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E-Government and Development in Zimbabwe: An Appraisal

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Abstract

This article scrutinizes the development of the E-governance strategy and adoption in Zimbabwe over time. The main purpose of the article is to offer a broad overview of the role that and e-Government and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) contribute in activating effective and efficient public sector processes. The paper attains this by deliberating the e-government policy aims, the e-government framework and the obstacles fronting the nation as it embarks on the adoption of the National Development Strategy (NDS 1) 2021-2025. Keywords: E-government, public administration, efficacy of e-government, Zimbabwe

1. Introduction

Public administration is obligated to take a principal role in the novelty and advancement of a dynamic and effectual information and communications technology (ICT) provision distribution system through e Government. Through the cumulative usage of ICT and the expansion of digital inclusion strategies, public administrations around the world are involved in the revolution processes that emphasis on attaining a competent, active, responsive public sector. This method, also identified as "Transformational Government", has converted to be a catalytic force for novelties that are primary to the decrease of incompetent processes in public administration. The obstacles confronted in the procedure of realizing the ICT revolution progressions will also be analyzed in this paper. The purpose of this article is to provide a broad summary of the significance that ICT and e-Government performs in activating modernism and competence through the acceptance of a contemporary, effective and excellent public administration. The article attains this purpose through the analysis of the specified e-government policy aims, e-government framework and the obstacles fronting the country as it embraces the implementation of the National Development Strategy (NDS 1).

1.1. Defining E-Government

Numerous definitions have been offered on the meaning and conceptualization of e-government. Given the excess of viewpoints on the notion, the paper embrace the World Bank's meaning and emphasis that denotes E-Government as the usage of information and communications technologies (ICT) planned to advance the effectiveness, efficiency, clearness and answerability of government processes. The superseding concern of the practice, with reference to the World Bank, is to make a technology-driven revolution of government processes into one that will concentrate on the decrease of expenses and the advancement of economic expansion and upgrading in public sector provision delivery. All in all, it is expected that through the acceptance of e-government progressions, the subsequent will be attained: lessening of functioning costs; improvement of transparency and answerability measures; enhancement of public service provision and the enabling of an e-society. Numerous countries are in the course of planning

and implementing e-government policies, agendas and schemes with an opinion to modernizing their public sector functionality.

1.2. The Efficacy of E-Government

Today's public administration has to be capable to encounter the obstacles and necessities of the 21st epoch proficiently and excellently. Provisions have to be restructured around the wants of people and businesses than around the desires of the administration. Decreasing the administrative liability on populaces and businesses is the chief advantage of augmented effectiveness and efficiency in public administration, activated by e-Government and amplified usage of ICT. Public administration currently has to move in the direction of what is known as 'Transformational Government' which necessitates that it attains enhanced excellence and best-value provision supply.

2. Background of ICTs in Zimbabwe

The implementation of ICTs and e-Government in Zimbabwe goes back to the early 1970s when the Central Computing Services (CCS) provided ICT supplies to the public services (Hikwa and Maisiri, 2014). Following this, was the adoption of the Integrated Results Based Management System (IRBMS) in 2005, which is supported by e-Government as an important component (COMESA e-Government Web Portal, 2012).Likewise, in 2005 the Zimbabwean Government in partnership with the National Economic Consultative Forum (NECF) coordinated on an e-readiness review to appropriately inform the purpose to connect ICTs in the country (Mhlanga, 2006). This e-readiness review eventually developed into the foundation for the "national ICT policy and e-strategy to provide a direction to a knowledge society" (Mhlanga, 2006:1). Upon the formation of the inclusive Government in 2009, the Government of Zimbabwe formed the Ministry of Information Communication Technology. Currently, directing the digital access and e-government programme in Zimbabwe is a Modernization Division within the Office of the President and Cabinet and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, and Courier Services directed by "ZimConnect", the e-government outline and other permitting instruments.

2.1. Developments that led to the 2015 ICT National Policy

There are several national and international documents that influenced the growth of the Zimbabwe National Policy for Information and Communication Technology of 2015. The national documents comprise the Vision 2020 (1999), Nziramasanga Education Commission Report (1999) , The National Economic Recovery Programme (2004-2006), Science and Technology Policy (2002 revised in 2010), National Industrial Development Policy (2012-2016), Zimbabwe Medium Term Plan (2011-2015) Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable SocioEconomic Transformation (2013-2018).

The international documents comprise AU Summit Final Declaration on ICT Development (2010), the African Information Society Initiative (AISI), the SADC Declaration on Information and Communication Technology, , Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, 2003-2005).

The brief deliberations of these documents are specified underneath. The Nziramasanga Education Commission Report of 1999 endorsed the implementation and mainstreaming of computer-based and learning in the pedagogy of schools, colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning (National ICT Policy Framework, 2006:14). This actually establishes a key component of the national ICT policy. The Zimbabwe Science and Technology Policy was implemented in 2002. The policy pursues to support national technological and scientific self-reliance and delivers an inclusive agenda for the country to progress and harness Science and Technology for growth. The policy also delivers for improved

harmonization and direction in Research and Development (R&D) undertakings in all areas of the economy. In fact, the policy acknowledges the ICT sector as an important enabler of national growth.

The National Economic Recovery Programme (NERP) was introduced in 2003 to address serious socioeconomic obstacles as an outcome of droughts. The "Ten Point Plan" pronounced by President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, at his inauguration in 2002, ensured for a centered multi-sector driven economic improvement policy. The NERP places stressed on the necessity for Zimbabwe to utilise the possibility of S&T in general and ICTs in specific in order to leap-frog national economic effectiveness. The Zimbabwe Medium Term Plan (2011-2015) classifies the advent and convergence of ICTs as being at the center of global socio-economic changes.

ICTs are further recognized as a catalyst that will lead Zimbabwe into a knowledge society that is promoted by dependable connectivity. The National Industrial Development Policy (2012-2016) pursues to indorse ICTs for economic development and industrialization. It identifies the numerous advantages that the use of ICTs allows business processes through reduced transactions costs, better communication, access to knowledge; new trade opportunities locally and globally; increased communication and increased productivity and efficiency. It further identifies that the Government of Zimbabwe is determined to seeing business accepting ICTs and e-technology with a perspective to producing higher worth chain products through the Strategic Plan managed by the Ministry responsible for ICT and the National ICT Policy Framework.

The Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (2013-2018) pursues to attain sustainable expansion and social fairness through indigenization, employment and empowerment initiatives through the usage of the nation's abundant human and natural capitals. ZIMASSET identifies the rehabilitation of infrastructural properties and the salvage of usefulness services in Zimbabwe; with enhanced ICT infrastructure, government efficiency, sector governance, utilization, research and development and increased access as the expected sector results intended to attain ZIMASSET goals. One of the main apparatuses of the Results Based Management Programme is e- Government.

3. SADC Declaration on Information and Communication Technology

The 2001 SADC Heads of State and Government declaration in Blantyre, Malawi identifies ICT as a reliable fast, efficient and flexible manner of information and communication exchange. The Heads of State and Government dedicated themselves and their own countries to ensure enhanced living standards for all their citizens through prioritising parts of action for conveying the digital divide in the SADC zone. They additional declared the following as precedence areas of action:

- The governing environment for ICT;
- Infrastructure for ICT expansion;
- Community involvement and governance in ICT growth;
- ICT in business expansion; and
- Human resource capability for ICT expansion.

3.1. AU Summit Final Declaration on ICT Development (2010)

The Heads of State and Government of the African Union meeting at the Fourteenth Ordinary Session of their Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (31 January – 2 February 2010) embraced a declaration on the ICT sector as being of importance in their expansion programmes and that of member States. Development agencies were encouraged to consider ICT infrastructure and telecommunication services as a rudimentary public utility infrastructure.

3.2. The African Information Society Initiative (AISI)

After recognizing the significant role ICTs contribute in enabling the attainment of growth goals and answering to the obstacles of the information age, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) launched the African Information Society Initiative in May 1996 as a common vision, not only to bridge the digital divide between Africa and the rest of the World, but more importantly, to create effective digital opportunities to be developed by Africans and their partners and speed the continent's entry into the information and knowledge global economy. The AISI was adopted by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Conference of Ministers, in May 1996 and subsequently endorsed by the Organisation of African Unity Heads of Summit meetings including the 1997 G-8 Summit. AISI activities among others include national and sectoral policy development and capacity building.

3.3. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action (2003-2005)

The first WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action endorsed in Geneva in 2003 by Heads of State and Government strongly recommends the adoption and utilisation of ICTs to meet the agreed developmental goals. It recognises that education, knowledge, information and communication were at the core of human endeavour, progress and well-being. Governments were urged, among other things, to provide enabling environments for the development and utilisation of ICTs. The second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Tunisia in 2005 reiterated Governments' unequivocal support for the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in December 2003.

3.4. Millennium Development Goals (2005)

In the New Millennium, governments in Africa started realising the need for sustained development effectiveness and the need to manage their development processes in a way that allowed them to achieve the greatest development impact. Zimbabwe has to a significant extent made inroads in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals adopted by Heads of State and Government at the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2000. The Zimbabwe Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report of 2005 launched by the President Robert Mugabe in September, 2005 recognises the role of ICTs as tools that add value and contribute significantly to the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. The Zimbabwe National Policy for Information and Communication Technology of 2015 has a vision, mission and key objectives.

3.5. Zimbabwe's E-readiness

The adoption of e-government is measured by the extent of a country's e-readiness (Uzoka et al., 2007). The Economist Intelligent Unit's white paper on the 2006 e-readiness rankings describe e-readiness as "the "state of play" of a nation's ICT infrastructure and the aptitude of its clients, businesses and governments to utilize ICT for their advantage." The e-readiness assessment of a country offers policy makers with a comprehensive scorecard of their economy's effectiveness comparative to global counterparts in the digital epoch (Ifinedo, 2005).

Common variables that are applied to evaluate e-readiness of a nation are: infrastructure, connectivity and technology, conducive legal and policy environment, socio-economic conditions and enabling business environment that support e-services (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2006). The Government of Zimbabwe with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) commissioned an e-Readiness Survey whose drive was to evaluate the nation's readiness to develop into a knowledge society. The National e-Readiness Survey point out that there was a lot of effort to be completed in terms of preparing

Zimbabwe for e-business, for out of a score of 4, the country scored only 1.4 (National E-Readiness Survey, 2005). With admiration to E-Government, the subsequent were the outcomes of the e-Readiness Survey:

- Government owns an enormous potential for E-Government through its wide area network and application systems including civil service payroll, SAP software, pensions processing and national registration system.
- Most of the online communication is G2C and G2B, but there is no citizen-to-government online communication;
- The institutional apparatuses for ICT are not distinct and harmonized; and
- There is no combined government policy framework for the expansion of e-Government.

This paper noted that the key aspect responsible for the low score is the retrograde ICT infrastructure particularly in the telecommunications sector. Numerous rural areas of Zimbabwe do not have electricity making it difficult to implement ICT-based services. This suggests that there is a necessity for a well-outlined government policy to articulate such inadequacies, prompting the central government to obligate financial and other resources in the direction of infrastructure.

The Zimbabwe Government has recognized many programmes and policies and over the years, signifying that there is readiness by the government to embrace ICTs as drivers of the knowledge economy. These are previously deliberated above. The WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action (2003) where Zimbabwe was represented intensely suggested the acceptance and utilization of ICTs to meet the agreed transformational goals. The Government of Zimbabwe has recognized a Wide Area network (WAN) that is accessible to all government agencies and departments. Additionally, there is the Modernisation Department in the Office of the President and Cabinet.

Furthermore, a National ICT/E-Government Policy and Technical Advisory Committee in the Office of the President and Cabinet was initiated and is composed of numerous stakeholders that convey every week. They support governance and management to the entire implementation procedure of flagship applications and the administration of top level national internet fields (COMESA e-Government Web Portal, 2012). This is vivid evidence that there is preparedness by all to accept technology. The Ministry of Science and Technology Development is the supporter of all technology-based events in Zimbabwe. Other plans for supporting comprehensive connectivity are the necessity to capacitate TelOne, NetOne and Powertel so that they are capable to progress key ICT infrastructure, improve ICT literacy by 10 per cent yearly, and make an ICT Hub, among others.

3.6. ICT Sector Challenges in Zimbabwe

Despite the progresses that are explained above, the ICT sector has been encountered a number of obstacles. Some of these comprise:- Insufficient communications infrastructure: although there has been important roll out of communications infrastructure with 2G surpassing 75% population coverage (as at 31 December 2014), high speed broadband reporting is still patchy with greatest rural and remote parts remaining uncovered due to a non-holistic method to general service. Broadband coverage in remote and rural areas remains low. Coverage is mostly concerted in prosperous urban areas. This is broadening the urban-rural digital divide against the value of equitable access. Largely people are still physically visiting government offices as to get simple information, fill and submit a form or to access any other services. Ministries of Home Affairs, Higher Education, Gender Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry Women Affairs and Local Government are typical examples.

This deficiency has had opposing effects on the expansion and usage of ICTs. Insufficient ICT skills: there is a deficiency of ICT skilled manpower to roll spearhead ICT programmes. This scarcity has a knock-on digital literacy which pushes uptake and usage of ICT provisions. There is necessity to assimilate ICTs in the education curricula beginning from initial childhood education stage as well as the upgrade of ICTs uptake within communities. The government can magnify the e-learning by increasing computer literacy in colleges and the broader community by increasing the presidential e-learning programme and initiate the public-private partnerships to increase infrastructure in schools. Disjointed institutional measures: the merging of technology podiums has resulted in numerous provisions which used to be obtainable over distinct podiums being availed on a solitary platform or network.

This has rendered it pointless to have numerous institutions supervising the expansion of electronic communications in any particular country. Insufficient investment capital: the high perceived country risk has stemmed in higher loaning rates for foreign borrowings. Additionally, the liquidity crunch presently bedeviling the nation has made it almost difficult to guarantee long term domestic funding for ICT schemes. Where accessible, the interest rates charged are excessive. There are also inadequate public-private partnerships activities in Zimbabwe specifically in the ICT sector.

As an outcome, the policy ought to emphasis on:

1. Universal access and provision;
2. Infrastructure expansion and management;
3. Innovation research, and industry expansion;
4. Policy restructuring, institutional mechanisms and regulatory framework
5. Capacity development and content expansion; and
6. National ICTs and the influence on regional assimilation

4. e-Government in Zimbabwe

E-government encompasses all electronic information channel, communications and transactions that permit service delivery among Government departments, establishments, agencies and units (G2G); amongst Government and the business (G2B) and among Government and the citizenry (G2C).

E-Government relies totally on ICTs to offer amenities such as:

- Suitable access to communicating information and services;
- Timely provision of public services; and
- Effective and Efficient methods of doing business transactions.

The Government of Zimbabwe describes e-government as “an enabler that enables the general implementation of the results-based management programme through the usage of information communication technologies (ICT) to advance service delivery.”

Nitro (2000) alludes that there are three areas of e-Government:

1. The development of government progressions (e-administration);
2. Linking citizens (E-services an e-Citizens);
3. Building exterior interactions (e-Society). Implied here is that e-government encourages worth for money by addressing the public sector difficulties of inconvenience, ineffectiveness and inefficiency.

In Zimbabwe, the e-Government has been a thoughtful element of the national plan. For example, an e-Government Blueprint has been implemented covering the years 2011-2015. It offers guidelines, policy and emphasis concerning the implementation of e-government (COMESA e-Government Web Portal, 2012). The Blueprint summaries the subsequent:

1. An appraisal of development on e-Government and standing of ICT in the country;
2. Plans that comprise the course and emphasis of the e-Government;
3. Programmes suggested for implementation;
4. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and Targets;
5. Suggested e-Government agendas; and Action Plan and adoption Roadmap

4.1. Policy Statements: e-Government

a) Enable the expansion of a solitary national strategy and blueprint for the scheduling, strategy and adoption of e-Government services and infrastructure. This will evade disintegration, replication and focus the government on aspects of attaining maximum outcomes. b) E-Government will be positioned to lessen government organizations functioning costs and to convey Government nearer to the citizens. c) The e-Government Plan will capitalize on and leverage on national ICT infrastructure to improve capital and functional spending requirements. d) Avail e-government services to all the people in a language that they comprehend.

4.2. Implications for National Development

In his speech during the 2005 World Summit of the Information Society Conference (WSIS) in Tunis, President Mugabe of Zimbabwe said, "ICTs can be a useful tool in generating economic growth and employment creation, improving productivity and quality of life for all people… On one level, this summit provides an opportunity for the global family of nations to address this need… (WSIS, Tunis, 2005). The E-Government programme being adopted in Zimbabwe presently is labelled 'ZimConnect' and it objectives is permitting all Departments, ministries and public bodies to have suppleness in organizing e-applications online that decrease red tape, eliminate corruption and other established bottlenecks related with the traditional approaches of public service delivery.

The e-applications, were riding on the Public Finance Management System that was launched during 2016 in order to convey Government services nearer to the citizens (GoZ, 2015). Additionally, the National Information Data Centre (NIDC) was advanced by the Zimbabwe government. The NIDC acted as a principal repository for public sector information and was centered the EGovernment Programme design. Comparable initiatives are also required for communication information centers and formation of computer laboratories in schools. The acceptance and usage of ICTs has significantly amplified in current years with the high acceptance witnessing the "digital divide" amongst urban and rural areas being decreased dramatically. This is showed by the high progress recorded by Zimbabwe's ICT pointers with active mobile diffusion reaching 90% and Internet diffusion reaching 45% as at 31 December 2014.

Speedy and robust infrastructural expansion and transformation has permitted the growth and obtainability of a plethora of e-services, which clients have been incorporated as an easier manner to transact and communicate amongst individual to individual, individual to business and business to business. There has been implementation of mobile money transfer, and numerous broadband applications including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube Skype and WhatsApp. Government websites for departments are up and operating, which is a vital landmark in the journey to a paperless and information society.

The 2015 ICT National Policy is now in place. Data show that Zimbabwe's mobile diffusion rates amplified to over 60 percent in 2010 from 9 percent in 2008. Internet diffusion rates have increased from 1.5 percent to between 11 per cent and 20 per cent throughout the same period. Government is also making great steps in the usage of ICTs by presenting numerous e-Government services to the public. Efforts and investments have been recorded in the aspects of ICT backbone infrastructure growth, ICTs in education, research and expansion, the formation of Community Information Centres, ICT administration and the

capacitation of lawmakers and government officials in ICT utilization. Zimbabwe is now linked to the undersea fibre optic network through WACS, EASSy and SEACOM.

Table 1: Zimbabwe's Web Presence in 2005, 2008 and 2010

S/N	web presence in 2005	web presence in 2008	web presence in 2024
51: Zimbabwe	←	←	←

Sources: UN Global E-government Report 2005; UN E-Government Survey 2008; UN E-Government survey 2023

The formation of official websites by the Zimbabwe Government delivers greater prospects for involved clients and to have quick access to government information. It makes government strategies and policies simply obtainable and reachable customers not only in Zimbabwe but also to citizens in other areas of the world. In the progression, acquisitions of government publications are made more cost-effective, transparent and accountable through the numerous government websites.

Access to information is considered crucial for poverty reduction since it contributes to new sources of income and employment for the poor, improved delivery of health and education services and competitiveness ofthe economy. Zimbabwe has continued to make significant efforts to build its ICT infrastructure as reflected by important improvements in developing its broadband infrastructure and the expansion of, mobile networkcoverage. As a result, ICT usage, while still low, has picked up slightly, as evident in the increase of the number of internet users.

Table 2: E-Government Readiness Data 2023 for Zimbabwe

Web Measure	Infrastructure Index	Human Capital Index	E-government Readiness Index
0,1654	0,0395	0,7900	0,3316

Source: United Nations, 2023; Geiger and Lanvin, 2023

In 2010, Zimbabwe's e-readiness index was 0, 3230 which was an improvement in e-government development. Zimbabwe jumped 12 positions to rank no 129. The 2012's E-Government Readiness Index shows Zimbabwe occupying 116th position out of 142 countries surveyed with an e-readiness index of 0.389 out of 1.

Mhlanga (2013) argues that citizens just need four (4 A's) as depicted in table 4 below.

Table 3

Accessibility	Services are expected to be accessible to users, in terms of distance and availability
Affordable	Services should not be so expensive
Adaptable	Services should take account the local social and political environment, and be adapted to local needs.
Acceptable	Service should be in a form that users find acceptable, for example culturally

Source: Mhlanga 2013:15

Other on-going E-Government flagship programmes are in the following line Ministries:

Table 4

Ministry/Agency	**Application**
Lands and Rural resettlement	Land management information system
Local Government, Public works and National Housing	Online Liquor License Application and Processing
Mines and Mining development	Online Application of Prospecting Licence
Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs - Deeds and Companies Department	Online company registration and Deeds transfer
Economic Planning and Investment promotion - Zimbabwe Investment Authority	Online Investment project application and Processing
State procurement Board	E-procurement and contracts management. Public Service Commission Online human resources management Information system including E-recruitment
Health and Child Care - Chitungwiza Hospital	E-hospital Administration
Home Affairs - Immigration - Registrar General's Office	E-visa application , processing and travellers' clearance online passport application functional
Primary and Secondary Education	E-learning Zimbabwe Revenue Authority E-taxation(functional)
Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development	High performance Computing Centre (functional)
Zimbabwe Revenue Authority	E-taxation (functional)

Source: Government of Zimbabwe, 2015: 136

For many of the citizens, ICT has penetrated virtually all aspects of their daily lives, from the way we shop to the way we communicate, work, share and network. Web 2.0 has had a major impact in transforming not only the way in which citizens communicate in their private sphere, but also the way in which civil society and politics work. The social media toolbox consisting of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and linkedIn are commonly now used by Zimbabweans. Nevertheless, these technologies have not reached everyone in our societies, nor have governments fully incorporated the potential of from these

technologies into their service-delivery or decision-making processes.

Therefore, the success of the future of e-Government will to some extent rely on the success of inclusion policies aimed at closing the existing digital divide. Minimizing the digital divide will contribute to the stimulation of a knowledge based society and a knowledge economy. The full benefits of the knowledge society, including e-Participation, can only be realised if citizens have the necessary skill sets, buttressed by government policies that focus on the promotion of digital skills and digital literacy. These skills must remain a top priority for the Zimbabwe Government and public administration.

Nevertheless, one must not overlook the fact that greater use of e-government and ICT in public administration also results in the appearance of new risks and challenges. Greater openness involves a greater chance of misuse. Therefore, issues related to ICT security and the development of secure standards are gaining importance in the implementation of e-Government solutions and strategies.

5 Conclusions

Today's public administration has to be able to efficiently and effectively meet the challenges and requirements of the 21st Century. Services have to be redesigned around the needs of citizens and businesses. Moreover, in thecontext of the current financial crisis, it has to be considered that the difficulty of obtaining extra resources exacerbates even more the need to boost efficiency and effectiveness in public administration. In this case, ICT- based service delivery and customer service is a solution that allows the limited resources to be dedicated to the areas where they are most needed.

While the opportunities opened up by ICT in public administration and public service delivery are Countless, the success of e-Government and its implementation depends on the creation of a digital inclusion infrastructure that enables citizens to easily access e-services. Public administration and public authorities have aleading role to play in making sure that more and more citizens take advantage of the opportunities created by a viable ICT system.

Zimbabwe should be commended for being prepared to embrace e-government. The Zimbabwe government has supported a number of programmes and policies that recognise ICTs as enablers of development.The Zimbabwe National ICT Policy Framework of 2002 and 2015 signal the willingness of the government to adopt e-government and related ICT programmes.

While there is marked progress in the areas mentioned above, further efforts are needed so that the vision for ICT development in Zimbabwe is realised. ICTs should be developed as one of the major pillars of the country's socio-economic development and growth. The National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) clearly spells out ICTs as one of the pillars for national socio-economic development.

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