E - GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA
PROGRESS MADE AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

Presentation by

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Southern African Development Community (SADC)
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INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

• SADC: Protocol on transport, communications and Meteorology (PTCM)

• SADC: ICT Declaration

• Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)
SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology
Protocol on Transport Communications and Meteorology

- **SADC Protocol on transport, communications and Meteorology (1996)**
  
  *It was a commitment by SADC Member States to embark on fundamental reforms in the Transport and Communications sectors in the region and focused on the deployment of reliable infrastructure in Communications to speed up development and facilitate trade amongst Member States.*

- Protocol milestones are:
  - Development of a regional policy and regulatory framework
  - Provision of Universal Service
  - Deployment of the relevant Infrastructure
  - Network Provision and maintenance; and
  - Capacity Building
Post PTCM: Addressing the “New” Digital revolution and its challenges

- **November 2002:** *SADC published a paper: Policy guidelines on making ICT a Priority in turning SADC into an Information Based Economy*

- **SADC Created specialized associations to undertake specific tasks**
  - ✔ **TRASA (1997) now CRASA** - established to coordinate and harmonize regulatory issues in the sub – region as a result of accelerated transformation in the sector.
  - ✔ **SATA** - formed with the objective of harmonizing interconnectivity in terms of setting up of radio, fiber and microwave backbone links in the Region (SRII)
SADC: ICT Declaration (2001)

• SADC: Declaration on Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

  Efficient communication and information exchange; with special consideration to, Rural and remote areas; under privileged urban areas; education; health; Gender and media groupings

• Identifies and details 5 priority areas:
  ✓ Regulatory Environment for ICT
  ✓ Infrastructure for ICT Development
  ✓ Community Participation and Governance in ICT Development
  ✓ ICT in Business Development
  ✓ Human Resource Capacity for ICT Development
SADC RISDP (2003)
RSIDP (2003) – ICT Key Targets

- A wider focus on ICT was recommended to transform SADC into an information based economy with specific objectives and deadlines:
  - Development of national integrated policy and strategic plan as specified in the SADC ICT declaration
  - Review of the 1996 Telecommunications Protocol to accommodate the wider perspectives of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)
  - Develop an ICT performance index and standards to facilitate cross-country e-readiness comparisons
### E- SADC INITIATIVE

- The development of a regional ICT strategy (e-SADC) would be undertaken as part of the implementation of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI).
- Initiative/ framework will look to the harmonization and coordination of national efforts as an integration strategy.
- The implementation of E-SADC will seek to achieve the following:
  - Harmonization of national policy and regulatory frameworks
  - Creation of a framework for the development of ICT infrastructure
  - Strengthening capacity at the sub-regional level in ICT for development and building a critical mass to facilitate regional integration through ICTs.
E-SADC INITIATIVE

• Objective
  – To prepare a SADC ICT strategy framework document. The strategic framework document would serve as a guideline for the implementation of the Information Society in the sub region.

• The e-strategy should address the following:
  – Convergence
  – harmonization of ICT indicators
  – promote ICT usage for regional economic integration
  – enhancement of connectivity and access to ICT services among and within the member states.
E-SADC INITIATIVE

- Strategy should address all major aspects of e-applications including the following:
  - e-government
  - e-parliament
  - e-commerce, e-education, e-health, e-agriculture

- The strategy should, where relevant, address policy, legislation, regulation, resources and other issues as cited in the respective ICT policies.
- Strategy will be continually updated
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<th>KEYS ISSUES – SADC/UNECA TECHNICAL WORKSHOP “e – SADC “</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Development and harmonization of ICT Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Capacity building in ICT</td>
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<td>Maintainability</td>
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<td>Convergence of Voice and Data Communications</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Security related to ICT</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>The need to keep SADC traffic local through, for example a regional internet exchange point</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>High bandwidth prices by electric power utilities for using their optic fibre infrastructure</td>
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<td>The need to exploit mobile as a rapid deployment technology</td>
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CHALLENGES

• Although at policy level, member states had adopted ICT as a key-driving element for socio-economic development (ICT Declaration of 2001) in practice, at the strategic level, implementation at Member States has been slow, which provides room for a concerted efforts to assist member states in developing their national ICT policies and strategic plans based on the SADC guidelines.
• Different levels of development in the SADC Member States
• Acknowledge a slow pace of implementation of the ICT Declaration at a regional level and where member states have an ICT Policy and face challenges of implementation
• Lack of ICP Funding – No partners in the development of the sector
CONCLUDING REMARKS

- As a Region we have commitment from the highest level of Government for the acceleration of Infrastructure which we believe is a pre requisite to having an e SADC.
- We believe that the e-SADC will provide us with a framework on which we will be able to guide our member states into embracing the information society. We are grateful to UNECA our partner in the implementation of the framework/initiative.
- We wish to learn from best practice as we work on our strategy
THANK YOU
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