MOBILE INFORMATION LITERACY CURRICULUM

Module 1 Guide: Introduction to Mobile Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs)

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HENRY M. JACKSON SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (JSIS)

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KEYWORDS

Mobile information literacy, information literacy, digital information literacy, digital literacy, mobile-centric, mobile-first, mobile phones, smart phones, Myanmar, ICTs, libraries, curriculum, training, training of trainers

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The Mobile Information Literacy curriculum is a growing collection of training materials designed to build information literacies for the millions of people worldwide coming online every month via a mobile phone.

Most information and digital literacy curricula were designed for a PC age, and public and private organizations around the world have used these curricula to help newcomers use computers and the internet effectively and safely. The better curricula address not only skills, but also concepts and attitudes. The central question for this project is: what are the relevant skills, concepts, and attitudes for people using mobiles, not PCs, to access the internet? As part of the Information Strategies for Societies in Transition project, we developed a six-module curriculum for mobile-first users. The project is situated in Myanmar, a country undergoing massive political, economic, and social changes, and where mobile penetration is expected to reach 80% by the end of 2015 from just 4% in 2014. Combined with the country’s history of media censorship, Myanmar presents unique challenges for addressing the needs of people who need the ability to find and evaluate the quality and credibility of information obtained online, understand how to create and share online information effectively, and participate safely and securely.

About the Curriculum

As millions of people come online across the globe through mobile devices, mobile information literacy is vital for those who have leapfrogged from traditional media to digital devices that provide instant access to information. Mobile information literacy is necessary to help people learn how to find and evaluate the quality and credibility of information obtained online, understand how to create and share online information effectively, and participate safely and securely. Mobile information literacy is critical to help people better consume, generate, and disseminate trustworthy information through both digital and traditional media.

The curriculum focuses on critical thinking in a digital environment of smart phones, mobile phones, and tablets, filling a critical gap in digital information literacy curricula. Existing curricular models assume people learn on a personal computer (PC). While this has been the case historically, the next billion people coming online will most likely learn on a mobile device. This has huge implications for how people get online, how they access and experience the internet, how much they produce in addition to consume information, and even how they conceptualize the internet itself. For instance, research shows that in Myanmar (and many other countries) more people use Facebook than the internet. Mobile-specific practices, such as zero-rating, mean people are coming online much more frequently through a handful of “walled garden” applications without an understanding of and similar access to the broader internet. Also, some mobile applications and websites don’t offer the full functionality of their PC counterparts. The curriculum aims to address these differences and empower mobile internet users to be equal participants in the online world.

The curriculum includes the following six modules:

- Module 1: Introduction to Mobile Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
- Module 2: A Mobile Lens on the Internet
- Module 3: Basic Web Searching via Mobile Devices
- Module 4: Working Online and Using Information via Mobile Devices
- Module 5: Putting It All Together
- Module 6: Module 5 Project Presentations
Curriculum Development

Our initial efforts sought to combine several frameworks in creating a comprehensive mobile information literacy curriculum: EU DIGCOMP, SCONUL, and Empowering 8. At the time of our review there were none that explicitly addressed all of the skills, concepts and attitudes for mobile-centric users. The EU DIGCOMP framework explicitly acknowledges that no curriculum for the mobile environment has been developed. Nevertheless, once we identified our target group as beginner-level participants with no knowledge of the internet, World Wide Web, and mobile technology use, the EU DIGCOMP proved to the most appropriate framework for designing a basic beginner-level curriculum. SCONUL and Empowering 8 were more appropriate for those with at least a minimum baseline digital information literacy.

How Others Can Implement the Curriculum

The curriculum and training guide were designed to be flexible and customizable, depending on the baseline skills of those being trained, and translated into other languages. In countries and contexts like Myanmar, where for many using a mobile phone marks their first experience with the internet and digital technology, these training materials can be used by various organizations, such as libraries and NGOs, to both train their staff and to build knowledge, skills, and mobile information literacy competencies within the populations they serve. In Myanmar the materials have been translated into Burmese, and master training sessions have been conducted to train library staff to further train their colleagues, as well as library patrons. Our partners in Myanmar have also conducted training sessions at the Ministry of Information.

The curriculum materials are offered here with a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 license, so others are free to use, adapt, and share the materials with attribution. We are also available to help organizations create customized materials based on their particular country or regional contexts and literacy training needs.

If you have questions on the curriculum or would like more information on how we can help, please email us at tascha@uw.edu. We also encourage individuals and organizations that use and adapt this curriculum and training to provide us with any feedback, ideas, and adapted materials. There are many ways you can do this: email tascha@uw.edu, leave a comment and upload materials on the main Mobile Information Literacy curriculum webpage http://tascha.uw.edu/mobile-information-literacy-curriculum, and/or participate on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/MobileInformationLiteracy.
Preparing for Conducting Trainings
By default, digital information literacy implies access to information on the internet. Technology often fails or can be difficult for many to use under time and pressure constraints. A good practice is to test run the presentation on the equipment in the facility well ahead of the actual training. This ensures that the presentation will go as intended and so trainers can determine and anticipate alternative options. Before conducting any presentation, trainers should be sure that:

- The training facility is equipped with the necessary materials and technology
- All equipment has been tested and is operational
- They are familiar with how to operate the equipment
- They have a backup plan for continuing the training should issues arise
About this Module

Introduction to Mobile Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

This module introduces participants to ICTs with a focus on mobile devices. Conceptual overview covers the evolution of ICT devices, OS platforms, basic functionality, and communication. Hands-on exercises cover basic operation of tablets and mobile phones, basic applications, and basic communication methods. Group work covers discussing general observations and perspectives, benefits and limitations of particular ICT devices and communication methods, and considering scenarios and relevance of each.

Prerequisites:
None

Topics covered:
- ICT basics
- Mobile ICT basics
- Mobile phone operation
- Affordances of mobile ICTs

Questions you will be able to answer at the end of this module:
- What are ICTs?
- Why are ICTs important?
- How is information accessed on mobile ICT devices?
- How do I send and receive information on my ICT device?
- How do I protect information on my ICT device?

How long does this module take?
1 hour, 20 minutes (80 minutes)
Module 1: Introduction to Mobile ICTs
Estimated total time: 1 hour, 20 minutes

Outline
1. Overview 5 mins
2. Defining ICTs 3 mins
3. Info Discussion 7 mins
4. Break 5 mins
5. Activities 60 mins
   - Activity 1.1: Making a Wi-Fi Connection
   - Activity 1.2: Securing Devices
   - Activity 1.3: Downloading and Assessing Apps
   - Activity 1.4: Basic Messaging and File Sharing

Assumptions
- All participants have mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets.
- Participants have basic knowledge of how to operate their mobile devices.
- Wi-Fi is available at the facility for participants to access.
- Welcome and introductions have already been done prior to this module.
- Participants have limited knowledge of ICTs.

Prepare ahead
Be sure to familiarize yourself with basic ICT features of mobile devices across the most common platforms used by your participants. Review the activities and ensure that you set up any necessary accounts and online spaces ahead of time.

Background information
ICT stands for “Information and Communications Technology.” While many immediately think of mobile phones and tablets when asked to identify ICT devices, ICTs have a much longer history and include such devices as television, radio, computers, and telephones. ICT refers both to the study of as well as the devices and processes used for communications. This workshop, however, will focus on mobile devices since they are more prevalent in Myanmar amongst the general population compared to computers and other devices.

Overview
(5 mins)
[Slide: Overview]

Briefly introduce yourself, the title of this module, and what will be covered:

- Hello, everyone. Welcome to the Myanmar Mobile Information Training Workshop. My name is [...]. This is Module 1: Intro to Mobile ICTs.
- In this Module, we will get an introduction to ICTs, briefly cover information and security, and do some hands-on activities to get familiar with using ICTs. As trainers, it will be important to be able to take your trainees through the process of working through their devices and understanding information without assuming any prior knowledge.
- By the end of this Module, you will have a basic understanding of ICTs that we will build on for the remaining Modules of this Mobile Information Literacy Module.
The best way to learn mobile information literacy is by learning new concepts and then applying what you’ve learned. This workshop is designed to be highly interactive to help you learn new concepts and retain what you’ve learned. You are encouraged to get the maximum benefit out of this workshop by experimenting, making mistakes so that you can learn from them, and asking lots of questions. As we progress, if something is unclear, please don’t hesitate to ask for clarification.

Encourage participants to be interactive and engage from the beginning by prompting them with:

- **Who can tell me what “ICT” stands for?**
  
  Call on any volunteers to answer. Depending on the response, you may prompt further with: *Anyone else?* When you receive a correct answer, or if you receive incorrect or no answers, state: *ICT stands for “Information and Communications Technology.”*

- **Who here uses or has used ICTs?**
  
  You may wish to register the show of hands total for later reference.

- **Call upon a few to answer, prompting them with:** *What did you use it for? Acknowledge their responses and repeat for the group. You may decide to prompt further with: What else did you use ICTs for? Depending on the response, it may help to add your personal experiences or other examples of using ICTs. Note the responses and reiterate a general summary: So, it appears that most are using ICTs for […], some for […], and others for […]. If there was a low number of positive responses to the earlier question on who uses ICTs, you may wish to ask the question again at this point to emphasize that, indeed, all participants use or have used some form of ICT.*

**Defining ICTs**

(3 mins)

[Slide: What are ICTs?]

Reiterate that ICTs = Information and Communications Technologies. Break down the acronym into its separate parts, and say each as you write or project for the participants to see:

1. Information
2. Communications
3. Technologies

- **Information is the representation of what we want to convey**
- **Communications is the sending or receiving of that information**
- **Technologies are the means of managing and enabling that information and communication**

**Information and Communications Technologies, or ICTs, are the devices and processes for creating, storing, retrieving, manipulating, sending, and receiving information.**

Emphasize that “Information” is very broadly defined. Traditional definitions of information usually meant print, textual, or verbal form, but information is much more than these. Prompt participants to reflect on this:


There are no incorrect answers. Information is everywhere, and all of these can be represented and managed by ICTs in some way. You may wish to refer to various images of ICTs, point them out in the facility, or name a few.

**Information Discussion**

(7 mins)
ICTs include many devices and processes, but with the increasing prevalence of mobile phones amongst the general population over other types of ICTs, these have become a major focus for researchers, businesses, educators, and more.

Poll the participants for their use of ICTs:

- How many people have a computer at home? At work? (If relevant: At school?)
- How many people use tablets at home? At work? (If relevant: At school?)
- How many people have a mobile phone? Where do you use it?

Summarize your observations for the group:

- So, \([x]\) people have computers at home, \([y]\) use computers at work; \([x]\) people have tablets at home, \([y]\) use tablets at work; and \([z]\) have mobile phones.
  Include school or other examples as necessary depending on your audience. You may wish to represent the numbers as percentages of the total number of participants; ideally, you should see that everyone uses a phone, more so than computers and tablets, and that this use is ubiquitous.
- Given the prevalence, and this is only increasing, you can see why businesses, governments, educators, and so on are interested in focusing on ICTs, mobile phones in particular. But it’s not the devices themselves that are of primary interest.

Get a sense of how aware participants are of the information on their phone:

- How many people have information on their mobile devices?
- What types of information are on your device? What do you use this information for?
- What do you consider valuable information? Why?
- How many people have valuable information on their phones?

Begin to establish a critical perspective on information that will be built on later:

- What might someone do with the information on your device?
- We now live in an information economy. More people have greater access to more information than ever before. ICTs make this possible. On the one hand, this is a positive benefit than can improve lives, and on the other, we must adjust our thinking of what this access to information entails. In an information economy, information is a valuable commodity much like material possessions and, similarly, needs to be protected from theft, misuse, and unauthorized access. Big Data tells us that any and all information, no matter how seemingly insignificant, can be combined and analyzed in ways that most people never intended or imagined. [Provide examples, such as: retail establishments would like to know what kind of people would buy their products and why, where their customers come from, and what influences their purchasing decisions. Any information about you, as their customer, on your habits, preferences, sensibilities will allow them to build profiles of other potential customers. This may be a positive or negative depending on your views of privacy. If you like retail establishments making suggestions for your future purchases based on a profile they’ve built of your habits and preferences, then this is a benefit. But consider: if retail establishments would pay enormous amounts of money to collect all kinds of data on you, can you think of what other entities might be interested in doing the same for their purposes without your knowledge or consent?]
- Once your information is collected, where do you think it goes? What happens to it? What are some reasons why this might be important to consider? [If you receive few responses, prompt with: would you want just anyone to have access to information on your whereabouts? What about where you...
shop, what you buy, who you call, where you live, who your family and friends are, where you work, what you read, etc.? Why might this be problematic?}

- So, access to information on the internet offers many positive benefits, but we must also be vigilant in protecting against unauthorized and negative uses of our information. This means becoming more literate about digital information.

**Activity 1.1: Making a Wi-Fi Connection**
(5-20 mins)

[Slide: Activity 1.1]
Have participants connect to the designated facility Wi-Fi. Emphasize that getting connected to the network is an important first step to continuing on with the remainder of the workshop. Access to the facility Wi-Fi will allow participants to practice downloading and installing apps, a skill that they will need to be familiar with for Module 2. Note: if participants are already sitting in groups, the time for this activity will be lower than if they have to take time to arrange into groups first. Also, while trainers may already be connected themselves, this is an important exercise for them to be able to do with others and on other types of phones and devices.

- Except for the most basic cellular phones, most mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets can connect to the internet using Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi offers many advantages over cellular network connections:
  (Provide brief relevant examples for each item.)
  - **Cost** – Wi-Fi is often free or very low cost; there are no roaming charges for Wi-Fi.
    (example: I can download and watch videos all day long using Wi-Fi at no charge; over cellular, I would easily exceed my data limit.)
  - **Coverage** – Wi-Fi is widely available; many homes, businesses, and other locations offer Wi-Fi.
    (example: This [type of facility] offers free Wi-Fi; […] offers free Wi-Fi; most airports, coffee shops, and retail businesses offer free Wi-Fi; etc.)
  - **Speed** – Wi-Fi has significantly faster speeds allowing for more data transfer over less time
  - **Quality** – Calls are often clearer over Wi-Fi than cellular
  - **Apps** – Many apps require Wi-Fi and can’t be used over cellular networks
  - **Security** – Wi-Fi offers security control options

1. Have participants form into small groups and work together to get connected to the Wi-Fi.
2. Provide the participants with the information necessary to log into the Wi-Fi
3. Encourage them to help others get connected on their devices.
4. Check in with each group to mark their progress and troubleshoot any issues.

**Activity 1.2: Securing Devices**
(10-20 mins)

[Slide: Activity 1.2]
- Now that we know that your information is valuable, it is important to understand how to protect your information from unauthorized access and use. The most basic way to do this is to secure your devices. All devices have some security options. How many people use some kind of protection mechanism to secure information on their devices? What do you do? [Provide other options depending on devices, such as phone location settings.]
1. Have participants work in groups to set basic security options on their devices, such as setting a device lock that requires a code or other method such as fingerprint to unlock.
2. Check in with each group to mark their progress and troubleshoot any issues.
3. Time permitting, ask participants about types of security options they discovered on their devices, and have them discuss the benefits and disadvantages of each.
4. Close by emphasizing an important information security method that many overlook: destroying information on a device before discarding the device or giving it away.

**BREAK**

(5 mins)

[Slide: Break]

**Activity 1.3: Downloading and Assessing Apps**

(20 mins)

[Slide: Activity 1.3]

Applications, or apps for short, are the programs that make mobile devices so powerful. In order to progress through the remainder of this module, participants will need to: 1) know how to download apps and install apps, and 2) understand basic app management.

- **What is an app?**
- **What apps do you have on your device?**
- **What do you use them for?**

Note the totals and summarize the app categories and uses for the group. For example, \([x]\) of you use Facebook for staying in touch or learning about current events; \([y]\) use YouTube to watch videos; \([z]\) use WhatsApp for messaging; etc.

Depending on the answers, lead into the activity by noting that the internet offers unprecedented access to information and communication, and ICTs via apps on mobile devices allow users to engage in this space. Emphasize the importance of understanding how to download and manage apps.

1. In groups, have participants find and compare their device method for downloading apps.
2. Instruct participants to download an app that you have selected. Choose one that participants do not already have, that is free, is from a trusted company, and is small enough for everyone to download at the same time. Some examples, though trainers will need to replace with apps that will work in Myanmar and that they have tested ahead of the Module: CamCard, OneBusAway, Zillow.
3. Check in with each group to mark their progress and troubleshoot any issues.

At present, there are over 1 million Android and Apple apps available for download. With so many apps to choose from, it can be difficult to assess the credibility and safety of apps. Emphasize the following items to be aware of in assessing apps:

1. Number of downloads – some apps are imitations or have very persuasive descriptions. For popular apps, participants should see a relatively large number of downloads compared to lookalikes.
2. Company or Creator – look for familiar names of companies or app creators that have established reputations for quality products and services.
3. Reviews – browse the lowest-rated reviews to learn about issues that users have noted.
Now that participants have downloaded the apps onto their devices, it is important that they understand how to access the settings on the app. At this point, they will not need to modify the settings, just understand how to find the settings of apps.

1. Have the participants work with their groups to find and identify the settings on their devices associated with the app they just downloaded.
   - *What are some options available in settings? What do they do?*
   - *Which settings options do you think are important for protecting your information? Why?*
2. Check in with each group to mark their progress and troubleshoot any issues.

Simply navigating away or closing an app window does not shut down an app. Many users erroneously believe that apps are closed down because they don’t see them. If apps are not closed down, they can continue to run in the background. In addition, running apps deplete battery life.

1. Have participants work in their groups to learn how to properly close down apps on their devices as well as on other devices.
2. Check in with each group to mark their progress and troubleshoot any issues.

Finally, participants should understand how to remove apps they no longer want on their devices:

1. Have participants work in their groups to learn how to delete apps on their devices as well as on other devices.
2. Check in with each group to mark their progress and troubleshoot any issues.

Activity 1.4: Basic Messaging and File Sharing – Email, SMS/MMS, listserv, DropBox, Facebook or other Social Media Application

(10-20 mins per application)

[Slide: Activity 1.4]

Depending on the level of experience and goals for the participants, select one, several, or all of these file sharing and communication applications to practice connecting and exchanging information. Note, for Dropbox and listserv applications, trainers will need to create these spaces ahead of time before they can add participants. One method to practice multiple applications in the same exercise is to connect these various methods. For example, have everyone send you an email. Then use their email addresses to add them to a DropBox space that you’ve already created ahead of this Module. You can also use the same email addresses to add them to a listserv; or you can instruct participants to request to be added by directing them to the listserv webpage. You can then use the listserv to send a group message asking everyone to send you an SMS message so that you will have their contact info. There are a variety of ways to combine taking participants through these methods. Choose what works best for your given group of participants.

**SMS (Short Message Service) / MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service):**

1. Provide participants with your contact information.
2. Have them send you an SMS / MMS message.
3. Respond to their messages.
4. Have group members exchange contact info and send the group an SMS / MMS message.
   - Note: some participants may need to adjust settings on their devices to handle MMS, so trainers should be prepared to assist participants with these settings.

**Email:**

1. Provide participants with your email information.
2. Have them send you an email message.
3. Respond to their messages.
4. Have group members exchange contact info and send each other a group email message.
   – Note: for participants without email addresses, you will need to guide them through setting one up. One recommendation: have them download or use their Gmail app.

**Listserv:**
1. Provide participants with the listserv information.
2. Have them sign up on the listserv webpage, or you may opt to add them yourself.
3. Send a message to the listserv.
4. Have group members respond to the listserv.

**DropBox:**
1. Provide permissions on a shared DropBox for participants and use the DropBox option to send the info to participants.
2. Have them navigate to the DropBox space.
3. Demonstrate adding a file to the DropBox.
4. Instruct participants to upload a file of their own to the DropBox.

**More advanced users:**
5. Create a DropBox space for groups, and instruct groups to upload files to the specific directories that you created for them.
6. Instruct participants to create their own DropBox spaces and share one with you.
7. Instruct participants to create and share a DropBox space with their group.
8. Create and send a link to a DropBox file to participants.
9. Instruct participants to send you and their group members a link to a file in DropBox.

**Facebook / Social Media:**
1. Provide participants with your personal or group Facebook information.
2. Have them send a message using Facebook.
3. Time permitting, you can also choose to cover various options for sending messages on Facebook, such as posting vs. messaging, security and privacy options for messages, etc.

**Wrap up**

[Slide: Review]

- That concludes module 1. You now have learned what ICTs are, why understanding ICTs and mobile information literacy are important, and how to manage your mobile ICT device for accessing information on the internet. In module 2, we shift our attention to the space of the internet. Take any questions or comments if any, then take a break.