

KDI-Brookings Seminar (Washington DC)

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**Discussion on
“Trends and Policy Measures to Address Digital Divide:
Implications based on Korean Case”**

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Characteristics of SK's Digital Divide

- **Still a divide, especially by age**
 - Digitalization of government and public services has made the divide by age even worse, leaving many elderly people excluded
 - SK's rapid shift to digital platforms in areas like government services, banking, and healthcare is leaving those who can't keep up behind
- **The age divide also extends to a regional divide**
 - Rural areas, which are aging faster, face more challenges
 - It's not about infrastructure, but about digital competence
- **This shows that SK should focus on improving digital skills rather than just expanding infrastructure**

Two Points to Keep in Mind

- **NK Defector: Exposure to information before leaving**
 - Before leaving, NK defectors were likely more familiar with digital tech already
 - Important to ask whether their digital skills improved after coming to SK, or if they were already more digital savvy before defecting
- **NK Residents: Timing of the survey**
 - The UNICEF MICS survey on NK residents was done in 2017, while the surveys on defectors and SK citizens were conducted in 2023
 - The digital skills of NK residents have improved since 2017, making direct comparisons tricky

Digital Competence: 9 Criteria (ITU)

● Basic Skills

- Copied or moved a file/folder
- Used a copy and paste tool to duplicate or move information within a document
- Sent email with attached file, such as document, picture, or video
- Transferred a file between a computer and other device

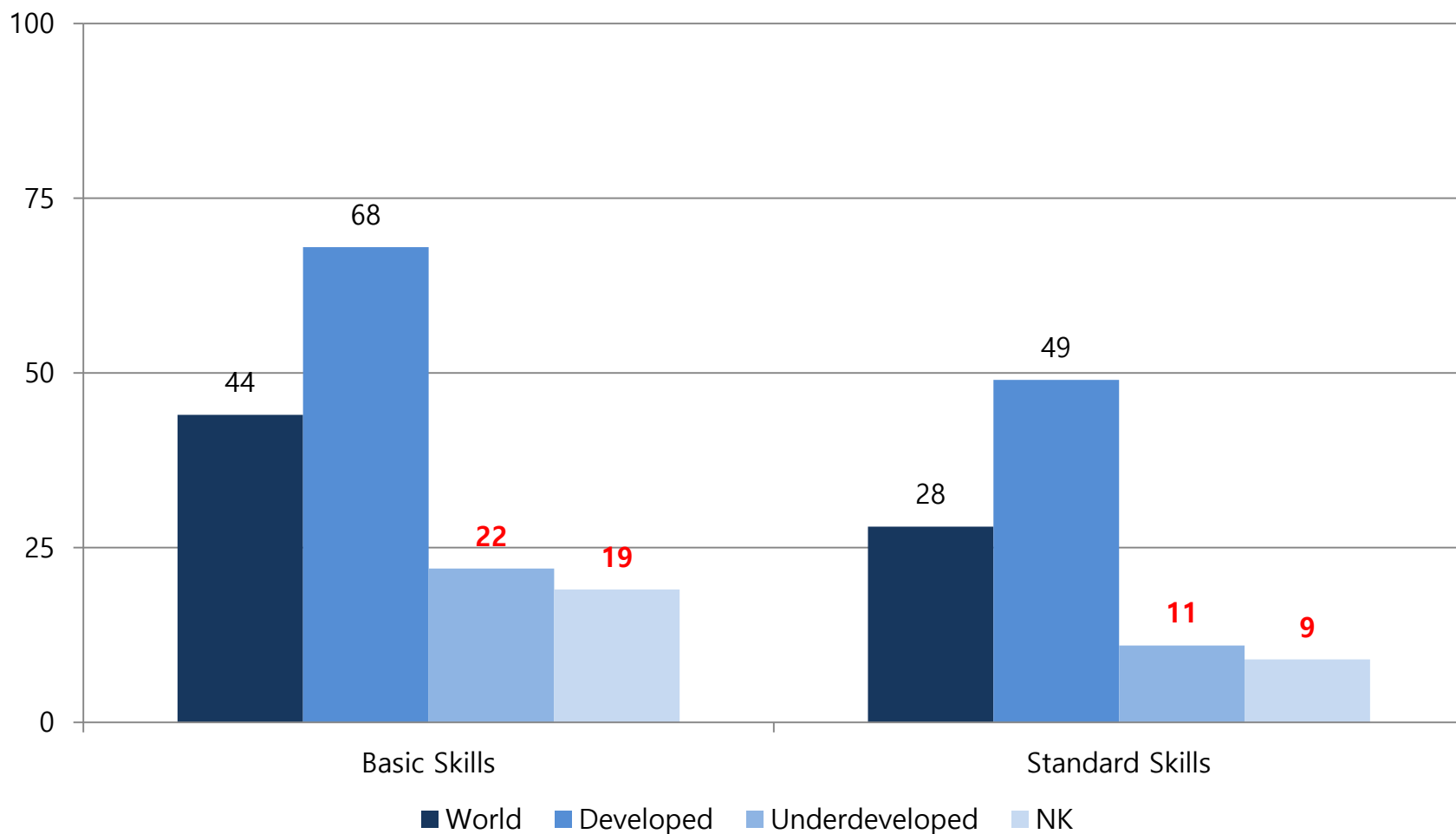
● Standard Skills

- Used a basic arithmetic formula in a spread sheet
- Connected and installed a new device and such as camera or printer
- Found downloaded, installed, configured software
- Created an electronic presentation with presentation software

● Advanced Skills

- Wrote a computer program in any programming language

ICT Competence: Comparing NK and Other Groups



Source: The ITU ICT SDG Indicator; UNICEF MICS(2018)

Digital Divide in NK's ICT Competence

	Overall avg.	COV (age)	COV (region)	COV (income)
Meet at least one out of the nine criteria	33.6	44.8	39.7	51.7
① Copying and moving files	32.4	44.9	39.3	52.5
② Copying and moving within a document	28.5	47.1	44.4	55.6
③ Sending an email with an attached file	3.5	42.0	155.1	112.3
④ Performing calculations using a device	15.6	57.5	61.6	62.0
⑤ Installing a new device	6.4	43.2	91.3	69.8
⑥ Utilizing downloaded software	4.8	49.8	90.9	88.7
⑦ Creating a presentation using software	7.4	48.2	86.5	71.2
⑧ Transferring files to another device	13.2	42.3	73.4	68.6
⑨ Programming languages	3.7	85.0	98.4	74.6

Source: UNICEF MICS(2018); Jongkyu LEE(2019)