



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

COURSE CODE: LIS 215

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

Course Guide

Course Code: LIS 215

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

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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 in brief the 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.

Course Objectives

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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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.

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?

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 Definition of Information
 - 3.2 Definition of Information Systems
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Reading

1.0 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 indispensable 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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?

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

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.

3.2 What is Information Systems?

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 devices 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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 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.

6.0 TUTOR –MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Define information as a term

7.0 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.

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

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main content
3.1	Definition of Community Information Service
3.2	Importance of Community Information Services
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	Reference/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Definition of Community Information Service

What is Community Information Service?

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.

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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSESSMENT

1. Explain the term community information service
2. Are community information services important to rural communities in Nigeria?
Discuss

7.0 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.

Rasmussen, R. (1979). Library-Based Services in a Multi-Cultural Society: Alternative Futures. Proceeding of 20th Biennial Conference of the Library Association of Australia, held on 26-30 August, 1979.84-111.

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

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 Types of Community Information Systems and Services
 - 3.2 Community Needs Analysis
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Reading

1.0 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

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.

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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSESSMENT

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?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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

Kempson, E. (1990). Rural Community Information Services: Guidelines for Researching Needs, Setting up Services and Evaluating Performance. *IFLA Journal*, 16(4), 429-439.

UNIT 2: INFORMATION NEEDS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content

3.1 Information needs

3.2 Rural community

3.3 Characteristics of rural communities

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 Reference/Further Reading

1.0 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

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.

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.

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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have learnt what of 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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSESSMENT

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 means. Discuss the characteristics of rural communities?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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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

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Categories of information needs of Rural Communities in Nigeria
 - 3.2 Philosophy of information services to Rural Communities in Nigeria
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marks Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Rereading

1.0 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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.

3.0 MAIN CONTEXT

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 obtain 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.

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 than 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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

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.

7.0 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

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

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content

3.1 Proposed Model of Information Services to Rural communities in Nigeria

3.2 Information Sources in Rural Communities

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

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.

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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSESSMENT

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.

7.0 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

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

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

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

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 Information Providers in Rural Communities
 - 3.2 Principles of Information Repackaging
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Information Providers in Rural Communities

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 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.

3.2 Principles of 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 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, storytelling, group discussions translations, oral transmissions, audio-visual materials, among others.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

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 labour 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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSESSMENT

1. Identify and discuss the roles of information provider agencies in rural areas.
2. What is information repackaging?
3. Discuss the principles of rural community information repackaging.

7.0 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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UNIT 2: PROCESS OF RURAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION REPACKAGING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 Process of Rural Community Information Repackaging
 - 3.2 Community Information Centres' Design and Development
 - 3.3 Functions of Community Information Centres

- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

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.

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.

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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

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.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

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

7.0 References/Further Reading

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

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UNIT 3: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICES AND INFORMATION REPACKAGING IN NIGERIA.

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main content

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6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

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.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

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.

4.0 CONCLUSION

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.

5.0 SUMMARY

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

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

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?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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