ICT Challenges to Enhance Socio-economic Development and Regional Integration within SADC

Presentation to the EuroAfrica-ICT FP7 Awareness Workshop
by
R. T. Unuth
Head, ICT
Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat

Gaborone, 08-09 October 2007
Agenda

- Background to ICT for Development
- The SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology
- The SADC ICT Declaration
- Concluding Remarks
## Background on ICT for Development

- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
- African Information Society Initiative (AISI)
- NEPAD ICT Framework
- African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE)
- SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)
The SADC RISDP

- Provides strategic direction for efficient implementation of the SADC programme of action over a period of 15 years
- Identifies priority interventions for integration across a range of areas
- Aligns the overarching long term integrated development goals and objectives with discrete policies and priority intervention areas
- Enhances and strengthens intersectoral linkages and synergies
ICT Development Strategy for the SADC Region

Three-pronged strategy namely:

- Proper regulatory and policy framework for attracting investors
- Infrastructure development
- Deployment of applications
The SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology

Telecommunications Objectives

- Develop national telecommunications networks that allow for the provision of reliable, effective and affordable telecommunications service.

- Provide high quality and efficient services.

- Achieve regional universal service.

- Enhance interconnectivity in the region and globally.
The SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology (cont.)

**Protocol Milestones**
- Development of a regional policy and regulatory framework
- Provision of universal service
- Deployment of relevant infrastructure
- Network provision and maintenance
- Capacity building

**Main Project**
- The SADC Regional Information Infrastructure (SRII) Project
- Possibility of linking the SRII to the EASSy cable

**Key Challenges of the Communications Sector**
- Lack of financial capacity and human resources
- Implementation of universal access/service mechanism by Member States
- Non-participation of telecommunication operators in regional agenda after privatisation
The SADC ICT Declaration

Five Priority Areas of Action

- 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
## The SADC ICT Declaration - From Concept to Reality

**On-going initiatives and project ideas**

- National e-strategies and Regional ICT framework.
- ICT legislations
- ICT indicators
- Pan-African project on tele-medicine and tele-education
- Regional Internet Exchange Point.
- ICT for community and women empowerment
The SADC ICT Declaration - From Concept to Reality (cont.)

On-going initiatives and project ideas (cont.)

- ICT incubators
- e-Government
- Capacity building

Challenges

- Human capacity constraints
- Financial resources
Concluding Remarks

- ICT, if harnessed properly, can meaningfully contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development of Member States and to regional integration.

- Projects and project ideas that have been identified are in line with the MDGs, the WSIS initiative, AU ICT framework, the SADC Protocol and the SADC ICT Declaration. Their main aim is to bring the benefits of ICT to all people in the region.

- The Secretariat is already collaborating with other organisations for some of the projects. The assistance of other International Cooperating Partners is also being sought.
Thank You
Merci
Obrigado