

BEYOND JUST A SIGNAL: THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AS A NEW FACE OF POVERTY IN BANDA ACEH

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Abstract: The digital divide has emerged as a new facet of poverty in the urban poor communities of Banda Aceh, particularly in Ulee Kareng Sub-District. This study identifies the impact of digital disparities on urban poor communities engaged in informal sectors with limited access to technology and digital literacy. Employing dependency theory, social reproduction theory, and social exclusion theory, the study analyzes how digitalization without equitable access exacerbates intergenerational poverty. Drawing on primary and secondary data, including BPS reports (2023) and field observations, this study proposes a community-based empowerment strategy through the *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program. This initiative aims to enhance digital literacy, provide free internet access, and promote participation in the digital economy to reduce social exclusion and break the cycle of poverty.

Keywords: Digital Divide, Urban Poverty, Social Exclusion, Digital Literacy, Community Empowerment

1. Introduction

The advent of digitalization has transformed the global social, economic, and cultural landscape, enabling unprecedented access to education, public services, and economic opportunities through information and communication technology (ICT). However, without equitable access, digitalization has deepened social inequalities, giving rise to the phenomenon known as the *digital divide*. In Banda Aceh, particularly in the urban poor areas of Ulee Kareng Sub-District, the digital divide has become a new face of poverty, exacerbating social and economic marginalization. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Banda Aceh (2023), approximately 8.12% of the city's population lives below the poverty line, with a significant concentration in densely populated urban areas like Ulee Kareng. Limited access to stable internet, digital devices, and low digital literacy have increasingly isolated these communities from essential services that now rely heavily on online platforms, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The urban poor in Ulee Kareng Sub-District primarily work in the informal sector, including daily laborers, street vendors, online motorcycle taxi drivers, or parking attendants. Their unstable income and lack of social security make them particularly vulnerable to economic shocks. Post-COVID-19, this vulnerability has been compounded as essential services such as education, healthcare, and social assistance have shifted to digital platforms. A report by Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022) highlights that children from poor families in Ulee Kareng struggle to access online education due to the lack of adequate devices like laptops or smartphones and limited internet data.

Furthermore, field observations reveal that many residents are unable to access app-based services, such as the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) or the Next Generation Social Welfare Information System (SIKS-NG), due to low digital literacy. This situation not only aggravates material poverty but also hinders social mobility and perpetuates intergenerational poverty.

The digital divide in Ulee Kareng is not merely a technical issue, such as the lack of internet connectivity or the high cost of devices, but a reflection of broader structural and cultural inequalities. Within the framework of dependency theory (Wallerstein, 1974), the urban poor in this area are positioned on the "periphery" of a global and national economic system increasingly oriented toward digitalization. Their reliance on conventional services marginalizes them further as public services and economic opportunities transition to digital platforms. Bourdieu's (1986) social reproduction theory explains how limited access to digital capital, such as devices and technological skills, results in academic disadvantages for children, thereby constraining their prospects for escaping poverty. Similarly, Lenoir's (1974) social exclusion theory underscores that disconnection from digital resources excludes the poor from development processes, creating a new form of marginalization in the digital era.

Culturally, the Ulee Kareng community retains strong values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and social solidarity, evident in groups such as women's religious study circles, youth organizations (*karang taruna*), and mosque youth groups. However, the pressures of urbanization and digitalization are beginning to erode these traditional social bonds, adding further complexity to the challenges faced. Therefore, there is a pressing need for empowerment strategies that not only address technological disparities but also leverage local social and cultural assets to create inclusive and sustainable solutions.

This study aims to: (1) identify the social, economic, and cultural characteristics of the urban poor in Ulee Kareng Sub-District, focusing on the impact of the digital divide on their livelihoods; (2) analyze the structural and cultural factors reinforcing the digital divide through the lenses of dependency, social reproduction, and social exclusion theories; and (3) design a community-based empowerment strategy through the *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program to reduce digital exclusion, enhance digital literacy, and promote economic opportunities and social mobility. Utilizing a qualitative approach and *Participatory Action Research* (PAR), this study integrates primary data from observations and interviews in Ulee Kareng's villages (*gampong*) with secondary data from BPS (2023) and Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022) reports. The community-based approach is designed to harness local assets, such as mutual cooperation values and social groups, while actively involving residents in the planning and implementation of empowerment programs. Through this, the study seeks to contribute meaningfully to achieving digital and social justice in Banda Aceh.

2. Literature Review

The digital divide, defined as the gap between those with access to digital technologies and those without, has become a critical lens for understanding modern forms of inequality. This section reviews key theoretical frameworks and empirical studies that illuminate the interplay between the digital divide, poverty, and social

exclusion, particularly in the context of urban poor communities. The analysis draws on dependency theory (Wallerstein, 1974), social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 1986), social exclusion theory (Lenoir, 1974), and social capital theory (Putnam, 2000), alongside contemporary studies on digital inequality.

2.1. Dependency Theory and the Digital Divide

Wallerstein's (1974) dependency theory provides a structural lens for understanding the digital divide within a global and national economic system. According to Wallerstein, peripheral communities are systematically disadvantaged in a world-system where resources and opportunities are concentrated in core areas. In the context of digitalization, urban poor communities, such as those in Ulee Kareng, are positioned on the periphery, reliant on outdated or limited access to technology while core urban centers benefit from advanced digital infrastructure. This dependency exacerbates their exclusion from digitalized public services and economic opportunities, reinforcing poverty. Kamalu and Ibrahim (2024) argue that digitalization, without equitable distribution of technological resources, can perpetuate economic dependency, as marginalized groups lack the means to participate in the digital economy, further entrenching their peripheral status.

2.2. Social Reproduction and Intergenerational Poverty

Bourdieu's (1986) social reproduction theory highlights how access to various forms of capital—economic, cultural, and social—shapes opportunities across generations. In the digital age, digital capital, encompassing access to devices, internet connectivity, and digital literacy, has become a critical determinant of social mobility. Limited access to digital capital, as observed in Ulee Kareng, restricts educational opportunities for children, leading to academic underachievement and reduced prospects for upward mobility. Goffe (2024) emphasizes that the digital divide perpetuates intergenerational poverty by limiting access to online education and skill-building platforms, which are increasingly essential for economic participation. This dynamic is particularly evident in urban poor communities, where the lack of digital resources reproduces social and economic disadvantages across generations.

2.3. Social Exclusion and Digital Marginalization

Lenoir's (1974) social exclusion theory provides a framework for understanding how the digital divide marginalizes communities from mainstream development processes. Social exclusion occurs when individuals or groups are systematically barred from accessing resources, rights, and opportunities necessary for full societal participation. In the context of Ulee Kareng, the shift of essential services—such as education, healthcare, and social assistance—to digital platforms has excluded those without adequate access or skills. Holmes and Burgess (2022) argue that digital exclusion is a significant driver of poverty in urban settings, as it restricts access to critical services and opportunities. Similarly, Wu (2024) notes that social security systems, when digitized without addressing access disparities, can deepen poverty rather than alleviate it, as marginalized groups are unable to navigate digital interfaces.

2.4. Social Capital and Community Resilience

Putnam's (2000) concept of social capital, particularly the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital, is crucial for understanding community resilience in the face of the digital divide. Bonding social capital, rooted in strong community ties such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) in Ulee Kareng, fosters solidarity but may be insufficient for accessing external opportunities. Bridging social capital, which connects communities to external networks and resources, is often limited among the urban poor, restricting their access to digital knowledge and opportunities. Sen's (1999) capability approach complements this by emphasizing that access to technology alone is insufficient; individuals must also have the capability to use it effectively to enhance their freedoms and opportunities. The combination of low bridging social capital and limited digital capabilities in Ulee Kareng underscores the need for community-based interventions that leverage local social networks while building connections to external resources.

2.5. Empirical Evidence on Digital Divide and Poverty

Empirical studies further illuminate the relationship between the digital divide and poverty. Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022) reports that urban poor communities in Banda Aceh, including Ulee Kareng, face significant barriers to digital participation due to the high cost of devices and internet access, as well as low digital literacy. This is particularly evident among children, who are unable to access online education, and adults, who struggle to navigate digital public services. Similarly, Holmes and Burgess (2022) highlight that digital exclusion in urban settings exacerbates poverty by limiting access to job opportunities and social services. Kamalu and Ibrahim (2024) argue that digitalization, while often promoted as a pathway out of poverty, can instead widen inequalities if access and literacy are not addressed equitably.

2.6. Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed literature underscores that the digital divide is not merely a technological issue but a complex social phenomenon rooted in structural and cultural inequalities. Dependency theory highlights the marginalization of peripheral communities in a digitalized economy, while social reproduction and social exclusion theories explain how limited access to digital capital perpetuates poverty and exclusion. Social capital theory emphasizes the role of community networks in mitigating these challenges, yet the lack of bridging capital limits their effectiveness. Empirical studies confirm that urban poor communities, like those in Ulee Kareng, face significant barriers to digital participation, particularly in education and public services. However, there is a gap in context-specific studies exploring community-based empowerment strategies that leverage local assets, such as cultural values and social groups, to address the digital divide in urban poor settings like Banda Aceh. This study aims to fill this gap by proposing the *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program, which integrates local social capital with digital empowerment to foster inclusive development.

3. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach to explore the digital divide as a new dimension of poverty in the urban poor communities of Ulee Kareng Sub-District,

Banda Aceh. The qualitative methodology is chosen to capture the nuanced social, economic, and cultural dynamics of the community, as well as the lived experiences of residents facing digital exclusion. To ensure the research is grounded in community needs and fosters actionable outcomes, the study adopts *Participatory Action Research* (PAR) as its primary framework. PAR emphasizes active community involvement in the research process, from problem identification to the design and evaluation of solutions, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment (Kendon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007).

2.3. Data Collection

Data were collected through a combination of primary and secondary sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of the digital divide in Ulee Kareng.

2.4. Primary Data

Primary data were gathered through direct observation and semi-structured interviews conducted in selected villages (*gampong*) within Ulee Kareng Sub-District. Observations focused on assessing the socio-economic conditions, digital infrastructure, and community interactions in these villages. Key observations included the availability of internet connectivity, access to digital devices, and the extent of digital literacy among residents. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of community members, including informal sector workers (e.g., street vendors, daily laborers, and online motorcycle taxi drivers), parents, and youth, to explore their experiences with digital exclusion, particularly in accessing education, public services, and economic opportunities. Interviews were designed to elicit qualitative insights into barriers to digital access, the impact of the digital divide on daily life, and community aspirations for digital inclusion. A total of 20 interviews were conducted, ensuring representation across gender, age, and occupation to capture diverse perspectives.

2.5. Secondary Data

Secondary data were sourced from official reports and studies relevant to poverty and digital access in Banda Aceh. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Banda Aceh (2023) provided quantitative data on poverty rates and socio-economic conditions in Ulee Kareng, reporting that 8.12% of the city's population lives below the poverty line. Additionally, a report by Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022) offered insights into digital access challenges, particularly for children in urban poor communities, highlighting barriers such as limited devices and internet data. These secondary sources were used to contextualize the primary data and validate the observed patterns of digital exclusion.

2.6. Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a thematic approach, guided by the theoretical frameworks of dependency theory (Wallerstein, 1974), social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 1986), and social exclusion theory (Lenoir, 1974). Primary data from interviews and observations were transcribed and coded to identify recurring themes, such as barriers to digital access, the impact of digital exclusion on education and economic opportunities, and the role of local social capital (e.g., *gotong royong*) in addressing these challenges. Secondary data were analyzed to corroborate findings and provide a broader socio-economic context. The PAR framework informed the analysis by ensuring that community perspectives shaped the interpretation of data and the design of the proposed *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program. Triangulation was

employed to enhance the validity of findings by cross-referencing primary data (interviews and observations) with secondary data (BPS and Yayasan Geutanyoe reports).

2.7. Community Involvement

The *Participatory Action Research* (PAR) approach ensured active community involvement throughout the research process. Community members were engaged through focus group discussions and village meetings (*musyawarah gampong*) to identify key issues related to the digital divide and co-design potential solutions. These discussions involved local leaders, youth groups (*karang taruna*), women's religious study circles, and mosque youth groups, leveraging the community's social capital to ensure the research was grounded in local needs and cultural values. This participatory process not only enriched the data collection but also informed the development of the *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program, ensuring its relevance and feasibility for implementation.

2.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research. Informed consent was obtained from all interview participants, ensuring they understood the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by using pseudonyms and securing data storage. The PAR approach further ensured ethical engagement by empowering community members as active partners rather than passive subjects, fostering mutual respect and collaboration.

2.9. Limitations

The study acknowledges several limitations. The qualitative approach, while effective for capturing in-depth insights, may not be generalizable to other contexts beyond Ulee Kareng. Additionally, the sample size for interviews (20 participants) may not fully represent the diversity of the community. However, the use of triangulation and participatory methods mitigates these limitations by ensuring robust and contextually relevant findings.

3. Finding and Discussion

This section presents the key findings from the study, based on primary data from observations and interviews in Ulee Kareng Sub-District, complemented by secondary data from BPS (2023) and Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022). The findings are organized into three main areas: (1) the social, economic, and cultural characteristics of the urban poor in Ulee Kareng; (2) the structural and cultural factors reinforcing the digital divide; and (3) the potential for community-based empowerment to address digital exclusion. These findings are analyzed through the lenses of dependency theory (Wallerstein, 1974), social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 1986), social exclusion theory (Lenoir, 1974), and social capital theory (Putnam, 2000).

3.3. Social, Economic, and Cultural Characteristics of the Urban Poor

The urban poor in Ulee Kareng Sub-District live in densely populated areas with limited basic infrastructure, such as reliable electricity and sanitation. Most residents work in the informal sector, including as daily laborers, street vendors, online motorcycle taxi drivers, and parking attendants, with incomes that are irregular and insufficient to meet basic needs. According to BPS (2023), 8.12% of Banda Aceh's population lives below the poverty line, with Ulee Kareng exhibiting a high concentration of poverty due to its urban density and economic marginalization.

Interviews revealed that the lack of social security and fluctuating incomes make these communities highly vulnerable to economic shocks, such as price increases or job disruptions.

Culturally, the community retains strong values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), evident in active social groups such as women's religious study circles, youth organizations (*karang taruna*), and mosque youth groups. These groups provide a sense of solidarity and support, particularly in times of hardship. However, field observations indicate that urbanization and digitalization are weakening these traditional bonds, as younger generations are increasingly drawn to individualistic behaviors influenced by urban lifestyles. This erosion of social cohesion exacerbates the challenges of addressing the digital divide, as community networks are critical for collective action.

The digital landscape in Ulee Kareng is characterized by limited access to stable internet and adequate devices. Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022) reports that a significant portion of children from poor families in Ulee Kareng were unable to participate in online education during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the lack of smartphones, laptops, or internet data. Interviews with parents highlighted that many could not afford internet subscriptions, with some relying on shared or outdated devices that were insufficient for educational or professional purposes. Adults, particularly informal sector workers, reported difficulties accessing app-based public services, such as DTKS and SIKS-NG, due to low digital literacy. This lack of access and skills has deepened their exclusion from essential services, reinforcing their socio-economic marginalization.

3.4. Structural and Cultural Factors Reinforcing the Digital Divide

The digital divide in Ulee Kareng is driven by both structural and cultural factors, which can be analyzed through the theoretical frameworks employed in this study.

a. Structural Factors

Dependency theory (Wallerstein, 1974) illuminates the structural marginalization of Ulee Kareng's urban poor within a digitalized economy. As digital infrastructure and resources are concentrated in urban centers or wealthier communities, Ulee Kareng remains on the "periphery," with limited access to reliable internet and modern devices. The shift of public services to digital platforms, such as online social assistance applications, has excluded those without digital access, as confirmed by interview findings. Kamalu and Ibrahim (2024) argue that digitalization, when not accompanied by equitable resource distribution, reinforces dependency and marginalization, a pattern evident in Ulee Kareng where residents are disconnected from the digital economy.

b. Cultural Factors

Bourdieu's (1986) social reproduction theory highlights how limited access to digital capital perpetuates intergenerational poverty. Interviews with parents revealed that children in Ulee Kareng often miss out on online education due to the lack of devices and internet, leading to academic underachievement. This aligns with Goffe's (2024) findings that the digital divide restricts access to educational opportunities, thereby limiting social mobility. Culturally, the low digital literacy among adults, as observed during interviews, stems from a lack of exposure to technology and a reliance on traditional, non-digital means of communication and service access. This cultural gap in digital skills further entrenches exclusion.

Lenoir's (1974) social exclusion theory explains how the digital divide isolates Ulee Kareng's residents from mainstream development processes. The transition to digital public services, such as DTKS and SIKS-NG, has created barriers for those without digital skills or access, as noted by Holmes and Burgess (2022). Field observations confirmed that many residents are unaware of how to navigate these platforms, resulting in missed opportunities for social assistance and economic participation. This exclusion is compounded by the lack of bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000), as Ulee Kareng's communities have limited connections to external networks that could provide digital knowledge or resources.

3.5. Potential for Community-Based Empowerment

Despite these challenges, the strong social capital in Ulee Kareng, rooted in *gotong royong* and community organizations, offers significant potential for addressing the digital divide. Focus group discussions during village meetings (*musyawarah gampong*) revealed that residents are eager to improve their digital skills and access, particularly for education and economic opportunities. Social groups, such as *karang taruna* and women's religious study circles, can serve as platforms for digital literacy training and community mobilization, as suggested by Putnam's (2000) emphasis on leveraging social capital for collective action.

The proposed *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program builds on these assets by creating community-based digital hubs that provide free internet access, shared devices, and training in digital skills, such as using Google Workspace, e-commerce platforms, and government digital services. The participatory nature of the research, guided by PAR, ensured that community members co-designed this program, identifying local needs and priorities. For example, youth expressed interest in digital marketing training to support small businesses, while parents emphasized the need for affordable internet for their children's education. These findings align with Sen's (1999) capability approach, which underscores the importance of not only providing access but also building the capacity to use technology effectively.

The potential for external stakeholder involvement further enhances the feasibility of this approach. Interviews with community leaders suggested that partnerships with local government, NGOs (e.g., Flower Aceh, Yayasan Geutanyoe), and universities could provide resources such as free Wi-Fi, training programs, and community laptops. Wu (2024) notes that addressing digital exclusion requires multi-stakeholder collaboration, a strategy that could be applied in Ulee Kareng to bridge the digital divide and foster inclusive development.

4. Discussion

The findings confirm that the digital divide in Ulee Kareng is a multifaceted issue, driven by structural inequalities (limited infrastructure and access), cultural barriers (low digital literacy), and social exclusion (disconnection from digitalized services). Dependency theory highlights the peripheral status of Ulee Kareng's urban poor, while social reproduction and social exclusion theories underscore the intergenerational and systemic impacts of the digital divide. However, the community's strong bonding social capital, combined with a participatory approach, offers a pathway for empowerment. The *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program, by leveraging local assets and fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, addresses the research gap identified in the literature review by proposing a context-specific, community-driven solution to digital exclusion.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

This study reveals that the digital divide in Ulee Kareng Sub-District, Banda Aceh, is not merely a technological issue but a profound manifestation of broader social and economic inequalities. The urban poor in Ulee Kareng, primarily engaged in the informal sector, face significant barriers to digital access and literacy, exacerbating their vulnerability to poverty and social exclusion. The findings, supported by primary data from interviews and observations and secondary data from BPS (2023) and Yayasan Geutanyoe (2022), highlight three key insights. First, the socio-economic conditions of Ulee Kareng's residents, characterized by unstable incomes and limited infrastructure, restrict their access to digital resources.

Second, structural factors, such as the concentration of digital infrastructure in wealthier areas, and cultural factors, such as low digital literacy, perpetuate exclusion and intergenerational poverty, as explained by dependency theory (Wallerstein, 1974), social reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 1986), and social exclusion theory (Lenoir, 1974). Third, the community's strong social capital, rooted in *gotong royong* and local organizations, offers a foundation for addressing these challenges through community-based empowerment.

The digital divide in Ulee Kareng reinforces a cycle of poverty by limiting access to education, public services, and economic opportunities, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era, where digital platforms have become essential. However, the potential for community-driven solutions, as evidenced by the enthusiasm for digital literacy and economic participation expressed in focus group discussions, suggests that inclusive strategies can mitigate these disparities. By leveraging local assets and fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, the proposed *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program offers a transformative approach to achieving digital and social justice, aligning with Sen's (1999) capability approach and Putnam's (2000) emphasis on social capital.

Recommendations

To address the digital divide and its impact on poverty in Ulee Kareng, this study proposes the implementation of the *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program, a community-based initiative designed to enhance digital access and literacy. The following recommendations outline the program's objectives, strategies, and indicators of success, grounded in the participatory insights gained from the research.

Program Design: *Rumoh Digital Gampong*

The *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program aims to establish community-based digital hubs in Ulee Kareng's villages (*gampong*) to provide free internet access, shared devices, and digital literacy training. The program is designed to empower residents by enhancing their capabilities to participate in the digital economy and access public services, thereby reducing digital exclusion and breaking the cycle of poverty.

Objectives

Short-Term:

- Enhance basic digital literacy among urban poor residents in Ulee Kareng.
- Provide community-based access to free internet and shared digital devices.

Long-Term:

- Reduce digital exclusion and increase economic opportunities for the urban poor.

- Mitigate digital and intergenerational poverty by fostering social mobility.

Implementation Strategies

1. **Participatory Approach:** Utilize village meetings (*musyawarah gampong*) to co-design and evaluate the program, ensuring community ownership and alignment with local needs. Community members, including local leaders, youth groups (*karang taruna*), and women's religious study circles, should be actively involved in planning and implementation to foster inclusivity.
2. **Training and Facilitation:** Conduct training programs on digital skills, including Google Workspace, e-commerce platforms, e-learning tools, and government digital services (e.g., DTKS, SIKS-NG). These programs should be tailored to the needs of different groups, such as youth interested in digital marketing and parents seeking educational support for their children.
3. **Access Infrastructure:** Establish digital hubs in village community centers (*balai gampong*) equipped with free Wi-Fi, shared laptops, and learning hotspots. These hubs should be accessible to all residents, with priority given to low-income families.
4. **Digital Cadre Development:** Train local youth as digital facilitators or "digital volunteers" to serve as peer educators, ensuring the sustainability of digital literacy efforts within the community.

Stakeholder Involvement

The success of *Rumoh Digital Gampong* depends on multi-stakeholder collaboration:

- **Local Government:** The Banda Aceh City Government should allocate budgets for free public Wi-Fi in Ulee Kareng's villages and support infrastructure development for digital hubs.
- **NGOs:** Organizations such as Flower Aceh and Yayasan Geutanyoe can provide technical training and mentorship, leveraging their experience in community development.
- **Universities:** Institutions like Teuku Umar University can implement thematic community service programs (*KKN Tematik*) focused on digital empowerment, engaging students as trainers and facilitators.
- **Private Sector:** Internet service providers and digital platforms can contribute through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as donating devices or subsidizing internet access.

Indicators of Success

- At least 70% of poor households in Ulee Kareng gain regular access to the internet.
- Increased number of residents accessing digital public services, such as DTKS and SIKS-NG.
- Emergence of 5–10 new digital-based micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) per village (*gampong*).
- Establishment of sustainable digital cadre teams to maintain and expand digital literacy initiatives.

Broader Recommendations

Beyond the *Rumoh Digital Gampong* program, broader policy and community actions are recommended:

- **Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for national and local policies that prioritize digital inclusion for urban poor communities, including subsidies for internet access and devices.
 - **Community Mobilization:** Strengthen local social capital by integrating digital literacy into existing community activities, such as religious study groups and youth organizations, to ensure sustained engagement.
 - **Continuous Evaluation:** Implement regular evaluations of digital empowerment programs, involving community feedback through *musyawarah gampong*, to ensure adaptability and effectiveness.
- By implementing these recommendations, Ulee Kareng can move toward digital and social justice, reducing the digital divide and fostering inclusive development for its urban poor communities.

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