

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE KENYA INSTITUTE OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT CEO DURING THE LAUNCH OF DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAMME (DLP) IN BUSIA COUNTY ON JULY 28, 2017.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good afternoon.

It is my pleasure to join you here for this vital occasion-the Launch of the Digital Literacy Program (DLP).

Indeed, this program is a key deliverable by the government meant to improve the quality of education in Kenya.

Technological advancements are here with us and all and sundry have experienced its impact in our day to day activities. Therefore, digital literacy has become a core skill for our children as they compete globally for emerging opportunities.

**Digital Literacy Programme (DLP)**

Kenya's Digital Literacy Programme (DLP), which basically refers to the use of digital technology and communications in learning, is a critical component of the ongoing curriculum reforms.

The programme initiated by the Government of Kenya in 2013 aims integrating ICT in education to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools. It is being executed through a multi stakeholder approach that involves different line ministries and state corporations.

Indeed, the advantages of ICT integration in curriculum delivery cannot be overestimated. The programme focuses on the country's long-term vision of creating a knowledge-based economy in line with vision 2030 requirements. It targets all primary schools in Kenya.

The tablets/laptops being distributed in schools countrywide are important devices for delivery of the digital content developed by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) for our learners. Teachers and learners can access the content for various approved subjects on these devices. The devices bestow on learners countrywide, the benefit of interacting with technology at an early age, thus promoting equality and uniformity in delivery of knowledge across the country.

Some 980, 848 tablets have been issued in 18,069 out of 21,729 schools country wide, representing more than 80 per cent, will enhance teaching and learning.

The devices are not meant to replace a teacher, but, to complement and make delivery of content more exciting and practical.

Already, 1,806 teachers have been trained on use of ICT in Busia County, with only 85 primary schools not yet supplied with the devices. National digital literacy will increase as teachers and learners use the ICT skills to search for, analyse, integrate, manage and evaluate information.

Learners undertaking Special Needs Education (SNE) would also benefit from the programme by accessing digital content, loaded, in digital tablets, customized for their use.

We cannot afford to wish away technology in schools. The world has become a global village, thanks to the government's commitment in promoting use of ICT to enhance service delivery in the public sector. Teachers and learners could acquire suitable skills to enable them remain globally competitive.

### **The Place of Digital Literacy in New Curriculum**

At the moment, KICD curriculum developers are at the monitoring and evaluation stage of the new curriculum that is being piloted in 470 schools countywide including this school, ahead of its implementation in the early years, in January next year. The curriculum seeks to entrench in the education system.

The curriculum developers are developing more learning materials that will be used up to third term, when the final evaluation of the success of the piloting will be undertaken.

The digital literacy occupies a sacred place in the development of this curriculum, which has not been reviewed for the last 14 years (since 2003). Ideally, the curriculum ought to be reviewed after every five years to capture emerging national and global trends.

However, teacher training is a critical component of integrating ICT in education. They need to appreciate the new paradigm shift in teaching and learning brought about by the emerging technological demands.

National digital literacy levels will increase as teachers and learners use the ICT skills to search for, analyze, integrate, manage, and evaluate information.

It is all about taking children out where knowledge is through the use of ICT as an important tool to complement teaching and learning. The devices are not meant to replace a teacher but to complement and make teaching and learning more exciting. They empower teachers in the delivery of the content in a more practical and realistic manner.

As the Chinese proverb goes, "Tell me, I'll forget. Show me, I'll remember. Involve me, I'll understand," DLP presents a unique opportunity for teachers to take children out, where knowledge is by helping them understand concepts through examples they can easily identify with.

The digital literacy program thus complements the beauty of the new curriculum that emphasizes on what learners can perform and not just what they can remember.

ICT will therefore guarantee quality education if it is used appropriately compared to solely relying on the traditional ways of delivery of educational content, which is mainly a textbook and a teacher.

A teacher could explain a concept as learners struggled to imagine the point the teacher is driving home. Some of the illustrations used were not clear to help the learner appreciate simple things like for instance, how an oxbow lake, looks like or how bloods circulates through the body. That has been made easy through the use of ICT in teaching, as it creates room for interactivity where you teach and show.

### **Language of Instruction**

The language of instructions in the tablets being used in schools has been simplified to enhance teaching and learning. We have made available a manual to guide teachers besides, the computer language conforming to globally acceptable standards, to ease usage.

KICD is alongside other partners monitoring the program keenly to point out areas that need further fine tuning.

Teachers' training has been continuous to ensure they are well versed with this technology. The government has incorporated ICT in teachers training colleges to ensure that teachers graduate with the requisite skills. Some can be Trainer of Trainers (ToTs) in the schools, hence enhance the digital literacy in the teaching profession.

We have to keep on sharing vital lessons as we move on, so that eventually we can have a program that accurately responds to the learner's salient educational needs.

We will keep on improving on the technology. Keep the feedback coming and we assure you that we shall not leave anything to chance in our pursuit to guarantee quality content for our children.

However, it is imperative that teachers develop a positive attitude towards the program to be able to inculcate the same attitude amongst the learners.

### **Conclusion**

To this end, I am sure we all agree that equipping our children with digital literacy is not a waste of time and resources. It is important and worth the investment. I would like to wish all of you a meaningful and fruitful interaction with these gadgets, as we do our best to realize our education goals.

**ENDS.....**

