



3. Benchmarking Study Conclusions



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Study Conclusions

Botswana is a country where information and communication technology has yet to provide society-wide benefits. A national ICT programme must seek to address the following observations.

ICT usage in homes and communities has been sporadic to date. Whether this is due to other social and economic challenges facing the government is not clear. However, as has been proven in various countries around the world, development can be a product of investment in ICT, not its prerequisite.

Of course, the state of health care in Botswana is dominated by the AIDS crisis. Technology alone cannot solve this problem. But improved communications associated with a national ICT programme is surely an opportunity to extend the reach of AIDS awareness and for citizens to readily find assistance.

Based on spending levels, public education is a high priority in Botswana. However, the country is still plagued by low levels of literacy and tertiary education enrollment. Basic education is a prerequisite to participate fully in the information economy and at present too many people lack these basic skills.

The business community in Botswana has not yet adopted ICT in a meaningful way – an essential factor to the long-term success of ICT planning efforts.

Despite the Botswana Government's commitment to promoting ICT as a priority, e-Government information and services are still rather meagre. It is imperative that Botswana address this gap between the e-Government messages and the reality that constituents experience everyday.

In some respects, Botswana is performing at or above global averages in ICT infrastructure. For example, waiting time for phones is quite acceptable. Internet access is reasonably affordable, ranking in the middle tier of countries worldwide. And yet in other areas, infrastructure is inadequate. Telecommunications investment is very low, and declining. The availability of telephone mainlines is poor. The country has the fewest internet hosts per capita of any of the eight nations examined.



Benchmarking Conclusions continued

Study Conclusions

Relative to other countries, Botswana boasts a very advanced legal and legislative system that is generally conducive to the proliferation of ICT and ICT-related industries. Botswana's highly developed legal system is an asset that can be used to assist with the orderly transition to an information-based economy.

The following page presents "Global connectivity rankings" taken from World Economic Forum studies in 2002/2003 and 2003/2004. These rankings take into account the sum total of all indicators analysed under their far-reaching surveys. That the countries examined for this report vary in their overall connectivity ranking should not surprise; these rankings are consistent with the statistics examined throughout this report. Of greater concern for ICT planners in Botswana is the country's decline in world rankings from 2002/03 to 2003/04. The reasons for this decline are not fully known. What can be inferred is that, despite any efforts to improve connectivity, other countries are progressing *faster*.

This benchmarking study is not an indictment of past shortcomings in ICT achievement. It represents a starting point for ICT planning, one that must be revisited on a periodic basis so that the effects of the national ICT development programme can be identified and measured.



Benchmarking Conclusions continued

“Global connectivity rankings” from World Economic Forum studies in 2002/2003 and 2003/2004)

Country	2002/03 Ranking ¹	2003/04 Ranking ²	Change
Canada	6 th	6 th	-
Estonia	24 th	25 th	-1
Malaysia	32 nd	26 th	+6
South Africa	36 th	37 th	-1
Mauritius	56 th	43 rd	+13
Trinidad and Tobago	58 th	52 nd	+6
Botswana	44 th	55 th	-11
Namibia	53 rd	59 th	-6

¹ The 2002/2003 study included 82 countries of greater than 1 million population

² The 2003/2004 study included 102 countries of greater than 1 million population