

Bridging Digital Divide by Boosting IT Skills for Soragune Village Sri Lanka for Socio-Economic Growth

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This study focused on how improving IT skills may help Soragune Village, which is in Badulla District of Sri Lanka, to grow socioeconomically. Even though IT skills are essential for modern growth, rural regions still face issues including poor infrastructure and restricted access to technology. The goal of this research was to provide a sustainable model for ongoing IT education by evaluating the impact of IT training programmes on residents' socioeconomic position, identifying critical IT skills that are in demand, and assessing the existing level of IT literacy. A mixed-method approach was used, combining quantitative information from structured surveys measuring socioeconomic circumstances, infrastructural access, and IT literacy levels with qualitative information from stakeholder interviews in the community. The results of the study show that Soragune Village has poor IT literacy, significant gaps in critical IT skills, and inadequate infrastructure. The study pinpoints crucial areas that require intervention, including the development of customized educational curricula, the acquisition of IT infrastructure, and the active participation of the community in the planning process to guarantee programme efficacy and relevance. This study provides a repeatable model for other comparable situations by emphasizing the potential of IT education to foster socio-economic progress in rural areas. The suggested approach places a strong emphasis on collaborations with non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, ongoing programme effect assessments, and long-term sustainability measures. This study emphasizes how IT skills may significantly improve employment, entrepreneurship, and the general socioeconomic growth of rural regions.

Keywords: *IT skills development, socio-economic growth, rural education, digital divide*