usually persons or communities with needs that cannot be answered or met using the information resources of the library/information centre may be referred to other information provider agencies in the local community or elsewhere.

Classes of information needs:

Information needs can grow from one of the three basic human needs, such as:

- **Physiological needs**: Physiological needs of individual includes the need for food and shelter;
- **psychological needs:** psychological needs which include the need for security and domination;
- **Cognitive needs**: cognitive needs are such needs which include the need to plan and learn a skill.

Information needs can further be divided into: dormant needs and unexpressed needs:

Dormant needs manifest: when people are not aware of what they need. This is usually seen as when people are unaware of "new" information available which could help and assist them in solving a problem.

Unexpressed needs are apparent: when people are aware of needs but rather prefer to do nothing to express this need(s).

When developing an information tool, the dormant and unexpressed needs should be anticipated if possible. This can be attempted by making deductions from available information on the information seeking behavior and the attitude to information of a prospective target group.

Hindrances to meeting information needs

There are various difficulties obstructing people from successfully using information. A person experiencing uncertainty does not recognize his specific need, especially if it is intangible. Because he is unable to specify what he really needs, he is unable to find a way to satisfy this need. There are a number of factors playing a role in successfully meeting information needs. These factors include the following:

Factors relating to personality:

1. persistence, willingness to continue and try again if success is not achieved immediately;
2. thoroughness, to search deeply and painstakingly;
3. orderliness, by searching systematically;
4. motivation, leading to commitment, to persist; and
5. receptiveness, which is the willingness to accept information from other sources.

Factors relating to time:

1. a lack of sufficient time to obtain and digest information in the time allotted for the task.

Factors relating to access:

1. even if someone knows about the existence of information, it might be difficult to obtain;
2. distance from places where information can be obtained;
3. format and language in which information is available; and
4. people use what is easiest to get and closest to hand, and not what is actually the best or most appropriate

Factors relating to the lack of resources and excessive costs:

1. Internet access and on-line uses of information systems are costly

Factors relating to information overload:

1. the amount of information can be overpowering. It needs to be evaluated and only the best selected

2.3.2 Rural Community

According to Baba (1988) the term rural community connotes the non-urban sector of any area or country. It is normally characterized by relatively small-size settlements (as contrasted to large-size of urban settlements) and heavy dependence on primary production activities (such as hunting/fishing, pastoralism and agriculture). It suffices to note here that apart from being the largest component of the national population of most developing countries like Nigeria, the rural population is also known to be the

poorest. The term rural has therefore come to be associated with poverty, deprivation and under-development. Similarly, Diso (2009) described rural areas in Nigeria as often conceptualized as areas characterized by sparsely populated settlements and absence of modern amenities (electricity, pipe-born water, schools, hospitals recreational facilities, etc.) with primary industries, mostly agriculture and local crafts as the people's dominant occupation.

Generally, the state of quality of life of the inhabitants of the rural areas remains very low. The people in rural area remain very low because of lack of access to basic social infrastructural services such as good roads, good water supply, educational services, health services and decent housing especially when compared to the access of the urban population to such infrastructures and services.

2.3.3 Characteristics of Rural Communities

Gypiyem & Dakur (2002) enumerated some characteristics of rural communities in developing nations as follows:

- Majority are strictly agricultural subsistence and others engage in small-scale businesses such as carpentry, weaving, sewing, trading, carving, and so on.
- There is low level of literacy
- There is low level of innovativeness
- There is inadequate healthcare facilities and services
- Rampant cases of disputes on land because of high inclination to land possessions.
- Inaccessibility of agricultural products to good transportation system, even some rural areas cannot be linked with the local government headquarters or state capitals.

Similarly, Anyanwu (1992) outlined six (6) basic characteristics with which a rural community in Nigeria can be identified as:

- Share beliefs which are nurtured and cherished by the people in the development of their common ideals, objectives, attitudes and values
- Share bonds of fellowship which demands obligations from the citizens and the conferment of benefits to them.
- Set standards and patterns of behavior which bring every citizen to conform to norms and values; it also helps to develop intimacy of relationships and bond of love and association.
- Common culture which is the aggregate of the social, ethnic, intellectual, artistic, ideas, traditions, customs, institutions, associations and materials.

Common administration where there is a common plan, a process involving accountability and responsibility for the good governance of such community.

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What does the term information needs means? As a librarian or information

provider how do you determine information needs of your users?

2. What does the term rural community mean? Discuss the characteristics of rural communities?

2.5 SUMMARY

Knowing information needs of the community dwellers is essential for the purpose of satisfying the information needs of the users. It is important to first and foremost determine the information needs through interaction and interview with the users to know their exact needs before satisfying them. The term rural community refers to the non-urban sector of any area in a country. It is normally characterized by relatively small-size settlements as contrasted to large-size of urban settlements.

You have learnt what information need is and how to determine information needs of users in order to provide the right information resources and services that will satisfy the users' needs. A rural community is usually associated with lack of access to basic infrastructures and services such as access to good roads, water supply, electricity, housing, hospitals, schools, libraries, among others that would improve their quality of life especially when compared to the urban communities' access to such social infrastructure and services.

2.6 GLOSSARY

Reference and information service desk – A reference service desk is a service point in a library or information center, where you can ask for help in finding library resources.

Reference Librarian – A reference librarian recommend, interpret, and use resources to help library users with specific information needs (ALA 2022).

2.7 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Information needs can be defined as a gap in a person's knowledge. When experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued with diligence until the desire is fulfilled. Persons with information needs often end up at the reference and information service desk of a library or community information service centre where it is the responsibility of the reference librarian to determine the precise nature of the need usually by conducting an information reference interview as a basis for recommending relevant information sources that would satisfy the need of the user.

2. According to Baba (1988) the term rural community connotes the non-urban sector of any area or country. It is normally characterized by relatively small-size settlements (as contrasted to large-size of urban settlements) and heavy dependence on primary production activities (such as hunting/fishing, pastoralism and agriculture). It suffices to note here that apart from being the largest component of the national population of most developing countries like Nigeria, the rural population is also known to be the poorest. The term rural has therefore come to be associated with poverty, deprivation and under-development. Similarly, Diso (2009) described rural areas in Nigeria as often conceptualized as areas characterized by sparsely populated settlements and absence of modern amenities (electricity, pipe-born water, schools, hospitals recreational facilities, etc.) with primary industries, mostly agriculture and local crafts as the people's dominant occupation.

MODULE 3: INFORMATION NEEDS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN NIGERIA

INTRODUCTION

Rural communities have different categories of information needs. Information needs varying from agriculture, health, marriage, aged in the society, different age groups, widows and tourism. Nigeria is a multicultural society which reflects its multi-needs of information.

UNIT 1: INFORMATION NEEDS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN NIGERIA

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1.1 Introduction

1.2 Learning Outcomes

1.3 Main Content

1.3.1 Categories of information needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria

1.3.2 Philosophy of information services to Rural Communities in Nigeria

1.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1.5 Summary

1.6 Glossary

1.7 Reference/Further Reading

1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Information need is usually studied as a component of information behavior. Information needed may be defined as information required by an individual or group at a particular time to fulfill a required task or to solve a specific problem. When an information need occurs there is definitely a need to complete a task; but there is a gap between what a person knows and what they are supposed to know (Fourie & Bakker, n.d). There are two types of information need, individual needs and group needs. Some of these information needs may be immediate, such as information needed to solve a problem at hand or to take decision. Some information need may not be pressing or immediate and they are referred as passive information which is in form of a stored knowledge. According to Umunnakwe (2013) information needs may be classified into three main types: needs that have become obvious due to an existing gap in knowledge, information needs that a user is aware of but does not want to express, and those information needs that a user may not be aware of, he/ she stumbles

upon it in the course of duty. In other words this implies that an individual has an information need when he/ she recognizes that his or her knowledge about something or situation is inadequate.

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the philosophy of information services to rural communities in Nigeria
- understand a need for a model of information services for rural development.

1.3 MAIN CONTEXT

1.3.1 Categories of Information Needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria

Ogunsheye, Alegbeleye & Aina (1985) gave different categories of needs of rural communities in Nigeria. These categories include:

- The neighborhood: information needs in the neighborhood include problems of water supply, electricity supply, environmental sanitation, refuse disposal, road maintenance and drought.

- Health: information on how individuals can prevent different diseases that affect them and awareness of available healthcare delivery and what it costs. Antenatal and post natal care, immunization of children in the community.

- Agriculture and allied occupations: the greatest area of information needs by rural Nigerians is in agriculture. Such information needs include planting of treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plants and animal diseases, fertilizer application, farm machineries, recommended thinning practices, proper storage of farm products, marketing techniques, cooperative activities and other agro-cultural activities.

- Education: information needs of the existing rural schools, needs of the illiterate's and semi-illiterates. They need to have relevant information that will develop in their interest and support of teaching and learning processes.

- Housing: rural public need information about where they can obtained loans to build houses and the type of materials to be used and where they can be easily obtained

- Employment: rural communities need information on employment opportunities on taxation, investment opportunities, banking and other financial activities.

- Transportation: they need information on the cost of bicycles, motorcycles and vehicles and where to obtain them. They need information about road construction and maintenance.

- Religion, recreation and culture: Information is required on religions, recreations and cultural activities.

- Welfare and family matters: information is required on problems of marriage, childcare, juvenile delinquency etc.

- Legal matters: information is needed on laws that affect the rural dwellers. Such law ranges from marriage law, family and land law.

- Crime and safety: information is required on how to prevent crimes, report crimes, role of the law enforcement agents within the community or information on how to form a vigilante group.

- Policies and government: information is needed on political rights of the people and how they can exercise such right when the need arises.

- Land: information is needed on land tenure systems, acquisition and transfer of land ownership etc.

- Information is needed by rural inhabitants in almost all human endeavors. As listed above development and transformation can only be possible, effective and relevant when information needs of the rural dwellers are met positively and timely.

Information Needs of Rural Dwellers The diverse nature of rural communities indicates that their information needs are many and multidimensional. It is very important to determine the totality of their information needs. In Nigeria, there is no comprehensive document on the information needs of rural inhabitants. This is a case of neglect. Attempts have been made to explore the needs of individual rural communities for the purpose of research. Alegbeleye and Aina (1985: 13) have quoted Ogunsheye who provided information needs categories of Nigerian rural communities, which include:

i. The neighborhood: information needs in the neighborhood include problems of water supply, electricity supply, Environmental sanitation, refuse disposal, road maintenance and drought.
ii. Health information on how individuals can, prevent different diseases that affect them, and awareness of available healthcare delivery and what it costs.
iii. Agriculture and allied occupations: the greatest area of information needs by rural Nigerians is in agriculture. Such information needs include planting treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plants and animal disease, fertilizer application, farm machineries, recommended thinning practices, proper storage of farm products, marketing techniques, cooperative activities and other agro-cultural activities.
iv. Education: information needs of the existing rural schools, needs of the illiterate's and semiilliterates. They need to have relevant information that will develop in their interest and support of teaching and learning processes.

v. Housing: rural public need information about where they can obtain loans to build houses and the type of materials to be used and where they can be easily obtained.
vi. Employment: rural communities need information on employment opportunities on taxation, investment opportunities, banking and other financial activities.
vii. Transportation: they need information on the cost of bicycles, motorcycles and vehicles and where to obtain them. They need information about road construction and maintenance. Religion, Recreation and Culture: information is required on religions, recreations and Cultural activities.
viii. Welfare and Family matters: information is required on problems of marriage, childcare, juvenile delinquency etc.
ix. Legal matters: information is needed on laws that affect the rural dwellers. Such law ranges from marriage to land.
x. Crime and Safety: Information is required on how to prevent crimes, report crimes, role of the law enforcement agents etc.
xi. Land: information is needed on land tenure systems, acquisition and transfer of land etc.

1.3.2 Philosophy of Information Services to Rural Communities in Nigeria

Public libraries/community information service centres are expected to provide an effective information service in rural areas. Ready access to information is indispensable to the advancement of rural communities. The right information provided when it is needed and where it is needed improves the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to make informed decisions that would enrich their lives and advancement of their communities.

Unfortunately, public libraries that are supposedly the rallying point of rural community information services appeared to have failed over the years to chart a comprehensive and effective philosophy of information services to rural communities. In Nigeria, that will rally-round all the information service provider agencies in the transformation of our rural communities through provision of effective information services. Diso (2009) observed that Nigerians are still dominantly peasant farmers, petty traders, middle men or government workers/agents and the country has the potentials to develop all sectors of human endeavor more especially if information services are fully enhanced in rural communities throughout the country. Public libraries are good government organs that can transform the rural communities through effective philosophy of information services.

A study of the information needs of the rural people spanning the period of 1981-1987, by Aboyade (1987) has shown that rural dwellers need information not less that of the urban dwellers, if presented to them in the appropriate format. It could help to boost their agricultural productivity, promote socio-economic equity and encourage grassroots community participation in the process of development. But the prevailing western style of librarianship, firmly embed in written literacy has tended to make the existing libraries irrelevant to those who need them. Thus, Aboyade (1987) calls for a

Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) to be created as part of the National Information System (NATIS) which would become bedrock for rural socio-economic and cultural transformation.

1.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What are the different categories of needs of rural communities in Nigeria?

2. Do you agree that public libraries/community information service centres in Nigeria have failed in providing information to rural communities? Discuss your answer.

1.5 SUMMARY

Rural information needs are categorized into different types reflective of each community. These needs could be similar at the same time different. Information provision to rural dwellers is far from adequate in Nigeria and has suffered from neglect. This shows the need for public libraries to come up with a philosophy for information services to rural communities in Nigeria. The difference or gap between the urban and rural communities is not much except that the latter has disadvantage of been neglected due because they have more number of illiteracy in their communities. None the less, it is expected that all their information needs be met and timely too.

People in rural areas whether literate or illiterate require access to quality information that will help them improve their quality of life. Similarly, access to quality information will contribute to the empowerment of rural communities to become better informed citizens generally thereby making life easier for them.

You have studied under this unit the different categorizes of needs prominent in the rural communities in Nigeria. You also learnt the need for a philosophy of information services to rural communities in Nigeria.

1.6 GLOSSARY

RUDIS - Rural Development Information System

NATIA - National Information System

1.7 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

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1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Categories of needs of rural communities in Nigeria:

- The neighborhood: information needs in the neighborhood include problems of water supply, electricity supply, environmental sanitation, refuse disposal, road maintenance and drought.
- Health: information on how individuals can prevent different diseases that affect them and awareness of available healthcare delivery and what it costs. Antenatal and post natal care, immunization of children in the community.
- Agriculture and allied occupations: the greatest area of information needs by rural Nigerians is in agriculture. Such information needs include planting of treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plants and animal diseases, fertilizer application, farm machineries, recommended thinning practices, proper storage of farm products, marketing techniques, cooperative activities and other agro-cultural activities.
- Education: information needs of the existing rural schools, needs of the illiterate's and semi-illiterates. They need to have relevant information that will develop in their interest and support of teaching and learning processes.
- Housing: rural public need information about where they can obtained loans to build houses and the type of materials to be used and where they can be easily obtained
- Employment: rural communities need information on employment opportunities on taxation, investment opportunities, banking and other financial activities.
- Transportation: they need information on the cost of bicycles, motorcycles and vehicles and where to obtain them. They need information about road construction and maintenance.
- Religion, recreation and culture: Information is required on religions, recreations and cultural activities.
- Welfare and family matters: information is required on problems of marriage, childcare, juvenile delinquency etc.

- Legal matters: information is needed on laws that affect the rural dwellers. Such law ranges from marriage law, family and land law.
- Crime and safety: information is required on how to prevent crimes, report crimes, role of the law enforcement agents within the community or information on how to form a vigilante group.
- Policies and government: information is needed on political rights of the people and how they can exercise such right when the need arises.
- Land: information is needed on land tenure systems, acquisition and transfer of land ownership etc.
- Information is needed by rural inhabitants in almost all human endeavors. As listed above development and transformation can only be possible, effective and relevant when information needs of the rural dwellers are met positively and timely.

2. Unfortunately, public libraries that are supposedly the rallying point of rural community information services appeared to have failed over the years to chart a comprehensive and effective philosophy of information services to rural communities. In Nigeria, that will rally-round all the information service provider agencies in the transformation of our rural communities through provision of effective information services. Diso (2009) observed that Nigerians are still dominantly peasant farmers, petty traders, middle men or government workers/agents and the country has the potentials to develop all sectors of human endeavor more especially if information services are fully enhanced in rural communities throughout the country. Public libraries are good government organs that can transform the rural communities through effective philosophy of information services.

UNIT 2: PROPOSED MODEL OF INFORMATION SERVICES TO RURAL COMMUNITIES IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Learning Outcomes

2.3 Main content

2.3.1 Proposed Model of Information Services to Rural communities in Nigeria

2.3.2 Information Sources in Rural Communities

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

2.5 Summary

2.6 Glossary

2.7 Reference/Further Reading

2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Library and information services in Nigeria have been criticized for being more visible in the urban centre at the expense of the rural majority. One of the challenges to the library and information profession today is how to redefine its goals, objectives and philosophy with a view to serving rural communities who also need various types of information resources and services that would improve their quality of life. Several studies have shown that rural communities in Nigeria get information through a variety of sources and information provider agencies. However, the qualities of information they are getting appeared to be ineffective and insufficient, due to the fact that the information provided were unstructured and uncoordinated.

2.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the need for a model of information services to rural communities that will serve as a philosophy for efficient and effective information provision in rural areas.
- know the various sources of information in available in the rural communities such as; interpersonal contact, electronic media (Radio and Television), print

media (books journals, posters, newspapers, etc.) and governmental and non-governmental agencies.

2.3 MAIN CONTENT

2.3.1 Proposed Model of Information Services to Rural Areas in Nigeria.

Certainly, there is a considerable amount of information in the rural communities from a variety of sources. A large percentage of the information resources and services available to them appear irrelevant and therefore do not meet their information needs because such information resources and services are not provided in the appropriate packages for the rural people to use in a meaningful manner. This could be attributed to absence of a favorable philosophy of information services to rural communities in Nigeria. On the basis of the foregoing, the envisaged model of Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) by Aboyade (1987) can be adapted to serve the basis for establishing a philosophy for information services to rural community in Nigeria.

According to Aboyade (1987), Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) is to be created as part of the National Information System (NATIS), which should become bedrock for rural development in Nigeria. Ever since this well-intentioned project, the local, state and federal governments in Nigeria have made no concrete efforts to integrate it to our rural information services.

The major objectives of the Rural Development Information System project are to:

- investigate the information requirements of rural dwellers generally
- identify sources of information required in rural communities
- examine traditional modes of information transfer, including principally oral traditions and indigenous knowledge systems and see how they can be made to facilitate access to knowledge and information generally.
- investigate and identify various means of disseminating modern scientific and technological information to non-literates.
- provide a framework for harmonizing all information resources aimed at rural development.
- devise a training programme for library personnel in information handling in a non-literate environment.

2.3.2 Information Sources in Rural Communities

We will begin this unit by examining the various information sources in rural communities. These information sources include; inter-personal contact, electronic media, print media, governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Interpersonal Contact as Sources of Information

People are important sources of information in rural communities. Diso (2009) stated that Nigerian rural populace get access to information through a variety of sources which include; interpersonal contact-the oral traditional communication system, information about any development emanating within or outside the communities is

passed from individual to individual or from community to community through oral means which includes communal meetings, festivals and ceremonies, religious activities, ordinary conversations and gossips. Also through expressions in artistic form such as drama, folktales, riddles, proverbs and songs are often used as sources of information to communicate the inherited wisdom and view of the world held by the community embedded in their indigenous knowledge system.

Electronic Media as Sources of Information

Electronic Media (Radio and Television) plays a significant role in opening the rural areas to the outside world through various programmes that serve as sources of information as well as entertainment. Radio is gradually becoming the second most important source of information for the rural people because like oral communication, its impact is not dependent upon literacy. Most radio programs or jingles are communicated in the local languages the communities can understand. Similarly, in terms of accessibility, radio is perhaps the most direct means of information in rural areas because the availability of the radio makes it easy for almost everybody to own a radio in most rural areas. Television has the advantage of combining both vision and hearing and like the radio, gets information directly to the people. However, one disadvantage of the television is that it is expensive therefore not widely accessible to the poor. As a result of these factors, community viewing centres were established in many rural areas.

The Print Media as Source of Information

Unlike the interpersonal and electronic media as source of information in rural areas, the impact of information transmission in rural areas via the print media (books journals, newspapers, bulletins, pamphlets, posters, etc. is highly limited by the literacy factor. The print media as source of information is restricted to civil servants, teachers, extension workers, religious scholars, students and to certain extent the adult literates who acquired literacy through adult education classes in the rural communities. However, print media constitute a good source of information to information provider agencies in rendering information services to rural communities.

Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies

The increasing concern about the conditions of the rural communities in recent time has developed into a lot of activities geared toward provision and dissemination of information by both government and non-governmental agencies such as local primary and post primary school teachers; adult educators; information officers; community development workers; health and sanitary extension workers; agricultural extension workers; community leaders etc. can be classified as sources of information in rural communities. Although, in most cases these information provider agencies function independently of one another often using different methods in disseminating their information to rural people.

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Is there the need for model of information services to rural areas in Nigeria?

Discuss in the light of RUDIS?

2. Outline and discuss information sources available to people in rural communities in Nigeria.

2.5 SUMMARY

The amount of information available to rural communities from various sources and provider agencies appear irrelevant to needs of the users due to lack of a philosophy that will guide the provision and dissemination of community information services to rural communities. The need for adoption of the Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) as proposed by B.O. Aboyade (1987) is to be looked at. Rural communities in Nigeria get information through a variety of sources which include interpersonal contacts, electronic media, print media, government and non-governmental agencies.

A proposed model of information services to rural communities in Nigeria, particularly the Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) was given. You also learnt the various sources of information available to rural communities in Nigeria. This model would serve as a bedrock for rural development in Nigeria.

2.6 GLOSSARY

Information source: "An information source is a person, thing, or place from which information comes, arises, or is obtained" (IGI Global 2022).

2.7 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

Aboyade, B.O. (1987). *The Provision of Information for Rural Development.* Ibadan: Fountain Publications.

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IGI GLOBAL, (2022). What are Information Sources. Retrieved from http://www.igi-global.com

2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Certainly, there is a considerable amount of information in the rural communities from a variety of sources. A large percentage of the information resources and services available to them appear irrelevant and therefore do not meet their information needs because such information resources and services are not provided in the appropriate packages for the rural people to use in a meaningful manner. This

could be attributed to absence of a favorable philosophy of information services to rural communities in Nigeria. On the basis of the foregoing, the envisaged model of Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) by Aboyade (1987) can be adapted to serve the basis for establishing a philosophy for information services to rural community in Nigeria.

2. Information sources available to people in rural communities in Nigeria:

Interpersonal Contact as Sources of Information

People are important sources of information in rural communities. Diso (2009) stated that Nigerian rural populace get access to information through a variety of sources which include; interpersonal contact-the oral traditional communication system, information about any development emanating within or outside the communities is passed from individual to individual or from community to community through oral means which includes communal meetings, festivals and ceremonies, religious activities, ordinary conversations and gossips. Also through expressions in artistic form such as drama, folktales, riddles, proverbs and songs are often used as sources of information to communicate the inherited wisdom and view of the world held by the community embedded in their indigenous knowledge system.

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Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies

The increasing concern about the conditions of the rural communities in recent time has developed into a lot of activities geared toward provision and dissemination of information by both government and non-governmental agencies such as local primary and post primary school teachers; adult educators; information officers; community development workers; health and sanitary extension workers; agricultural extension workers; community leaders etc. can be classified as sources of information in rural communities. Although, in most cases these information provider agencies function independently of one another often using different methods in disseminating their information to rural people.

MODULE 4: INFORMATION PROVIDERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Information providers in rural communities include the following: Public libraries/community information service centres, the mass-media, primary healthcare centres, agricultural extension services, community development workers etc. However, it is important to note that these information provider agencies appear to work independent of one another in disseminating information hence, making the information environment in rural communities not properly structured and coordinated for provision and dissemination of quality information for rural development.

UNIT 1: INFORMATION PROVIDERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

CONTENTS

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Learning Outcomes

1.3 Main content

1.3.1 Information Providers in Rural Communities

1.3.2 Principles of Information Repackaging

1.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1.5 Summary

1.6 Glossary

1.7 References/Further Reading

1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the different categories of information provider agencies in rural communities
- understand the meaning of information repackaging
- learn the principles of rural community information repackaging
- learn the process of rural community information repackaging

1.3 MAIN CONTENT

1.3.1 Information Providers in Rural Communities

As Librarians and information professionals we should take the leading role in repackaging information for the rural communities. The rural communities are predominately farmers as such we the librarians are expected to repackage information materials which have been tailored to meet the information needs of rural inhabitants in a language and format they would understand (Aboyade 1987) Information to be repackaged could be sourced from published materials, raw data collected by research institutions, government statistical service, online information and even from peoples own corpus of indigenous knowledge. (Onwubiko 1999).

We shall begin this unit by examining the various information provider agencies in rural communities. These include; libraries/community information service centres, the mass-media, primary healthcare centres, agricultural extension services and community development workers.

Public libraries / rural community information services is a public library-based activity, it is the agency that provides community information services. Library-based community information services are still not visible in our communities both in the urban and rural areas. Community information services are provided by public libraries. This indicates that for many years severe criticisms have been leveled that the public library system generally for allowing literacy to be the pre-requisite for reaping the benefit offered by the public libraries. Libraries, especially those in rural areas should be adapted to suit local conditions where farmers are predominant in many cases and cannot benefit from information services offered by the libraries because majority of them are illiterates. Over the years, attempts to find a suitable alternative to the western public library model have resulted in different experiments and proposals such as the Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) project carried out at Badeku village near Ibadan, Nigeria. Ever since this project was initiated, the Local; States and Federal Government in Nigeria made no concrete efforts to assist its integration to public libraries for effective provision of rural information services in Nigeria.

The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. The public library provides a range of services, both within the library and in the community, to satisfy their users' needs. Some of the key services of the public library are:

a. Loan of books and other media.
b. Provision of books and other materials for use in the library.
c. Information services using print and electronic media.
d. Readers' advisory services including reservation services
e. Community information services
f. User education including support for literacy programmes
g. Programming and events. (IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines, 2001

Since the inhabitants of the rural communities are predominantly farmers, what type of information would they need? How can we repackage the needed information to suit their information needs on agriculture?

Types of agricultural information for farmers

Accororing to Aina, (1995) in Iwhiwhu (2008), the types of agricultural information required by farmers can be categorized as technical/ scientific, commercial, social – cultural and legal information.

Technical/ scientific information

This information arises from research and development at research institutes, government departments, universities and international organizations. It includes reports, journal articles, theses and dissertations.

Commercial information

This is information on sales of agricultural commodities, cooperatives and export activities. Most of this information is found in newsletters, gazettes, feasibility repots and government publications

Social cultural Information

Information on traditional agricultural practices (indigenous knowledge), labor availability etc. the possible sources of this information are books, government publications, newspapers, and reports.

Legal information

This concerns any legal information on land tenure, land distribution, taxes, agricultural products and most of this information is contained in policies, compendium of laws, or government publications.

INFORMATION SOURCES AND PROVIDERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Mass-Media (Radio and Television)

The Mass-Media are used to disseminate information to rural dwellers. According to Diso (2009), the introduction of electronic media, mostly the radio has added a new and significant dimension in information transmission in rural areas. Today, electronic media (radio and to some extent, television) play a significant role in opening the rural areas to the "outside World" through their various programmes that serves as sources of information as well as entertainment. Radio is gradually becoming the most important source of information for rural people because its impact is not dependent upon literacy and the rural people can afford to own one since it is not expensive.

Primary Healthcare Centres

Primary Healthcare Centres in our rural areas provide information on health matters to the rural people generally. The existence of primary healthcare areas provide health information on how individual and the community as a whole can prevent different diseases that affect or might affect them and create awareness of available health care delivery service programmes in the community such as family planning, immunization, malaria, communicable diseases, health education, sanitation, nutrition, etc.

Agricultural Extension Services

This category of information providers work closely with farmers who are the majority in our rural areas. They provide information about farming practices derived from various agricultural researches which include but not limited to planting treated seeds, soil conservation, prevention of plants diseases, fertilizer application, farm machineries, proper storage of farm products, marketing techniques, cooperative activities, etc. Agricultural extension workers indeed provide critical information to farmers for better yield of farm produce. Their importance in the provision of quality information services to rural communities cannot be overstated. However, according to Camble (1994) studies have shown that many rural development programmes have failed in developing countries, because they were planned with insufficient relevant information.

Indigenous knowledge transfer

It used to be thought that development consisted of the dissemination of modem, scientific and sophisticated knowledge to inform and uplift the rural masses. Rural people's own knowledge tended to be despised and ignored. This is no longer the case and the existence of indigenous knowledge, side by side with external information, is acknowledged as important in the development process. It is now accepted that any attempt to communicate modem scientific and technical knowledge to rural people must take due cognizance of their beliefs and culture (Aboyade 1981). Rural people are strong in information about farming practices and the environment. Theirs is an adaptable system because it is based on observation and therefore continuously updated and corrected. The mobilization of rural people's knowledge is necessary. Ways have to be found of linking the indigenous and exotic knowledge systems, so that each complements the other. The full participation of rural people in the process of introducing new ideas and in the design and implementation of development projects is essential. This not only ensures the incorporation of indigenous knowledge but fosters the development of a third knowledge system, the knowledge created by rural people as they take part in the development process (Mchombu 1993; Karlsson 1995)

Primary (research) information has to be produced, organized and then repackaged in a form understandable by the end user. This extension material must then in its turn be organized and finally communicated to the farmer. Considering the type of information needed and its specificity to local and particular conditions, clearly any

mechanism of information transfer must be conceived not only at the national level but especially at the local level

Traditional communication systems

There is already an indigenous information transfer system in existence in rural communities. Information is constantly circulating. Providers of information must take into account the traditional ways of communication and even utilize some of their methods. Exchange of information takes place where people meet, e.g. market places, health clinics, bus stops, village meetings, schools, churches, mosques.

Person-to-person communication is the most effective, via priests, local dignitaries, age-group leaders, friends, neighbors and parents. There are acknowledged 'information gatekeepers', elders of the community or those holding positions in the village authority structure. They are the recognized leaders of thought. These people often have to demonstrate by their own examples that it is in order to adopt new ways of doing things. They also provide avenues for discussing and explaining the implications, of suggested innovations.

Media of communication

Experiments with communication media confirm that printed media only meets with limited success. Where high rates of illiteracy are present, print-based systems are unsuitable. Visual (e.g. posters), audio (radio, cassettes) and mixed media (e.g. film) have had varied success. Most effective are media which incorporates traditional systems, like theatre, song and group discussion. Indigenous knowledge has always been transmitted very effectively through teaching, apprenticeship and storytelling (Lundstrom 1985; Rosenberg 1987). In Uganda repackaged information is presented in an amalgamation of almost all media because most communities are a mixture of both literate and illiterate populations

External information

External information to rural communities is at the moment fragmented between several government ministries, non-governmental agencies and parastatals. Most of the agencies supply information as part of a larger package of inputs and services and within a narrow subject field. The supply of information is dismally low. All this leads to a serious gap in the exchange process and also in the information transfer chain that links rural communities with other knowledge centers both within and without their own country (Mchombu 1993). Since most people in rural areas earn their livelihood through farming, a considerable amount of research has been carried out on the way information is transferred to farmers and other end-users.

1.3.2 PRINCIPLES OF RURAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION REPACKAGING

What is Information Repackaging?

According to Igbeka (2008) Information Repackaging is a library and information service which customizes information to meet specific needs of its users. With the advent of the information age, information overload occurs frequently making it increasingly difficult to access information that is relevant and comprehensive. The purpose of an information repackaging service is to locate, retrieve, evaluate, interpret and repackage information on a particular subject in order to save time, labour and costs to users.

Therefore, the term information repackaging can be defined as the ability and method of making information available to groups of people in a particular format that could be best accessible to them instead of the former format that was difficult for them to understand or access. Furthermore, for information to be beneficial to users, it may require interpretation and conversion to a form that the end users can understand and assimilate.

Provision of repackaging information requires a good knowledge of the target users and the kinds of information they need particularly in the case of rural communities, where majority are not literate. The study of information needs of users should be carried out continuously as the needs of users changes and are not always constant. A feedback is also required about the appropriate format into which the information will be repackaged and about the channels through which it will be disseminated.

Information repackaging Information repackaging refers to putting together information gathered from different sources and condensing it. Information Repackaging (IR) is a library and information service which customizes information to meet the specific needs of users Packaging is the bundling of products and services to address specific needs. (Iwhiwhu 2008).It can be done by:

• Reformatting and synthesizing raw information;

• Combining expertise or consulting on a subject with access to relevant information sources;

• Providing training or assistance to a user in accessing an information product. Information repackaging can be done in many ways including reformatting and synthesizing raw information, combining expertise or consulting on subject with access to relevant information sources and providing training or assistance to users in increasing an information product. However, illiteracy usually hampers the delivery of information to farmers. Therefore, information providers should always adequately interpret, repackage and apply information to the user's situation and help communities to act on the information they receive.

Why information is repackaged?

Language barrier

Information contained in scientific and technical journals/research reports and books is in languages which make them inappropriate for use by most people (WHO 2008).

Even when the language is appropriate there are other language barriers and format considerations.

Illiteracy

Majority of farmers in the in the rural communities are illiterate. Information repackaging promotes literacy by providing information to farmers on types of pesticide made for each crops, irrigation methods etc.

Attitude

As the saying goes, “seeing is believing” Many people would rather see for themselves than hear how best to manage their farmers, this is where the use of posters can be effective because situations can be illustrated and appreciated well.

Ignorance

Some Information is repackaged because people might not be aware that some farming activities actually decrease food production as for example planting the same crop over and over again decreases the soil nutrients.

Lack of funds

Indictate the medium of dissemination of information. As for example if the population is big then instead of printed material, one could use the radio to communicate agro biodiversity information. Information repackaging is one way of overcoming these obstacles .It is important in assisting the facilitation and appropriate dissemination of gathered information. Presentation of information is crucial for it being disseminated properly. It must be understandable, readable, acceptable and usable.

FUNCTIONS OF INFORMATION REPACKAGING.

The repackaging of information serves the following functions:

As a saving tool

Local farmers have minute use information over and above their requirements. The repackaging of information helps reduce the time farmers may otherwise have to spend on lengthy perusal and interpretation of large volumes of agro-diversity information.

As a selective tool and a systematic sorter of useful information

Farmers are ensured wider access to useful information originally contained only in limited copies of publications available in libraries and documentation centres.

As a translation tool

Good materials prepared in various languages and local dialects are increasing in number. These have to be translated into a more commonly used language to ensure wide use.

As an opportunity for practical application of research results

Farmers are provided a chance to correlate with the wealth of information emanating from research studies, experiments and action projects through overt policy and practical implications and recommendations.

As a means for prompt delivery of relevant information

Farmers are kept updated on the latest available agro-diversity information, a facility that is particularly made significant by the current rapid generation of new information which may sometimes invalidate information preceding it.

Key steps in information repackaging

The process of repackaging information depends on the availability of materials, from research institutes, government sources, online services and networks and indigenous knowledge. The present technology of integrated text, graphics and media facilitates repackaging. Information repackaging can also be seen as part of a process of information consolidation. The following are proposed steps for information repackaging.

• Study of potential users, user needs and closing information gaps

• Selection of primary information sources and the evaluation of the information content

• Content analysis: this enables restructuring (condensing, rewriting, translating, etc.) and packaging or repackaging of information

• Dissemination of the packages in the various formats - accompanied by feedback from users - evaluation and adjustment of the material.

IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION REPACKAGING AT INFORMATION CENTERS

Information repackaging entitles a systematic process of adding value to information services. It is a value added component s would include but are not limited to information analysis, synthesis, editing, translating and transmitting its symbolic and media formats. IR ensures currency, accuracy, pertinence, comprehensiveness, ease of comprehension and convenience of use. Following are fore major importance of (IR) information repackaging. 1.To customize information to user need. 2.To facilitate dissemination, organization, and for communication. 3.To simplify e.g. an automated bibliography is like a map in the world of information overload. 4.To facilitate interactivity between user, knowledge base, and technology.

Methods for Information Repackaging

In the process of designing the repackaging, it is essential to have specific information about the target audience to collect, process and apply the required information and design and repackage of information according to user demands. The methodology of information repackaging includes the following points.

1. Preparation of the first brief: the first transitory brief consist selective information prepared by information experts.

2. Analysis of the brief: the first brief should analyze with reference to the target audience, the information content, the budget of the message carrier as well as the life cycle of the carrier. The repackaged product should give sufficient description on the required information topic and communicate to the target audience.

3. Design criteria for the message carrier: the message carrier should be such that it attracts the reader.

4. Selection of the message carrier: the message carrier should be designed with several with several shapes and sizes.

5. Production of the message carrier: the message carrier should be well designed before producing it.

6. Feedback system planning: it is important to design a feedback system to judge the success of the repackaging information.

In identifying the user groups, their information needs and the corresponding repackaging activities, the information absorption characteristics should be considered because the ability of different user groups to absorb information differs. For instance, while policy makers aged 40-50 share an interest in demography, they do differ in their ability to absorb information. In other words, a finer set of factors, in addition to professional levels, geographical location, organisational set-up, and subject interests, effects the degree to which publications can be effective in creating change. These factors, which are discussed below, determine to a great extent users' ability to absorb information.

a) Educational attainment and literacy levels: Based on research, users with lower levels of literacy benefit more from repackaged information that are heavily illustrated with pictures, charts, and other visual aids. Likewise, less educated individuals are more influenced by one-sided presentations when already convinced of the position advocated, and also exhibit more marked changes of opinion when conclusions to a problem are explicitly drawn. For users with a higher level of education, two-sided presentations are much more effective. This difference is given due consideration, for example, in deciding the suitability of discussing the advantages and/or disadvantages of a large family size.

b) Professional levels and workload: The professional levels and workload of users also influence their information absorption characteristics. For example, policy makers and administrators at the top of the organisational hierarchy are usually confronted with an overload of information material for which they do

not have sufficient time to absorb and much less peruse. In this case, repackaging activities that summarize entire documents, highlighting only the most important points and their policy-oriented implications or recommendations are suggested.

c) Psychological, cultural and social variables: A considerable number of research studies' on information diffusion and utilization show that different psychological, cultural and social variables affect users' capacity to absorb and internalize information. For instance. the effectiveness of fear appeals in changing attitudes and behavior, such as the adverse effects of non- or limited access to education and housing facilities on families with more than two children, depends on the credibility of the source of information and the extent of general/public support to the message conveyed by a particular piece of information. Fear appeals directed to the welfare of people valued by the 16 receiver of information (e.g. family members, close friends) are also effective. The projection of cultural similarities also accounts for better absorption characteristics. For instance, the use of a picture of a family enjoying the many benefits of a highly urbanised place may prove counterproductive if the audience consists of rural families.

d) Awareness of the population programme and attitude towards it: Absorption characteristics are also affected by the users' level of awareness of the population education programme and their attitudes to it. At various stages leading to their acceptance of an innovation in the population education programme, users need different types of information. Initially, users would require information on the nature of the innovation (i.e. values clarification as a new method for teaching population education), its advantages, uses and the reasons for accepting it vis-a-vis the traditional teaching approach. These initial information motivate users to seek more in-depth and comprehensive information later. In the final stage, users would require information that will reinforce their acceptance/ adoption of this teaching innovation, and also provide them with future options for other teaching innovations, such as the discovery or inquiry approach, game /simulation and role playing.

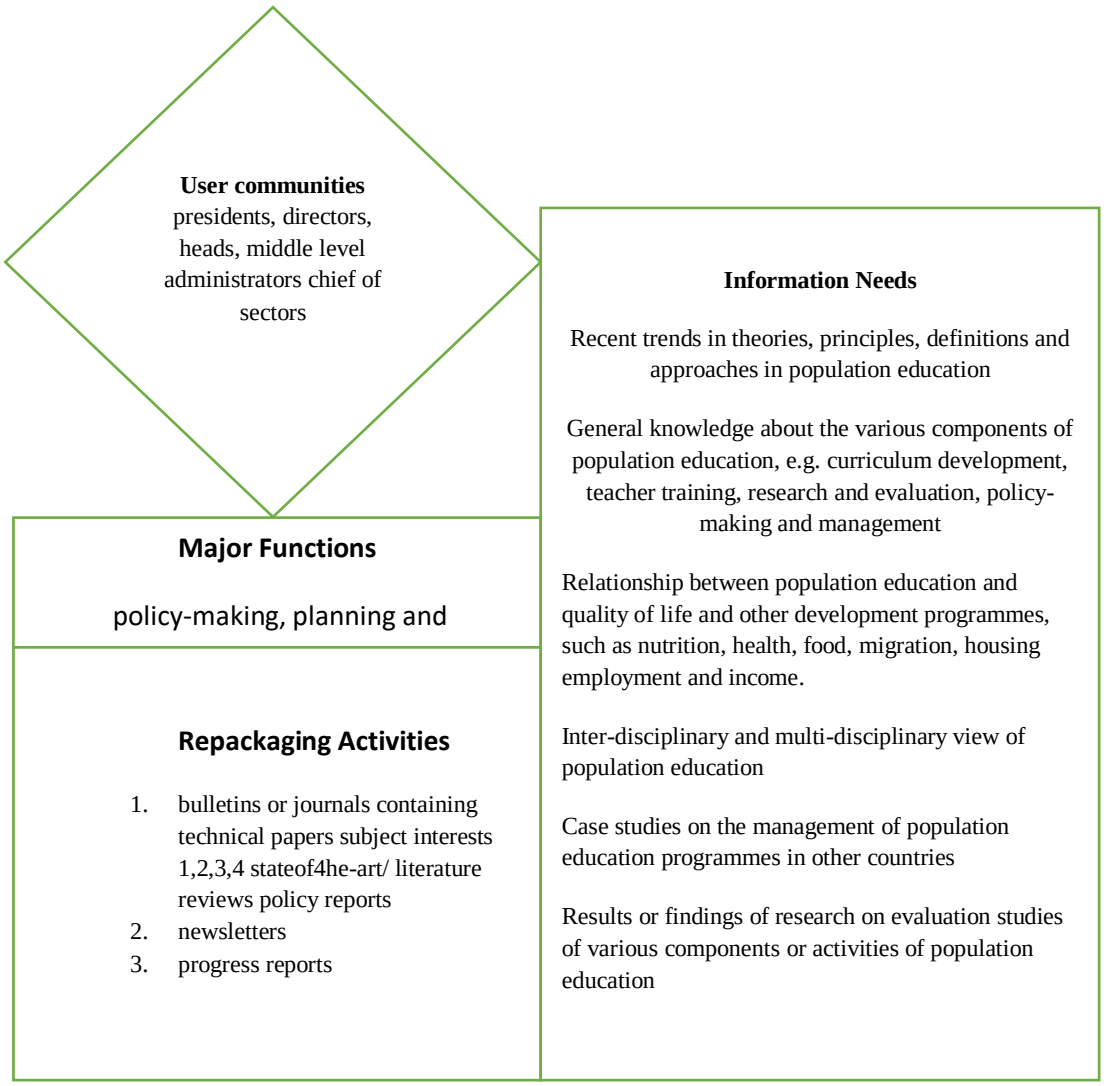
Information Repackaging Formats.

For the purpose of serving information needs of defined users such as farmers in rural communities, repackaging of information in a format that is easier to disseminate to them in a language they understand is vital. For instance, information on a printed format can be repackaged into a local language they understand and presented in oral format. Therefore, information repackaging formats can be in the following forms:

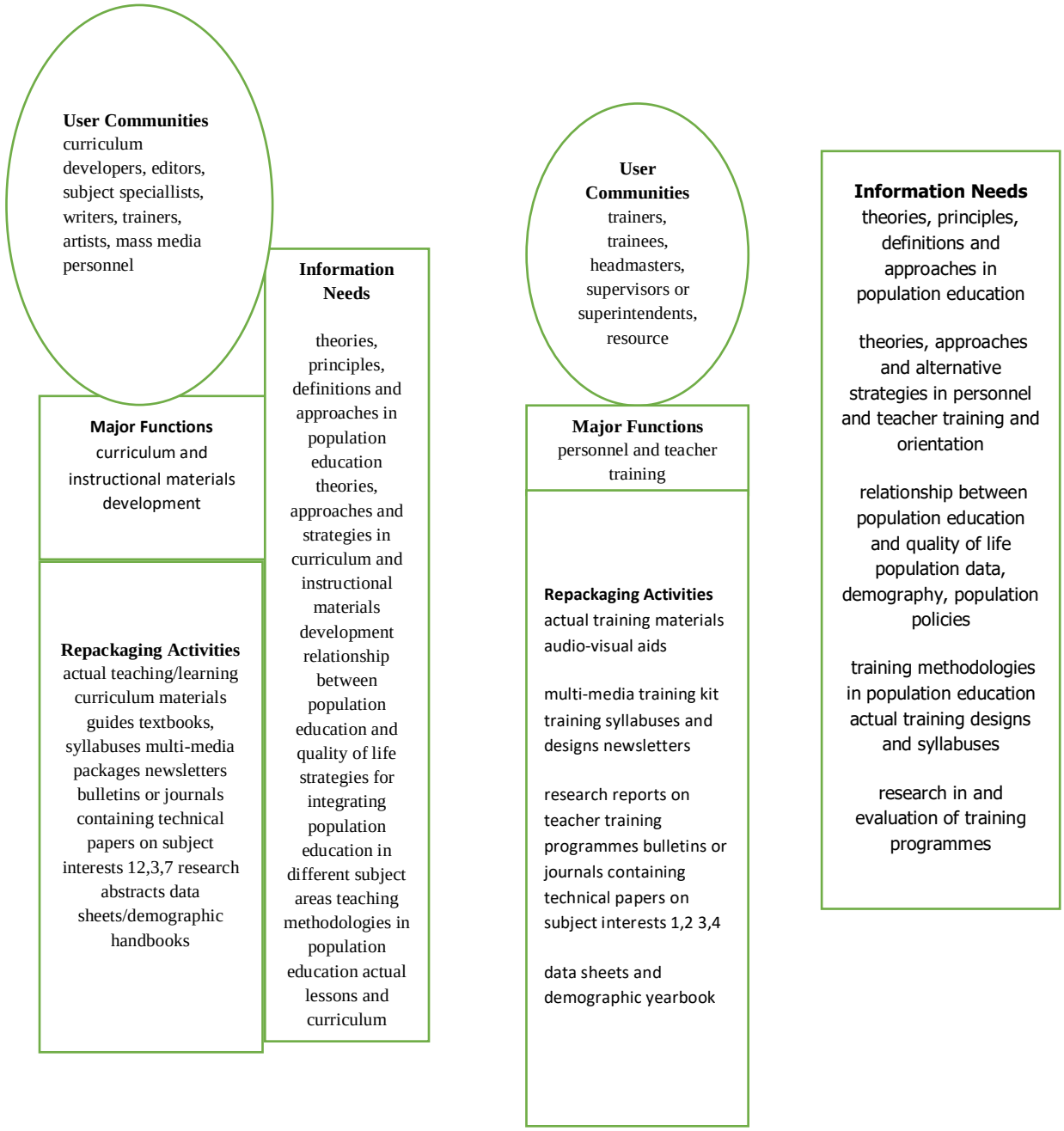
- reformatting and synthesizing raw information that is changing the original form or state of information so as to make it easier for the user to understand.
- combining expertise or consulting on a subject with access to relevant information sources-that is engaging experienced librarians or subject specialists in packaging to a format that can satisfy the different users of information.

- repackaging of information in the library or rural community information service centre could also be shifted from print media to oral format-that is the oral format should also be added by the libraries/community information centres in order to satisfy the different information needs of users. These oral formats include the following: drama, use of songs, story-telling, group discussions translations, oral transmissions, audio-visual materials, among others.

Methodically in determining the repackaging activities most suited to the information needs of users in the rural communities for instance the schools in the rural community becomes especially significant for population education information centres with limited funding, resources and manpower capability to handle elaborate and comprehensive repackaging programmes. Repackaging activities are selected based on the following factors:



HOW TO CHOOSE REPACKAGING ACTIVITIES FOR EDUCATORS AND PUPILS IN THE RURAL COMMUNITY.



1.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What is information repackaging?

2. Discuss the principles of rural community information repackaging.

1.5 SUMMARY

Information providers available to rural communities in Nigeria include the public libraries/community information service centres, mass-media, primary healthcare

centres agricultural extension services, community development centres, among others. Information repackaging is not a new service in public libraries and community information centres. Thus, information repackaging is the ability and method of making information available to group of people in a particular format that could be accessible to them in a more understandable and usable formats.

Information repackaging is not new in libraries and community information centres, repackaging of information involves presentation of information in a more understandable, acceptable and usable formats to users usually, information materials in printed forms are repackaged and tailored to meet the information needs of the members of rural communities who are mostly non-literate. The repackaged information is usually presented in formats such as films, slides, oral, posters, pamphlets, etc that is appropriate to the users. Information repackaging is essential such that it can save time, energy and labor of the users. In this unit, you have been exposed to the definition, format and the process of information repackaging. You also have learnt the types of information provider agencies available to rural dwellers in Nigeria. The definition of information repackaging, the principles of rural community information repackaging and process of rural community information repackaging were discussed.

1.6 GLOSSARY

IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

UNESCO – United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.

1.7 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

Diso, L.I. (2009). Access to Information and knowledge in Nigeria: Information Needs and Information Transfer Processes in Rural Communities. *Borno Library, Archival and Information Science Journal*. 8(2). 1-21

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1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Information repackaging is a process whereby information is obtained from various sources and are packaged in a way that is more suitable and usable by library users.

According to Igbeka (2008) Information Repackaging is a library and information service which customizes information to meet specific needs of its users. With the advent of the information age, information overload occurs frequently making it increasingly difficult to access information that is relevant and comprehensive. The purpose of an information repackaging service is to locate, retrieve, evaluate, interpret and repackage information on a particular subject in order to save time, labour and costs to users.

2. **Language barrier**

Information contained in scientific and technical journals/research reports and books is in languages which make them inappropriate for use by most people (WHO 2008). Even when the language is appropriate there are other language barriers and format considerations.

Illiteracy

Majority of farmers in the in the rural communities are illiterate. Information repackaging promotes literacy by providing information to farmers on types of pesticide made for each crops, irrigation methods etc.

Attitude

As the saying goes, "seeing is believing" Many people would rather see for themselves than hear how best to manage their farmers, this is where the use of posters can be effective because situations can be illustrated and appreciated well.

Ignorance

Some Information is repackaged because people might not be aware that some farming activities actually decrease food production as for example planting the same crop over and over again decreases the soil nutrients.

Lack of funds

Indicate the medium of dissemination of information. As for example if the population is big then instead of printed material, one could use the radio to communicate agro biodiversity information. Information repackaging is one way of overcoming these obstacles. It is important in assisting the facilitation and appropriate dissemination of gathered information. Presentation of information is crucial for it being disseminated properly. It must be understandable, readable, acceptable and usable.

UNIT 2: PROCESS OF RURAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION REPACKAGING

CONTENTS

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Learning Outcomes

2.3 Main content

2.3.1 Process of Rural Community Information Repackaging

2.3.2 Community Information Centres' Design and Development

2.3.3 Functions of Community Information Centres

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

2.5 Summary

2.6 Glossary

2.7 References/Further Reading

2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The physical recording, arrangement and dissemination of information on a particular topic or subject-matter on a given medium and in a given form for the purposes of making the information more understandable, acceptable and in usable form to solve some problems and information needs of a defined users such as people in rural communities involves certain process. Therefore, in this unit, you will learn the prerequisite steps involved in the process of repackaging information for rural communities. Rural Community Information Centres should be based in public libraries, because they are the agency responsible to provide community information services particularly in the rural areas in order to cater for their yearning needs for information that can improve their well-being and livelihoods. Thus, in this unit you will learn the process of designing community information centres and their functions to rural communities in Nigeria.

2.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- learn the process involved in rural community information repackaging
- learn the process of designing rural community information centres
- learn the functions of rural community information centres

2.3 MAIN CONTENT

2.3.1 Process of Rural Community Information Repackaging

Information repackaging also known as information consolidation as stated by Igbeka (2008) is the public knowledge specifically selected, analyzed, evaluated and possibly restructured and repackaged for the purpose of satisfying some of the immediate problems and information needs of a defined users who otherwise may not effectively and efficiently access and use this knowledge as available in the great amount of document or in its original form. Therefore, the process involved in repackaging information as listed by Igbeka (2008) are as follows:

- identify the target user groups
- identify the information needs and interests of users
- familiarize your-self with the different aspects of the subject
- have the knowledge of various helpful techniques used in presenting ideas in a package.

Similarly, Udensi (2010) identified the steps involved in the process of information repackaging as follows:

- Knowledge of the target information users: Having a good knowledge of the group the supposed information is meant for is a very good essential step in the process of information repackaging. In the first instance, what is the message? Who are the target groups? Is it the youths, adults, elderly, children or rural dwellers, farmers, traders, literate or illiterates, etc.
- What are the information needs of the target group? There should be a need assessment of the target group in order to have a clear knowledge of their information needs. This ought to be done through various means. It could be done through oral interview of the people, observations, interactions, etc.
- Chose appropriate format to repackage the information: The choice of suitable format that will be used to repackage the information depends on the target group. Is the target group literate or illiterates? Are they urban or rural dwellers? Are they adults or youths etc?
- Channel of dissemination: This is the choice of a medium to pass the information across to the target group, the type of target group also determine to a large extent the channel of the information dissemination. For instance, a message to the rural dwellers could be through one on one interactions, storytelling, drama, etc. these channels may not work out well to transmit a message for any group in the urban or university setting.
- Source of material to be repackaged: The choice of the materials to be repackaged will depend largely on the information need at a particular time and the availability of information sources. For information to buttress a message could be sourced from various available literatures, research publications on findings in various subject areas, government statistical publications, magazines, newspapers, journals, textbooks, etc.

- Evaluation of materials to be repackaged: The information to be repackaged should be properly evaluated in order to get desired results. The following can help to evaluate information to be repackaged:-

a) Accuracy-be sure that your information is accurate.
b) Complete –be sure that the information is complete, not in piece meals (half-truth and half- lies).
c) Simplicity-the information you want to repackage should be presented in simple language. It should also be very clear and easy to understand by any lay man.
d) Readability- the information should be bold and readable, big vocabulary should be avoided. The design involved should be bold and clear, it should not be clumsy.
e) The structured message should be direct and meaningful to the target group.
f) In case where posters will be used, short paragraphs and bold print should be used, so as to accommodate people with sight impediments.

HOW TO IDENTIFY USER GROUPS, THEIR INFORMATION NEEDS AND THE CORRESPONDING REPACKAGING ACTIVITIES

In identifying the user groups, their information needs and the corresponding repackaging activities, the information absorption characteristics should be considered because the ability of different user groups to absorb information differs . For instance, while policy makers aged 40-50 share an interest in demography, they do differ in their ability to absorb information. In other words, a finer set of factors, in addition to professional levels, geographical location, organisational set-up, and subject interests, effects the degree to which publications can be effective in creating change. These factors, which are discussed below, determine to a great extent users' ability to absorb information.

a) Educational attainment and literacy levels: Based on research, users with lower levels of literacy benefit more from repackaged information that are heavily illustrated with pictures, charts, and other visual aids. Likewise, less educated individuals are more influenced by one-sided presentations when already convinced of the position advocated, and also exhibit more marked changes of opinion when conclusions to a problem are explicitly drawn. For users with a higher level of education, two-sided presentations are much more effective. This difference is given due consideration, for example, in deciding the suitability of discussing the advantages and/or disadvantages of a large family size.
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c) Psychological, cultural and social variables: A considerable number of research studies' on information diffusion and utilisation show that different psychological, cultural and social variables affect users' capacity to absorb and internalize information. For instance. the effectiveness of fear appeals in changing attitudes and behaviour, such as the adverse effects of non- or limited access to education and housing facilities on families with more than two children, depends on the credibility of the source of information and the extent of general/public support to the message conveyed by a particular piece of information. Fear appeals directed to the welfare of people valued by the 16 receiver of information (e.g. family members, close friends) are also effective. The projection of cultural similarities also accounts for better absorption characteristics. For instance, the use of a picture of a family enjoying the many benefits of a highly urbanised place may prove counterproductive if the audience consists of rural families.

d) Awareness of the population programme and attitude towards it: Absorption characteristics are also affected by the users' level of awareness of the population education programme and their attitudes to it. At various stages leading to their acceptance of an innovation in the population education programme, users need different types of information. Initially, users would require information on the nature of the innovation (i.e. values clarification as a new method for teaching population education), its advantages, uses and the reasons for accepting it vis-a-vis the traditional teaching approach. These initial information motivate users to seek more in-depth and comprehensive information later. In the final stage, users would require information that will reinforce their acceptance/ adoption of this teaching innovation, and also provide them with future options for other teaching innovations, such as the discovery or inquiry approach, game /simulation and role playing.

2.3.2 Community Information Centres' Design and Development

The essence of designing and establishing a community information centres in rural areas in Nigeria is to meet the distinct information needs of the rural dwellers be it on education, health, political, business, occupational, security etc. by serving them with the exact information, they need to improve their quality of life and livelihoods. To attain this, thus, a number of basic principles should be followed during the designing and planning community information centre. These include the following;

- Goals and objectives of community information centre- These should be defined realistically, bearing in mind the general information needs of the local community and the information resources likely to be made available to meet those needs.
- Community analysis- The community information provider must have knowledge of the socio-economic structure of its community as well as their traditions, local history and indigenous knowledge system.
- Use of community development – It is crucial to accept that effective community information services cannot be imposed on communities, but must be set-up from within the community itself. Therefore, the community

information centre should be designed so that it is managed and controlled by the community.

- Build on existing information provider agencies- The existing information providers in the community should be involved in the design of the new service and an attempt should be made to coordinate dissemination and use of information within the rural environment. In some cases the most appropriate information service might be one which meets the needs of other information direct to the people in the community.
- Using a range of information formats- An information service intended for direct use by rural people cannot be based on printed materials alone. Thus, it should be built on traditional patterns of information seeking and this will mean using oral communications reinforced by posters, charts, photographs, town criers, slides, films, audio types.
- Using active information workers- The information workers must understand the information they are handling and they must be able to interpret and apply that information to the particular needs of the users. They should be able to repackage information materials into formats that are more appropriate to the needs of the people. They should also explore and use indigenous knowledge system in that community.
- Monitoring and evaluation- To ensure that a community information centre remains effective and that it responds to the needs of the community which it serves, it is necessary to monitor and evaluate its performance. This should be a continuous exercise, which will provide the necessary information for managing the development of the centre. Therefore, in any evaluation exercise, it must seek to identify the needs of the people served by the centre, to identify problems which must be solved, if the people's needs are to be met and to identify opportunities which might be used to improve the centre.
- Budget and finance- Enough budgeting allocation should be made available for effective implementation and efficient running of the centre. In this case, local governments and state governments should give enough allocations to public library boards, which will in turn fund the rural community information centres.

It is important to note that in designing and establishing community information centre is to learn from other librarians/ information providers who must have established rural community information centres in other communities. With these in mind, it is possible to begin the actual planning and design. Again, it is important to note that members of the community should be involved in the process because they are the ones that would understand and present it in a format other people in the community would understand. The members of the community are to be involved because they alone can present the actual need(s) of the community. This involvement might be achieved through informal discussion groups or even establish a formal management group or committee.

Finally, it will be necessary to decide on a management structure for the centre, to locate suitable premises and to decide on the opening hours. The planning will also

have to include a consideration of the number and type of staff that will be required and whether they will need training which is usually need for the staff. Also financing the centre involves how much funds will be needed and where will it come from for establishing and continuous running of the centre.

2.3.3 Functions of Community Information Centre

The following are functions of community information centres as enumerated by Uzuegbu and Uzuegbu (2013):

- meet the information needs of the community members within which the centre operates.
- serve as a source of occupational based and general information to the community
- packaging the information they may need in media tools and information resources that will assure their quick comprehension.
- contribute to the economic regeneration of the community by providing quality information.
- strategizing a way of reaching out to users rather than wait for them in the library.
- examining the existing information provider agencies in the community and coordinating all information transfer activities in the community
- sustaining community identity and confidence.

2.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. Discuss the basic steps in the process of rural community information repackaging.

2. Discuss the functions of community information centre.

2.5 SUMMARY

Satisfying information needs of rural dwellers require repackaging the information as a format that is easier for them to understand. The process involved in rural community repackaging were examined step by step in this unit. To meet the distinct information needs of rural communities by serving them with quality information that will improve their livelihoods requires a number of basic principles to be followed in designing and planning community information centre.

You have learnt the basic steps in process of rural community information repackaging. It is important to note that in designing and establishing community information centre is to learn from other librarians/ information providers who must have established rural community information centres in other communities. With these in mind, it is possible to begin the actual planning and design. Again, it is important to note that members of the community should be involved in the process because they are the ones that would understand and present it in a format other

people in the community would understand. You have also studied the steps in designing community information centre and the functions of community information services centre to rural communities.

2.6 GLOSSARY

Literacy: "Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world" (National Literacy Trust 2017).

2.7 References/Further Reading

Igbeka, J.U. (2008). *Entrepreneurship in Library and Information Services*. Ibadan: Stirling-Hordon Publishers. 86-92.

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2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. The process involved in repackaging information as listed by Igbeka (2008) are as follows:

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- identify the information needs and interests of users
- familiarize your-self with the different aspects of the subject
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- Evaluation of materials to be repackaged: The information to be repackaged should be properly evaluated in order to get desired results.

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- examining the existing information provider agencies in the community and coordinating all information transfer activities in the community
- sustaining community identity and confidence.

UNIT 3: ICT APPLICATION IN THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICES; COMMUNITY INFORMATION CENTRES DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENTS.

CONTENTS

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Learning Outcomes

3.3 Main content

3.3.1 Use of ICTs for Information Repackaging

3.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

3.5 Summary

3.6 Glossary

3.7 References/Further Reading

3.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

With the aid of ICT, Information repackaging is achieved. According to Malav (2015) Information packaging is done with the assistance of various sort of media i.e., print media, audiovisual media, electronic media and social contact. Modern technology makes it much easier to repackage information through integration of text and graphics and texts. Information technology assists in repackaging information into oral form, for example, the use of podcasts in rural areas to record oral history and songs. The use of tape recorders also assists in capturing a fading memory with regards to traditional (Ugwuanyi and Ejikeme, 2013). Collence, (2011) affirmed that "modern technology is important in repackaging information because Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) are free from the fetters of time and space.

3.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Ascertain the Information and Communication Technology facilities available for repackaging of information for the rural communities
- To determine Information and Communication Technology facilities for repackaging textual information;
- To determine the extent to which Information and Communication Technology are used for visual information repackaging

- Find out the problems associated with the use of Information and Communication Technology for information repackaging

3.3 MAIN CONTENT

3.3.1 Use of ICTs for Information Repackaging

As identified by Dongardive (2013), Information Communication Technologies used for repackaging of information include electronic medium like CD, DVD. According Ugwuogu (2015), technological tools through which information could also be repackaged in library include: Bibliography on disks, internet, Wide Area Information Services (WAIS), World Wide Web (WWW), and social media. In a similar vein, Aina and Adekanye (2013**)** identify ICTs such as CD-ROM databases, internet/E-mail, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes magnetic disk, computers, micro forms etc. are for the education purposes, for enjoyment, and entertainment of the tertiary institutions academic library users.

Use of Information Communication Technologies facilities in the rural community is a means in which information centers in the community could achieve their goal of meeting the information needs of the rural people.

The Information Communication Technologies facilities provides information in an electronic format in other words Information Communication Technologies could be used to repackage information to the rural people in different formats such as audio and visual forms. The use of Information Communication Technology for information repackaging is the rural communities is adequately defined while examining these forms of information as follow;

Audio is sound within the acoustic range available to humans. An audio frequency is an electrical alternating current within the 20 to 20,000 Hertz (cycles per second) range that can be used to produce acoustic sound (Rouse, 2005). The word audio is the Latin word meaning "I hear" and it is used in librarianship to describe anything concerned with the recording, broadcasting, or replaying of sound. This therefore covers microphones, disc recorders, amplifiers, loudspeakers and any of the other techniques which are used to record or replay sound weaves, (Sinclair, 1998). Audio resource is any instructional device that can be heard but not seen. It is a record of captured sound that can be played back. Audio resources are therefore information materials that a user can only access its content by hearing. This include: recordings, tele-lecture, radio, sound films telephone, tapes and cassettes, radio broadcasts, etc.

The audio material renders content as speech to which the rural community would listen and understand bearing in mind the language must be considered. The audio material may be recorded human speech in community's local or indigenous language or synthesized electronic speech still in their indigenous language. If the audio material is created in a flexible way - for example aligned to National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) or Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) standards - there are many ways in which the speech output can be adjusted. Depending on the technology used, changes in the pitch, volume and speed at which the speech is presented can be made.

It is possible to have local inhabitants whom are blind or visually impaired, or are dyslexic that is having difficulty with reading text, or who spend a great deal of time trying to decode text may benefit from the use of auditory text. When an information is presented auditory it can help reduce the cognitive load of trying to read text or braille and can focus on comprehension of the information.

Visual information is also another form of information resources. Visual information resources are those materials which can be seen and can be understood by observing the visual aspect of any object. They include: projected materials- slide, film-strips, film; illustrated books, chart, picture, maps, globes, atlas, poster, models, drowning, cartoons, real objects, etc. In the rural communities, using visual information in repackaging information for them would go a long way.
Visual material can be used effectively to teach facts, data, directions, processes, and invisible concepts that are often complex or elusive (Wileman, 1993). Visual learning materials can be quite effective in enriching the experience of the indigenes of the community by enabling them to observe situations and processes which are otherwise difficult to portray verbally. Visual information are a peculiarly direct and telling source of encounter with the past, even if the image cannot always be taken as truthful. There is extensive evidence in the literature to support the claim that the use of digital visual materials either static images.

Showing the community visual images, such as maps with locations of their churches, mosques, farmlands, health care center etc can help them get excited about a particular information. When the rural people are able to see a photograph of information on areas that would benefit them such as agricultural produce, health care like antenatal, child birth, immunization and schools they are more likely to be engaged in finding out more about them. Visual information materials also help them clarify their thoughts and doubts. The people would see how ideas are connected and realize how information can be grouped and organized. With visual information, new concepts are more thoroughly and easily understood when they are linked to prior knowledge. Visual information materials help the rural community to organize and analyze information. Visual information materials help the community to integrate new knowledge because when an information is displayed visually, there is tendency that the people would remember information when it is represented and learned both visually and verbally.

Visual information help the rural people to think out of the box and critically too. Linked verbal and visual information help them make connections, understand relationships and recall related details as shown in the visual information.
Electronic poster is a visual medium of communication which conveys information vividly, attractively, informative, and economically such could be seen in the community health centers with pictures of mother and child displaying important information. Typically posters include both textual and visual elements, although a poster may be either wholly graphical or wholly text. Posters may be used for many purposes. They are a frequent tools of advertisers (particularly of events, musicians and films), and other groups trying to communicate a message. Posters are also used

for reproductions of artwork, particularly famous works, and are generally low-cost compared to original artwork.

Problems of use of ICT for Information Repackaging

The use of Information Communication Technology for repackaging of information in the rural community is faced with numerous challenges which hinder effective information repackaging in the community such as funding, infrastructure, competencies, personal issues, and system breakdown due to low current. Funding has been a perennial problem facing library managers in their bid to carry out library operations, especially in this information age. Daramola (2004) revealed that research evidence has shown that many developing countries like Nigerian find it difficult to cope with the challenges of new information technology, due to scarce human, materials and financial resources. This prevents many libraries from establishing and maintaining a digital library.

The second problem hindering use of information and communication technology in information repackaging to the rural community is inadequate infrastructure; poor infrastructural facilities especially in the developing world could frustrate properly trained packagers in doing their work. For instance, good hardware and a telecommunications infrastructure that is reliable and cost effective could be the only way forward. Absence or dearth of quality sources of primary information could be a disaster for any meaningful effort to be made in information repackaging.

There is also the problem of system breakdown to low current. Irregular or non-supply of electricity in developing in the rural community is a major constraint in information repackaging especially in this era that information provision has become technologically driven. The rural people cannot afford to own a stand-by generating set serving the community at large since other variables like funds for maintenance and fuelling, running hours, etc. have roles to play in determining viability and effectiveness.

Another problem identified hindering effective use of Information and Communication Technology in Information Repackaging is inadequate staff training and exposure. These bring about shoddy attempts to repackage information which sometimes are hardly utilized by potential users.

The dearth or absence of subject specialists/language experts could be a handicap if repackages lack it. In essence, the technical level of the topic to be treated and knowledge of the target group for the package must correlate; otherwise, the work could be an exercise in futility. Language experts, on the other hand, play invaluable roles by translating equally essential research information into languages in which they can be appreciated and used for further research and scholarship endeavors.

3.4 Self-Assessment Exercises

1. What is visual information?

2. What are the challenges faced in using ICT for Information Repackaging?

3.5 SUMMARY

Satisfying information needs of rural dwellers require repackaging the information as a format that is easier for them to understand. The process involved in rural community repackaging were examined step by step in this unit. To meet the distinct information needs of rural communities by serving them with quality information that will improve their livelihoods requires a number of basic principles to be followed in designing and planning community information centre.

You have learnt the basic steps in process of rural community information repackaging. It is important to note that in designing and establishing community information centre is to learn from other librarians/ information providers who must have established rural community information centres in other communities. With these in mind, it is possible to begin the actual planning and design. Again, it is important to note that members of the community should be involved in the process because they are the ones that would understand and present it in a format other people in the community would understand. You have also studied the steps in designing community information centre and the functions of community information services centre to rural communities.

3.6 GLOSSARY

NIMAS - National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard.

DAISY - Digital Accessible Information System.

3.7 References/Further Reading

3.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Visual information is also another form of information resources. Visual information resources are those materials which can be seen and can be understood by observing the visual aspect of any object. They include: projected materials- slide, film-strips, film; illustrated books, chart, picture, maps, globes, atlas, poster, models, drowning, cartoons, real objects, etc.

2. The use of Information Communication Technology for repackaging of information in the rural community is faced with numerous challenges which hinder effective information repackaging in the community such as funding, infrastructure, competencies, personal issues, and system breakdown due to low current. Funding has been a perennial problem facing library managers in their bid to carry out library operations, especially in this information age. Daramola (2004) revealed that research evidence has shown that many developing countries like Nigerian find it difficult to cope with the challenges of new information technology, due to scarce human, materials and financial resources. This prevents many libraries from establishing and maintaining a digital library.

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UNIT 4: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICES AND INFORMATION REPACKAGING IN NIGERIA.

CONTENTS

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Learning Outcomes

4.3 Main content

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4.4 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

4.5 Summary

4.6 Glossary

4.7 References/Further Reading

4.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The state of rural community information services in Nigeria has not significantly changed over the years. Several studies on community information services have shown that most rural communities have no access to adequate and right information at the right time. Consequently, this undermines the efforts at improving the living conditions of the rural people. Therefore, in this unit, you will learn the problems and challenges confronting the development of community information services and information repackaging in Nigeria. These problems and challenges include; absence of relevant government policies for development of libraries and information services, poor state of existing public libraries, absence of rural community information centres/libraries, inadequate human and infrastructures, lack of funds from the government among others.

4.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- learn the numerous problems and challenges associated with the development of community information services and information repackaging in Nigeria.

4.3 MAIN CONTENT

4.3.1 Problems and Challenges Associated with Development of Community Information Services and Information Repackaging in Nigeria.

The Problems and Challenges associated with development of community information services and information repackaging in Nigeria are listed below:

- absence of relevant government policies for development of libraries and information services. The apparent lack of recognition by government of the importance of library and information services in the diverse human activities in the society is the most serious challenge to library development in Nigeria.
- lack of National Information System (NATIS) and Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) in Nigeria, that would guide and coordinate the information environment for effective and sufficient provision and dissemination of development information for the overall development of rural areas in particular, and the country in general.
- the condition of public libraries and information services in Nigeria is deteriorating because of the attitude of state governments being the principal supporters of public libraries. Hence, this declining support or even its total absence made the development of public library services difficult particularly provision of rural community information services.
- absence of rural community information centres that will serve the variety of information needs of rural dwellers because public library services are concentrated in urban centres. Thus, making information provision to rural areas neglected or non-existent in Nigeria.
- lack of funds-finance is an important factor in the development of a community information services in rural areas. Unfortunately, public libraries in Nigeria are underfunded or not funded at all, in majority of the cases; the government guarantees only payment of staff salaries and does not finance any activity in the public libraries and information services.

4.4 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Examine the problems and challenges of rural community information services and information repackaging in Nigeria. What solutions would you suggest to eliminate these problems?

4.5 SUMMARY

From the unit, we can conclude that a rural community information service in Nigeria is faced with several problems and challenges. Some of the major problems confronting the development of rural community information services were identified and discussed in detail.

You have learnt the problems and challenges associated with development of rural community information services and information repackaging for rural communities in Nigeria. The absence of relevant government policies for development of libraries

and information services. The apparent lack of recognition by government of the importance of library and information services in the diverse human activities in the society is the most serious challenge to library development in Nigeria

4.6 GLOSSARY

RUDIS - Rural Development Information System.

NATIS - National Information System.

4.7 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Aguolu, C.C and Aguolu, I. E. (2002). *Libraries and Information Management. Jo*s:

El-Information Services.

4.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. The Problems and Challenges associated with development of community information services and information repackaging in Nigeria are listed below:

- absence of relevant government policies for development of libraries and information services. The apparent lack of recognition by government of the importance of library and information services in the diverse human activities in the society is the most serious challenge to library development in Nigeria.
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