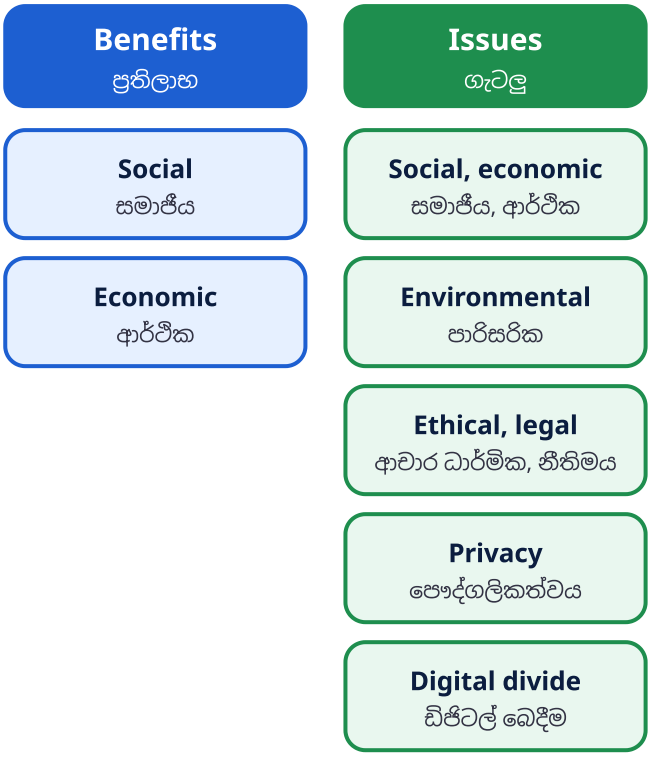
Grade 12 A/L ICT · Lesson 1

1.7 Impact of ICT on Society: Benefits, Issues and the Digital Divide

Syllabus 1.7. ICT has changed how we live, learn and work. It brings many **benefits**, but also **social, economic, environmental, ethical, legal and privacy issues**. In this part you study these issues, the laws in Sri Lanka that deal with them, e-waste, the **Sustainable Development Goals** and the **digital divide**.



ICT has benefits and issues.

1. Benefits of ICT

- Fast, cheap communication across the world.
- Better education and health services, even in rural areas.
- New jobs and businesses (software, BPO, freelancing, e-commerce).
- Faster, more accurate work and less paper.
- Easy access to government services and information.

2. Issues caused by ICT

Type	Issues
Social	Less face-to-face contact, addiction to games and social media, cyberbullying, fake news

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Economic	Some jobs replaced by automation, cost of equipment, online fraud
Environmental	E-waste, high electricity use by data centres
Health	Eye strain, back pain, repetitive strain injury, lack of exercise
Ethical and legal	Piracy, plagiarism, hacking, misuse of personal data

3. Privacy, confidentiality and security

Privacy is the right of a person to control information about themselves. **Confidentiality** means information is seen only by the people who are allowed to see it (for example medical or bank records). Threats include **hacking** (getting into a system without permission), **malware** (viruses, ransomware) and **phishing** – fake emails, messages or websites that trick people into giving passwords or card numbers.

> 🧱 **Worked example: Spot the phishing message**
> An SMS says: "Your bank account is blocked. Click bank-lk-verify.xyz and enter your PIN within 1 hour." **Signs:** urgent threat, strange web address (not the bank's real domain), asks for a PIN (banks never ask). **Action:** do not click; call the bank on its official number; delete the message.

4. Intellectual property: copyright, piracy, plagiarism and licensing

Term	Meaning
Copyright	The legal right of a creator to control copying of their work (software, music, books)
Software piracy	Copying, sharing or using software without a valid licence
Plagiarism	Presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own without credit
Licensed software	Software used under the rules of its licence – single user, site licence, open source licence

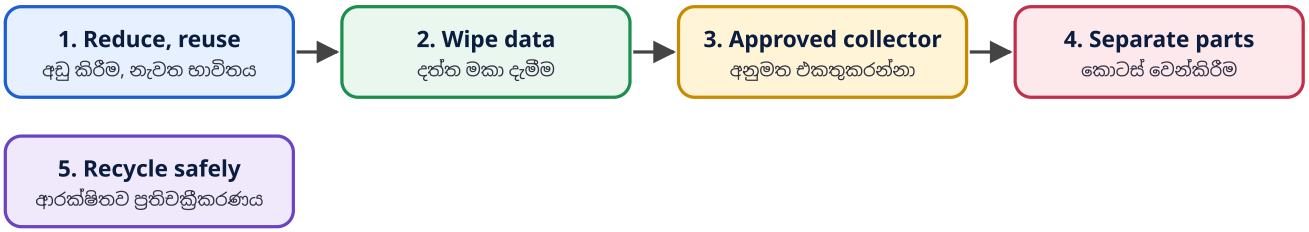
> 💡 To avoid plagiarism: write in your own words, use quotation marks for exact words, and give the source (cite).

5. ICT laws in Sri Lanka

Law	What it does
Intellectual Property Act No. 36 of 2003	Protects copyright, patents and trademarks
Electronic Transactions Act No. 19 of 2006	Electronic documents and signatures are legal
Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007	Unauthorised access, hacking and data damage are crimes
Personal Data Protection Act No. 9 of 2022	Organisations must protect personal data

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6. E-waste



Handle e-waste safely: reduce, reuse, recycle.

E-waste is old or broken electronic equipment (phones, computers, batteries). It contains harmful materials such as lead, mercury and cadmium that pollute soil and water if dumped or burnt. Good practice: **reduce** (buy only what is needed, repair), **reuse** (donate working devices), **recycle** (give to an approved e-waste collector).

7. ICT and the Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015 the United Nations agreed on **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** to reach by 2030. ICT helps many of them, for example: Goal 3 (good health – telemedicine), Goal 4 (quality education – e-learning), Goal 8 (decent work – online jobs), Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure – broadband) and Goal 13 (climate action – sensors and data to watch the weather).

8. The digital divide

The **digital divide** is the gap between people who have access to ICT and the skills to use it, and people who do not. Causes: cost of devices and data, no Internet coverage in rural areas, lack of ICT skills, language barriers, age and disability. Ways to reduce it: Nenasala (community telecentres), school computer labs, cheaper data, content in Sinhala and Tamil, and training programmes.

> 🚀 **Beyond the syllabus (2026 update)** *Not required for the exam – read for interest.* **New issues in 2026. Deepfakes** – AI-made fake videos and voices – are used for scams and false news; check the source before you believe or share. Sri Lanka's **Personal Data Protection Act No. 9 of 2022** is being brought into force in stages, so organisations must protect personal data and tell people how it is used. E-waste is growing fast as phones are replaced more often.

Key Words

Privacy – A person's right to control information about themselves.	**Confidentiality** – Information is seen only by people allowed to see it.
Phishing – Fake messages or websites that trick people into giving secrets.	**Hacking** – Getting into a computer system without permission.

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Malware – Harmful software such as viruses and ransomware.

Copyright – A creator's legal right to control copying of their work.

Software piracy – Copying or using software without a valid licence.

Plagiarism – Presenting another person's work as your own.

E-waste – Old or broken electronic equipment that is thrown away.

Digital divide – The gap between people with and without access to ICT.

SDGs – The 17 UN goals for a better world by 2030.

Cyberbullying – Using ICT to hurt or threaten another person.

Deepfake – A fake video or voice made with AI.

Sample Q&A

1. Give two social and two environmental issues caused by ICT.

> **Answer:** Social: cyberbullying, addiction. Environmental: e-waste, high electricity use by data centres.

2. What is phishing and how can you protect yourself?

> **Answer:** Fake messages that trick you into giving passwords or card numbers. Do not click unknown links, check the web address, never share a PIN, and contact the organisation directly.

3. Distinguish software piracy from plagiarism.

> **Answer:** Piracy is copying or using software without a licence; plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own.

4. Name the Sri Lankan law that makes hacking a crime.

> **Answer:** The Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007.

5. Why is e-waste harmful and how should it be handled?

> **Answer:** It contains lead, mercury and cadmium that pollute soil and water. Reduce, reuse and recycle through approved collectors.

6. What is the digital divide? Give two ways to reduce it.

> **Answer:** The gap between people who have ICT access and skills and those who do not. Reduce it with Nenasala centres, school computer labs, cheaper data or training.

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MCQ

1. Which Sri Lankan act protects copyright of software?

A. Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007
B. Motor Traffic Act
C. Personal Data Protection Act No. 9 of 2022
D. Intellectual Property Act No. 36 of 2003
E. Electronic Transactions Act No. 19 of 2006

2. Which act makes electronic documents and signatures legal?

A. Electronic Transactions Act No. 19 of 2006
B. Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007
C. Personal Data Protection Act No. 9 of 2022
D. Intellectual Property Act No. 36 of 2003
E. Education Act

3. An email asking you to “verify your PIN” through a strange link is:

A. Plagiarism
B. Phishing
C. Validation
D. Copyright
E. E-commerce

4. Copying an essay from a website and submitting it as your own is:

A. Phishing
B. Piracy
C. Plagiarism
D. Hacking
E. E-waste

5. Installing one licensed copy of software on 30 computers without permission is:

A. Software piracy
B. Open source use
C. Plagiarism
D. E-governance
E. Verification

6. How many Sustainable Development Goals are there?

A. 20
B. 8
C. 15
D. 17
E. 10

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7. The SDGs were agreed by the United Nations in:

A. 2020
B. 2010
C. 2000
D. 2030
E. 2015

8. Which material in e-waste is harmful?

A. Cotton
B. Water
C. Lead
D. Salt
E. Oxygen

9. The gap between people with and without ICT access is the:

A. Bandwidth
B. Digital divide
C. Data life cycle
D. Firewall
E. Batch gap

10. Which helps reduce the digital divide in Sri Lanka?

A. Software piracy
B. Closing school labs
C. Nenasala community centres
D. Content only in English
E. Higher data prices

11. Medical records seen only by the doctor and patient show:

A. Piracy
B. E-waste
C. Plagiarism
D. Confidentiality
E. Redundancy

12. Eye strain and back pain from long computer use are:

A. Economic benefits
B. Environmental benefits
C. Validation errors
D. Legal issues
E. Health issues

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13. Which term means: “A person’s right to control information about themselves”?

A. SDGs
B. Privacy
C. Copyright
D. Plagiarism
E. Phishing

14. Which term means: “Information is seen only by people allowed to see it”?

A. Cyberbullying
B. Hacking
C. Software piracy
D. E-waste
E. Confidentiality

15. Which term means: “Fake messages or websites that trick people into giving secrets”?

A. Digital divide
B. Phishing
C. Plagiarism
D. Deepfake
E. Malware

16. Which term means: “Getting into a computer system without permission”?

A. Hacking
B. E-waste
C. Copyright
D. SDGs
E. Privacy

17. Which term means: “Harmful software such as viruses and ransomware”?

A. Software piracy
B. Cyberbullying
C. Digital divide
D. Malware
E. Confidentiality

18. Which term means: “A creator’s legal right to control copying of their work”?

A. Copyright
B. Phishing
C. SDGs
D. Plagiarism
E. Deepfake

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19. Which term means: "Copying or using software without a valid licence"?

A. E-waste
B. Cyberbullying
C. Software piracy
D. Hacking
E. Privacy

20. Which term means: "Presenting another person's work as your own"?

A. Malware
B. Confidentiality
C. Digital divide
D. Deepfake
E. Plagiarism

Structured Questions

1. Discuss three benefits and three issues of ICT for society. *(6 marks)*

> Benefits – fast communication; better education and health; new jobs; issues – cyberbullying and addiction; job loss from automation; e-waste

2. A student gets this SMS: "Your account is blocked. Click bank-lk-verify.xyz and enter your PIN within 1 hour." (a) Name this attack. (b) Give three signs. (c) State what the student should do. *(5 marks)*

> (a) Phishing; (b) urgent threat; strange web address; asks for a PIN; (c) do not click and call the bank on its official number

3. Name four Sri Lankan laws related to ICT with their numbers and years, and state what each covers. *(4 marks)*

> Intellectual Property Act No. 36 of 2003 – protects copyright, patents and trademarks; Electronic Transactions Act No. 19 of 2006 – electronic documents and signatures are legal; Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007 – unauthorised access, hacking and data damage are crimes; Personal Data Protection Act No. 9 of 2022 – organisations must protect personal data

4. Explain what e-waste is, why it is harmful and three ways to manage it. *(5 marks)*

> Old or broken electronic equipment; contains lead, mercury and cadmium that pollute soil and water; reduce by repairing; reuse by donating; recycle through approved collectors

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5. Define the digital divide, give two causes and suggest two ways ICT can help reach the SDGs while reducing it. *(5 marks)*

> Gap between people with and without ICT access and skills; causes – cost of devices and data; no rural coverage; ways – e-learning in rural schools supports Goal 4; telemedicine via Nenasala supports Goal 3

Summary

- ICT brings fast communication, better services and new jobs.
- Issues: social, economic, environmental, health, ethical and legal.
- Protect privacy and confidentiality; watch out for phishing.
- Respect copyright; avoid piracy and plagiarism; use licensed software.
- Manage e-waste, support the SDGs and reduce the digital divide.

MCQ answer key – 1.7

1. **D** – IP law covers copyright.
2. **A** – E-transactions.
3. **B** – A trick to steal secrets.
4. **C** – Taking credit for others' work.
5. **A** – Breaks the licence.
6. **D** – Agreed in 2015.
7. **E** – Target year is 2030.
8. **C** – Also mercury and cadmium.
9. **B** – Access + skills gap.
10. **C** – Access in villages.
11. **D** – Only allowed people.
12. **E** – Effects on the body.
13. **B** – Privacy – A person's right to control information about themselves.
14. **E** – Confidentiality – Information is seen only by people allowed to see it.
15. **B** – Phishing – Fake messages or websites that trick people into giving secrets.
16. **A** – Hacking – Getting into a computer system without permission.
17. **D** – Malware – Harmful software such as viruses and ransomware.
18. **A** – Copyright – A creator's legal right to control copying of their work.
19. **C** – Software piracy – Copying or using software without a valid licence.
20. **E** – Plagiarism – Presenting another person's work as your own.

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