

MODULE 1 FUNDAMENTALS OF TELECENTRES

UNIT 1 GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT TELECENTRES

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1.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Explain what telecentres are
- Describe the global telecentre movement
- Describe the telecentre movement in India
- Identify and explain the various kinds of telecentres
- Describe governance
- Establish the link between governance and telecentres

Note: Underlined words in the text mean that their definitions are available at the end of the unit.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last few years, you may have wondered about the change in your community. For example, there are more cell phones in your community. You may have one yourself. There may be several mobile service towers constructed in your area to provide you and your mobile phone



with a connection.

There may be a telecentre in your community – started by an NGO, a government Common Service Centre (CSC), or by a local business person or entrepreneur, someone you know.

These are some examples of change. There may be many others. The important thing is that you and your community are part of many more changes to come. Some will be good, others not so good.

To make the changes work for you and your community, you may need to play a constructive role by first understanding what these technologies can do for you. Once you experience that the technologies can change your life and the life of your community for the better, you will feel good. The telecentre movement is a powerful idea – of bringing together technology – both computers and Internet – for community development.

In this Unit you will be introduced to the telecentre movement, in India and globally. You will also learn about governance and telecentres.

1.2 WHAT ARE TELECENTRES?

Do you know what a telecentre is? Have you heard of a telecentre? Have you ever used a telecentre? If you have, did you able what you were looking for?

Close your eyes. Picture a room, as part of a building, with some chairs and tables, a computer, printer, an Internet connection and a few people. Can you picture this?

A **telecentre** is a public place where you can:

1. Use computers
2. Use the Internet
3. Use other digital technologies that allow you and others to gather information, create, learn, and communicate with others while they develop essential digital skills.
4. Use digital technologies to support the following kinds of development:
 - community
 - economic
 - education
 - social
 - meet other people
 - learn about economic opportunities

Telecentres are local gathering places. They are places where you and others can come together to talk, tell stories, share knowledge and even have a cup of tea or coffee.

These activities bring you and the community together. It also sets the tone for how the technology is used. You and other people in your community can use tools to meet your local needs.

Computers and the internet are being used in ways that you could never imagine. You can get information about bus and train timings, reserve a ticket, and know that the weather in your area will be like next week or next month, so farmers can plan their activities according to this information.



People and technology



When you and other people in your community or people at the grassroots level take the opportunity to innovate, communities get stronger and more connected to each other. You come together to decide what is needed to improve your quality of life, and experiment to see what works.

You work, enjoy and learn together. The telecentre is a place where you can get wonderful things which could be useful, entertaining and lasting.

Where are the telecentres?

Telecentres exist in almost every country. They go by different names:

- Village Knowledge centres (VKCs)
- Village Resource Centres (VRCs)
- Infocentres
- Community Technology Centres (CTCs),
- Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs),
- Multipurpose Community Telecentres (MCTs),
- Common/Citizen Service Centres (CSCs),
- *Gyan Chaupals*
- *E Chaupals*

In India telecentres are known by gyan chaupals, E chaupals, Village Knowledge Centres and Village Knowledge Centres.

Examples from around the world show that telecentres empower communities in many ways. In India telecentres can empower communities as they:

- Provide a platform for common projects
- Bring people of different social and economic backgrounds together
- Deliver community services
- Draw young people into community life and give them new opportunities
- Capture and build on community history

Check Your Progress 1

Note:

a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. Define a Telecentre in 20-25 words

2. Give three names by which Indian telecentres are known.

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

3. Describe how telecentres empower communities in India in 20-25 words

1.3 THE GLOBAL TELECENTRE MOVEMENT

The global telecentre movement is just what the three words mean. It is a movement (an association or a group) of people and organisations that are part of ideas, actions and processes to do with telecentres. In the section above (1.2) you have been introduced to what telecentres are.

You are part of the telecentre movement, if you are a telecentre owner, manager, operator or volunteer with a telecentre. And, like you there are thousands of people, in other parts of the world, which are also involved in telecentre work. With these people and you, a movement is formed.

The global telecentre movement is the idea that telecentres in different parts of the world can learn from each other's experiences – successes and failures.

As you can imagine, to every telecentre experiment has been successful. Some has closed down; others have had to change track; and some are doing well.

1.3.1 The telecentre movement and development

In the 1980s, as a result of advances in computing, telecottages in Europe and Community Technology Centers (CTCs) in the United States began to emerge. At this time, many people, especially in countries like India, had only heard of the computer; few had seen one and even fewer had used one.

As computers were becoming more common in Europe and the US, people began to buy them for their homes. But, this was not possible in every home. Therefore, computers in public places seemed like a good idea.

1.3.2 A telecottage is a [community](#) based facility to assist learning, access to technology and access to work for the [local community](#).

The Telecottages movement started in [Sweden](#) and spread to in many places, especially the [United Kingdom](#).

A Community Technology Center (CTC) provides training that ranges from basic computing skills to digital media production as well as applied skills (e.g. online job search).

While some CTCs are freestanding operations, many others are located in public libraries, schools, social service agencies, neighbourhoods and religious centers.

There are thousands of these education centres located across the world. In the United States, more than 1,000 community technology centers are organized under the leadership of CTCnet, a nonprofit association headquartered in Washington, D.C.

In the 1990s, telecentres spread to Africa, Asia and Latin America. Since then, they have been growing and maturing.

These global and national efforts to create and maintain telecentres is known as the telecentre movement.

This means that many initiatives or many people working together helps the body of knowledge and experience to grow. We learn from each other and benefit for each other's experiences – successes, failures and challenges. You may have found this to be true in your life as well.

1.3.3 International development institutions

Various international development institutions sponsored the creation of telecentres in developing countries. Some of these are:

1. International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

The IDRC was created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to help developing countries use science and technology to find practical, long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems. IDRC support helps to create a local research community whose work will build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies.

2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

UNESCO is a UN agency, founded on November 16, 1945. It works through [Education, Social and Natural Science, Culture and Communication](#) to build peace in people and countries.

Other experiments with telecentres also started over the last 20 years.

1.3.4 The Global Telecentre Movement

This movement is a result of many experiments with technology to improve the lives of people. As countries like India got more developed, it was thought that technology could help with many things to improve the lives of people: work and income, food, shelter, education and health.

These concepts have come together in the field called 'development'. Since the late 1940s, countries have come to be known as more developed and less developed according to how they provide for their citizens. Over the years, certain mechanisms have been developed to measure development and rate countries.

Each year since 1990 the Human Development Report has published the Human Development Index (HDI). They are:

The HDI is a measure of three dimensions of human development:

1. Living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy or how many years you live),
2. Being educated (measured by adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary level) and
3. Having a decent standard of living (measured by how much you earn and what you can buy with it).

The index does not include important indicators such as gender, income inequality, human rights and political freedoms.

In 2007-2008, the HDI for India is 0.619, and the rank is 128 out of 177 countries. Rank 1 would be the highest and 177 the lowest.

As you may know, in India, as in many other countries, there have been great advances in technology. The one important technology which is the back bone of this curriculum is the technology that allows us to use computers and the Internet in ways that have the potential to change our lives.

1.3.5 Digital Revolution

When this technology – computers and the Internet – first became available, they were expensive. There was a certain structure needed to make things work – such as power, literacy and creation of content that would be useful to you and other people in the rural and remote areas.

There was a concern that some people – those who did not have money, education or lived in rural areas - would be left behind. And, that this gap between the rich and the poor began to be known as the 'digital divide'

So, by the 1990s, to make sure that everyone was included in what was called the 'digital revolution' certain agencies began to work to make sure that this 'inclusion' would happen.

The word digital comes from the Latin word digitus meaning finger, as when fingers are used for counting. This of course was before the days of calculators. But even now, many people in India use fingers to count.

A digital system uses discrete (discontinuous) values, usually but not always [symbolized numerically](#) (hence called "digital") to represent information for input, processing, transmission, storage, etc.

What is the digital revolution?

The digital revolution refers to the enormous potential of digital technology for development purposes – the potential of creating a revolution – change that creates major transformation.

What is the digital divide?

Digital divide is the gap between people who can access [digital](#) and [information technology](#) and those who cannot.

This includes gaps in physical access to [technology](#), resources and skills needed to effectively participate as a [digital citizen](#). It also excludes people based on [gender](#), [income](#), class, caste and [race](#) groups, and by location.

The term [global digital divide](#) refers to differences in technology access between countries or large regions.

Organisations such as UNESCO and IDRC (already mentioned above) have been active to reduce these differences. Both agencies started telecentres in developing countries (India being one of them) and are still very much involved and active in the telecentre movement.

IDRC's [telecentre.org](#) is supporting networks of telecentres around the world and UNESCO continues to support the growth of community multimedia centres (CMCs), which, unlike most other telecentres, have a local community radio component.

1.3.6 Networks and networking

What are networks of telecentres? What is networking?

A network or networking is a method of making and expanding contacts. For example if you have a friend who introduces you to their friend, you expand your circle of friends. You then introduce your friends to the new friend - this is networking. The term networking can be used with people, groups and computers.

In computer language, a network is a collection of computers connected together that allows the computers to share information and resources. There are many different kinds of networks. The two

most common are LANs (Local Area Network) and WANs (Wide Area Network).

Check Your Progress 2

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. Describe a telecottage in less than 25 words. Give one reason why CTCs are necessary

2. Name three ways in which CTCs help communities

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____

3. Describe the global telecentre movement in 25 words or less

5. Define the following in 15-20 words:

a. Networking

b. Digital divide

1.4 THE INDIAN TELECENTRE MOVEMENT

As you may know, India is a very large country. There are almost 600,000 villages in India. This is where most Indians live. It is a huge challenge to take telecentres to the villages.

However, over the last 15 years there have been efforts to meet this challenge. Below are some examples of the experiments - projects – that have come to be known as the Indian Telecentre Movement.

1.4.1 Mission 2007 and the Grameen Gyan Abhiyan

The **Grameen Gyan Abhiyan (GGA)** is Rural Knowledge Movement in India. It has been working to get ICTs to the 637,000 villages of India.

The GGA is a partnership of many organisations that have various kinds of telecentres – community-based, entrepreneurial, government, business or corporate and cooperative models - and combinations of all these models in pairs or more.

By 2007 the GGA had 400 partners committed to make a knowledge revolution in rural India.

The GGA carries on the work of Mission 2007, which started in 2003. The goal of Mission 2007 was to have a telecentre in every village by 2007, India's 60th year of Independence.

Mission 2007 started as a project in Pondicherry in 1997 in the form of a telecentre under the Information Village Research Project of M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF). These centres later were called Knowledge Centres, in three villages near Pondicherry.

In 1998, the Information Village Research Project was established with financial support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, a world renowned scientist, in his vision of Mission 2007, saw knowledge revolution as a means to increasing human productivity and creativity in every area of human life.

So, the experiment to take science and technology to the villages - through the Village Knowledge Centres and Village Resource Centres - for development was launched.

Without any prior experience (or any model to follow), the progress was slow. Some of the early centres based in individuals' homes had to be closed down, as the benefits were not reaching all members of the community, especially people belonging to the Dalit community.

Social inclusion (which means that all people in an area benefit from development), was an important goal of the MSSRF-IDRC ICT programme.

Both the MSSRF staff and the volunteers from the local communities learnt from such experience and helped expand the network to 12 villages in the next few years.

This project was followed by several other ICT-enabled information delivery projects (often referred to as 'info-kiosk' projects) in different parts of India.

The partners of Mission 2007 were successful in getting policy-makers in the public

sectors and private sectors to see the need for investing in telecentres.

With the Mission 2007 vision several experiments - in the government and private sector - started.

- *The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)* launched a Village Resource Centre programme at the Block level involving satellite connectivity and teleconferencing facilities.
- *The Department of Information Technology (DIT)* launched the Common Service Centre (CSC) programme designed to cover 100,000 villages.
- *The Ministry of Panchayati Raj* planned to provide to each Panchayat the necessary ICT infrastructure to enable them to participate in the **e-Governance** programme.
- *ITC Ltd* decided to expand its **e-choupal** programme in order to cover 50,000 villages
- *Azim Premji Foundation and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)* developed software in major Indian languages.
- *M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)* organized 80 VKCs and 15 VRCs by 2007.
- Many state governments, academic institutions and NGOs have organized VKCs in different parts of the country.
- The Government of India included knowledge connectivity as an important component of *Bharat Nirman* or a New Deal for Rural India.

Mission 2007 encouraged a national movement for bridging the urban-rural digital divide and for ensuring knowledge connectivity in areas relevant to the day to day life and livelihood of rural families.

The MSSRF has played a pioneering role in the Indian telecentre movement. The Secretariat for the National Alliance for Mission 2007 – a broad based coalition of government, non-government, academic and business sectors committed to taking ICT to all the 600,000 villages of India as soon as possible – is based at MSSRF.

MSSRF has established a *Jamsetji Tata National Virtual Academy (NVA) for Rural Prosperity (NVA)* and a *Jamsetji Tata Training School*.

The NVA has currently 985 Fellows from India and 25 Foreign Fellows drawn from the Afghanistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Nepal and Nigeria.

The Jamsetji Tata Training School aims to provide opportunities for lifelong professional growth to NVA Fellows, as well as help in identifying suitable staff for VKCs and VRCs as well as CSC and other programmes sponsored by Government and Industry.

The goal, by 2010, is that the GGA will cover every village, home or hut in the country. The last mile and last person connectivity will be achieved through an integrated internet-community radio or internet-cell phone synergy.

1.4.2 Significance of the GGA

- Under the GGA, with the help of ISRO, every Block will have a Village Resource Centre
- Every Panchayat will have a *Gyan Choupal* or Village Knowledge Centre with the help of the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Civil Society Organizations, multilateral donors, the academic and private sectors and bilateral and multilateral donors.
- In the VKCs, the first step is to be connected to the Internet (or connectivity as it is called). Then, there is content and content creation – or what is offered in the VKCs. It has to be something that helps local people, meets their needs and is in local languages.
- The goal of the GGA is to link scientific know-how and field level do-how. For this, VRCs and VKCs will be linked to appropriate government programmes such as *Sarva Siksha Abhiyan* for literacy, *Yuva* and *Mahila Sakthi Abhiyans* of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, National Rural Health Mission, National Horticulture Mission, National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, etc.

Check Your Progress 3

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. Describe the Grameen Gyan Abhiyan (in 30 words or less)

1.5 TYPES OF TELECENTRES

There are many kinds of telecentres depending on the people they serve, the services they provide or the business or organisational model they follow.

Telecentres could be sponsored by NGOs or local governments, be a commercial venture or university based. Here is a very brief description of the various types of telecentres.

- *NGO-sponsored* telecentres are hosted by an NGO which manages the centre.
- *Local government* telecentres work to further local development by providing public ICT access. They give out information, decentralise services and encourage participation of local people.
- *Commercial* telecentres, launched by entrepreneurs for profit, range from a commercial

cybercafé to social enterprise, where profit and development objectives are combined.

- *School-based* telecentres are designed to involve community members during off-school hours.
- *University-related* telecentres can offer social outreach to disadvantaged and community groups, provide training, develop locally relevant content, and establish and facilitate virtual networks.

1.5.1 Common Service Centres (CSCs)

The Government of India has approved a **Common Services Centres (CSCs)** Scheme for providing support for 100,000 centres in 600,000 villages of India.

The goal of the Scheme is to develop a platform through which the government, private and social sector organisations can combine development and commercial goals to benefit people in rural and remote areas of India with and through a combination of IT-based as well as non-IT-based services.

The Scheme has been approved at a total cost of Rs 5742 Cr. over 4 years. The central government will contribute Rs 856 Cr. and the state governments Rs 793 Cr. The balance of the resources will come from the private sector.

The CSCs will be ICT-enabled kiosks having a PC along with basic support equipment like Printer, Scanner, UPS, with Wireless Connectivity as a minimum. There could be additional equipment for edutainment (education through entertainment), telemedicine, projection systems, etc.

The Scheme is to be implemented through a Public Private Partnership (PPP).

The CSCs will be one of the three pillars of the core and support infrastructure of the National e-Governance Plan for enabling anytime anywhere delivery of government services. The other two would be:

(a) The State Wide Area Network (for Connectivity) which has already been approved by the Government for Rs 3334 Cr. and

(b) The State Data Centre Scheme (for secure hosting of data and applications) for which the draft guidelines are under preparation.

Many services available to you and others could come together at the national level.

For this and state-specific plans the Department of Information Technology (DIT) has appointed a National Level Service Agency (NLSA) with defined Terms of Reference to coordinate the entire

activity.

1.5.2 Gyan Sanchar

Gyan Sanchar was a pilot project introduced in 32 villages of Hoshangabad and Harda districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the project is a partnership, between Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP) India and a Canadian business team comprising IBM Business Consulting Services and Sasktel International. The Project is working in collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh Government. Its goal was to provide services and schemes to rural communities.

1.5.3 e-Choupal

E-Choupal is an initiative of ITC Limited (a large multi business company in India) to link directly with rural farmers to obtain agricultural and aquaculture produce like soybeans, wheat, coffee, and prawns.

Through e-Choupal, farmers directly negotiate the sale of their produce with ITC Limited via established computers and Internet access in rural areas across several agricultural regions of the country.

The PCs and Internet access at these centres enable the farmers to obtain information on *mandi* prices, good farming practices and place orders for agricultural inputs like seeds and fertilisers. This helps farmers in improving the quality of produce, and also helps in realizing a better price.

Each ITC Limited kiosk having an access to Internet is run by a *sanchalak* — a trained farmer. The computer is kept in the *sanchalak*'s house and linked to the Internet via phone lines or by a VSAT connection and serves an average of 600 farmers in the surrounding ten villages within about a 5 km radius.

The *sanchalak* bears some operating cost but in return earns service fee for the e-transactions done through his *eChoupal*.

The warehouse hub is managed by the same traditional middle-men, now called *samyojaks*, but with a newly defined role. The middlemen make up for the lack of infrastructure and fulfill critical jobs like cash disbursement, quantity aggregation and transport.

There are 6,500 e-Choupals today. ITC Limited plans to scale up to 20,000 by 2012 covering 100,000 villages in 15 states, servicing 15 million farmers.

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. Name five kinds of telecentres

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____
- v. _____

2. Name the three levels of the Indian government's e-governance plan

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____

1.6 GOVERNANCE AND TELECENTRES

In the previous sections you have learned about why telecentres are important to rural areas and development. You have also seen the connection between the different groups in the telecentre movement and government agencies.

In this section you will learn about the important links between telecentres and governance. First and foremost, what is governance?

Governance is the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. These include:

1. The *process* by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced (seen in voice and accountability, political stability and lack of violence)
2. The *capacity* of the government to effectively create and carry out sound policies (seen in government effectiveness and regulatory quality), and
3. The *respect* of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (seen in rule of law and control of corruption).

Governance is also about power relationships in society.

Governance systems define who decides on policies, how resources are distributed across society and how governments are held accountable.

Good governance is now a central part of the international development agenda.

Good governance is an ideal in which political processes translate the will of the people into public policies and establish the rules that efficiently and effectively deliver services to all members of society.

To understand why good governance matters, let us take the example of education and bad governance.

Do you remember when you had to get a brother or sister into a school? Did your parents tell you a story about what they had to do to get you into a school? What was this experience like?

What happens when there is no school building, no teacher and no books? What if the school for girls is more than walking distance? If the family cannot afford the school fees, can they get help with a government scheme? Do they know about this?

In the example of education, bad governance means that parents and communities have to face these issues. The system is unaccountable and unresponsive to their needs. This means that education systems which are not effective when it comes to raising learning achievements. It leaves communities and regions with children sitting in classrooms lacking basic teaching materials, supervised by untrained and de-motivated teachers. In some cases, bad governance also means that funds allocated to schools do not arrive, on time or at all.

Poor governance practices in education affect the whole of society. But, the poor suffer most.

Good governance implies not just transparency and accountability, but also a commitment to equal opportunity for all citizens.

People with money can send their children to private schools. But, people with less or no money depend on the government to deliver education services. When these services are of poor quality, or people cannot get to them or they cost too much, the poor lose out.

You know what it is like to give a bribe to get anything done – to get admission for a start. Failure to tackle corruption, another hallmark of bad governance, has particularly damaging consequences for poor families. When resources do not reach schools, or when schools levy unauthorized fees, it is the poor who are least able to pay.

Beyond education, good governance is seen as a condition for poverty alleviation and eradication, increased rural economic growth, and improved public and private service provision.

In rural and remote areas, especially, governance is a very important element of life. When you have to pay for services that are often free or subsidised by the government, when you do not receive the kind of justice you deserve or live in fear of your life from the rich and powerful, then there is a lack of governance.

Often you do not know what you are entitled to. Although the central and state governments may have created programmes and schemes for you and others, this information does not reach you and others in your community. If you do have the information, then you may not know how to access the schemes and make it work for you.

Over the years, NGOs and some private and public sector initiatives have tried to compensate for the lack of governance in these areas by creating schools, educational programmes, health care centres, *aganwadis* and food supplements. But, given the size of the population (the demand), these initiatives cannot create enough (supply).

However, the government, with its very large infrastructure, in collaboration with the private sector and NGOs and community organisations, can address the demand.

In many ways, all sectors are looking to the telecentres to be the places where this can all come together. While they cannot meet all needs, certainly some basic needs can be met. For example information on:

1. Land deeds, sale and prices
2. Birth and death certificates
3. Health issues such as vaccinations, eye camps, well women checkups, diabetes camps, etc
4. School entry requirements, examinations and results
5. Cropping patters, weather, water, availability of seeds, pesticides, etc
6. Job vacancies and recruitment
7. Education and training possibilities for young people
8. Right to Information Act (RTI)

I am sure you and people you know can benefit from this information. Yes?

Check Your Progress 5

Note:

- a) Please use the space given below each question for your answer
- b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

1. Describe governance in 25 words or less

2. List three elements of governance

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____

3. Who is affected by poor governance?

3. Give five examples of basic information – related to governance - that telecentres can give.

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____

- iv. _____
v. _____

1.7 SUMMING UP

In this unit we learned about telecentres – what they are, their history, the various kinds of telecentres, how they work and their relationship to development. The main points are:

- Telecentres are places which bring the computer and internet to communities
- The global telecentre movement was created to bridge the digital divide
- The telecentre movement in India has many stakeholders
- The Indian telecentre movement is the *Grameen Gyan Abhiyan*
- There are various kinds of telecentres – government, private, NGO sponsored and mixed
- Telecentres bring the technology that makes good governance possible

1.8 Check Your Progress: Model Answers

CYP 1

1. A telecentre is a place where computers, the Internet and other digital technologies are available – to gather information, create, learn, and communicate.

2. India, telecentres are known by many names. Three of them could be: Village Knowledge centres (VKCs), CSCs, and *Gyan Choupals*

3. Telecentres empower people in many ways. They: provide a platform for common projects; make links across social and economic divides; deliver community services; draw young people into community life and give them new opportunities and capture and build on community history.

CYP 2

1. A telecottage is a [community](#) based facility to assist learning, access to technology and access to work for the [local community](#). A Community Technology Center (CTC) provides training that ranges from basic computing skills to [digital media](#) production as well as applied skills (e.g. online job search).

2. CTC programmes work in many ways:

- They increase people's self-sufficiency and capacity to learn
- Develop people's skills and talents
- Help people to participate in community life.
- Help develop consumers of information technology products and services.

3. The global telecentre movement is a movement (an association or a group) of people and organisations that are part of ideas, actions and processes to do with telecentres

4.

a. A network or networking is a method of making and expanding contacts.

b. The digital divide is the gap between people with good access to [digital](#) and [information technology](#) and those without.

CYP 3

1. The *Grameen Gyan Abhiyan* (GGA) is Rural Knowledge Movement in India. It has been working to get ICTs to the 637,000 villages of India.

2. i. *Empowerment* means to increase the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It involves the empowered developing self confidence.

ii. *An NGO* is a non-governmental organisation. This means that it has come together by the desire of citizens –men and women – for a common purpose or goal. Usually, an NGO comes together to compensate for a need that the government cannot or has not been able to fulfill.

CYP 4

1. The 5 kinds of telecentres

- *NGO-sponsored*
- *Local government*
- *Commercial*
- *School-based*
- *University-related*

2. The three levels of the Indian e-governance plan

- **CSCs**
- **The State Wide Area Network**
- **The State Data Centre Scheme**

CYP 5

1. Governance is the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. These include:

- The *process* by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced (seen in voice and accountability, political stability and lack of violence)
- 2. The *capacity* of the government to effectively create and carry out sound policies (seen in government effectiveness and regulatory quality), and
- The *respect* of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (seen in rule of law and control of corruption).

2. The poor are most affected by poor governance.

3. Five examples of information related to governance that telecentres can give are:

1. Land deeds, sale and prices
2. Birth and death certificates
3. Health issues such as vaccinations, eye camps, well women checkups, diabetes camps, etc
4. School entry requirements, examinations and results
5. Cropping patters, weather, water, availability of seeds, pesticides, etc

1.9 DEFINITIONS

1. Computer

A computer is a machine that manipulates data according to a list of instructions.

2. Internet

The Internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks that interchange data by packet switching using the standardized Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP). It is a "network of networks" that consists of millions of private and public, academic, business, and government networks of local to global scope that are linked by copper wires, fiber-optic cables, wireless connections, and other technologies.

The Internet carries various information resources and services, such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer and file sharing, online gaming, and the inter-linked hypertext documents and other resources of the World Wide Web (WWW).

3. Digital

The word digital is used in computing and electronics, especially where real-world information is converted to binary numeric form as in digital audio and digital photography. Such data-carrying signals carry electronic or optical pulses, the amplitude of each of which represents a logical 1 (pulse present and/or high) or a logical 0 (pulse absent and/or low).

A digital system uses discrete (discontinuous) values, usually but not always symbolized

numerically (hence called "digital") to represent information for input, processing, transmission, storage, etc. By contrast, non-digital (or analog) systems use a continuous range of values to represent information. Although digital representations are discrete, the information represented can be either discrete, such as numbers, letters or icons, or continuous, such as sounds, images, and other measurements of continuous systems.

The word *digital* comes from the same source as the word digit and *digitus* (the Latin word for *finger*), as fingers are used for discrete counting.

4. Development

Development is a process of planning and programming to meet the political, social and economic needs of people, communities and countries.

International development institutions

These are institutions involved in development issues at a global level, from a global perspective, and work in more than one country.

Some examples are the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

Developed/developing countries

Countries are rated on the basis of their being able to meet the needs of their people in food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, etc.

Developed countries are those who have met and are meeting the needs of most people in their country. The United States, Denmark, Canada are some examples of developed countries.

Developing countries are those who still have to meet the needs of their people. India, Bangladesh and Nepal are examples of developing countries.

Grassroots/grassroots movements

A grassroots movement is one that is motivated and created by people in a community – in a natural and spontaneous manner. This is the opposite of a national or global movement which is created more deliberately by people working in a different space and style.

Some examples of grassroots moved in India are the *Narmada Bachao Andolan*, the *Chipko* movement.

5. Policy, policy making, policy makers

A policy is a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve results. This can apply to government, private sector organizations and groups, and individuals. Policy makers are those that are involved in policy making.

Policy or policy studies refers to the process of making important organisational decisions, including the identification of different alternatives such as programs or spending priorities, and choosing among them on the basis of the impact they will have. Policies can be understood as political, management, financial, and administrative mechanisms arranged to reach explicit goals.

6. Public sector

The public sector is the part of economic and administrative life that deals with the delivery of goods and services by and for the government, at the national, regional or local levels.

Examples of public sector activity are services such as public housing, health, education, government schemes, urban planning and national defense.

7. Private sector

The private sector is that part of the economy which is run for private profit and is not controlled by the state.

8. Empowerment, empower

Empowerment means to increase the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It is the process by which:

- Those who are empowered develop self confidence.
- Enables a person to gain power, authority and influence over others, institutions or society.

Empowerment is probably the totality of the following or similar capabilities:

- Having decision-making power of your own
- Having access to information and resources for taking proper decision

- Having a range of options from which you can make choices (not just yes/no, either/or.)
- Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making
- Having positive thinking on the ability to make change
- Ability to learn skills for improving your or group power
- Ability to change others' perceptions by democratic means
- Involving a growth process and changes that are never ending and self-initiated
- Increasing your positive self-image and overcoming stigma
- Increasing your ability in discreet thinking to sort out right and wrong

In short, empowerment is the process that allows people to gain the knowledge, skill-sets and attitude needed to cope with the changing world and the circumstances in which people live.

In development, the empowerment approach focuses on mobilising the self-help efforts of the poor, rather than providing them with social welfare.

9. NGO

An NGO is a non-governmental organisation. This means that it has come together by the desire of citizens –men and women – for a common purpose or goal. Usually, an NGO comes together to compensate for a need that the government cannot or has not been able to fulfill.

10. Public Private Partnership (PPP)

Public-private partnership (PPP) describes a government service or private business venture which is funded and operated through a partnership of government and one or more [private sector](#) companies. These schemes are sometimes referred to as PPP, P3 or P3.

11. Governance

Governance relates to decisions that define expectations, grant [power](#), or verify [performance](#). It can be part of a separate process or of a specific part of [management](#) or [leadership](#) processes. Sometimes people set up a [government](#) to administer these processes and systems.

In the case of a [business](#) or of a [non-profit organisation](#), governance means consistent management, cohesive policies, processes and decision-rights for a given area of responsibility. For example, managing at a corporate level might involve evolving policies on [privacy](#), on internal investment, and on the use of data.

You also have read in this section of the Unit, examples of governance in education.

E-Governance is the public sector's use of ICTs to improve information and service delivery, encouraging citizen participation in the decision-making process and making government more accountable, transparent and effective.

1.11 ASSIGNMENT

Make a short presentation on the essential elements of this Module. It MUST include the following:

- What are telecentres?
- The global and Indian telecentre movement
- The various kinds of telecentres
- How telecentres help with governance
- How a telecentre could help your community

The presentation could be

1. A 5-7 minute cassette or CD audio recording
2. A video tape (5 minutes)
3. A written essay (1000 words)
4. A drawing
5. A poem
6. A photos essay (with about 10 photos and text)

1.12 GLOSSARY AND REFERENCES

1. Grameen Gyan Abhiyan - www.gga.org.
2. UNESCO – www.unesco.org
3. IDRC – www.idrc.org.ca
5. MSSRF – www.mssrf.org
6. UNDP – www.undp.org
7. ISRO – www.isro.org
8. DIT and CSCs – www.mit.gov.in
9. PRIs – www.panchayat.gov.in
10. ITC – www.echoupal.com
11. Telecentre.org - www.telecentre.org
12. Definitions and background information - www.wikipedia.org