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**10TH ITU WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION/ICT INDICATORS MEETING
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PAPER**

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**AN OVERVIEW OF ZIMBABWE'S WORK ON MEASURING THE WSIS
TARGETS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WSIS+10 REVIEW PROCESS.**

The installation of the fibre optic cable linking Zimbabwe to an undersea cable at Beira, Mozambique was completed last year at a cost of US\$6, 3 million. Another fibre optic project linking Harare-Bulawayo-Beitbridge to the undersea cable in South Africa is nearing completion. Once complete, the fibre optic project is set to transform the country's information communication technology landscape. Expectations are that Zimbabwe which is landlocked will have faster Internet and telephone connection, transmission of data as well as multimedia facilities. It is expected that by 2014 the country will be internationally networked, with about 1 340 km of cables, carrying massive amounts of mobile phone, television, Internet and other telecommunication signals. It is also expected that vast job opportunities will open up, costs of internet access and doing business will be lowered. The development is seen as ushering in a new era in Zimbabwe, for example, it is anticipated that software developers, students, internet fanatics, broadcasters and other sectors will cash in as telecommunication services become better. Expressed simply, fibre optic internet cables are expected to change lives and livelihoods in the country and drive it faster towards becoming a knowledgeable based information society

The country has traditionally relied on the Mazowe earth satellite link which is not only limited but very slow and expensive.

The link between ICT statistics and policy making, and suggestions on how to improve the availability of the data, both at the national and global level cannot be overemphasised. Bellow is target achievement developments that have taken place in the country so.

Target 1. Connect all villages with ICTs and establish community access points.

The government is committed to building community awareness on the important role ICT plays in today's constantly evolving technological world. Zimbabwe like other nations in the region is exploring ways to develop the ICT industry. There is in Zimbabwe an ICT Achievers Programme. The programme is a gesture to inspire Zimbabweans to view ICTs as the key to fulfilling their life-wide aspirations, reward

excellence and create appetite for success for those companies in the habit of super-achievement. ICT is a locomotive force for socio-economic development in developing countries, as a result, efforts of individuals and organizations that have excelled, have been innovative and have contributed meaningfully to the development of the nation through ICTs need to be acknowledged. Mubaira, Murambinda, Maphisa, Ngundu and Mutoko have been identified as pilot points for establishing community access points

Target 2. Connect all secondary schools and primary schools with ICTs

The ministry of Information and Communication Technology in conjunction with the Zimbabwe Academic Research Network (ZARnet) has initiated a programme to link to the Internet all schools that benefited from the President's Computerisation Programme. As a starting point eighty (80) schools have been identified for the first phase of the project. One thousand three hundred (1 300) personal computers, sixty (60) projectors and ancillary equipment was procured. **ICT has changed** our way of doing things and no doubt education is part of this. What stands out from the achievements on this target was the establishment of a 40-seater lab model for schools which was implemented in 10 2011 at Chogugudza Primary School in Mashonaland East. This will act as the standard and will be rolled out to more schools in all provinces in the next two years. **This is being done** in pursuit of the target of equipping every school in Zimbabwe with a computer lab and Internet connection in order to increase computer literacy at grassroots level and also promote electronic learning at the schools by providing e-learning content. In the Matabeleland region, the government identified Manje Secondary School as the model school for region. The school received 42 x PCs, 2 x Printers, 1 x LCD Projector, 7 x 4 way adaptors, 1 x white board 1 x local area Network (LAN) setup and Internet setup. A wireless internet connection was also put up to enable anyone around the school in a certain radius to access the internet using wireless mobile Internet devices. Government being aware of the current electricity shortages is looking to alternative solar energy to power the programme in rural areas.

Target 3. Connect all scientific and research centres with ICTs

With the completion of the installation of a fibre optic cable projects linking the country to the outside world through the sea on via Mozambique and South Africa the whole country will be assured of fast and reliable internet connectivity. It should then be easy to connect all scientific and research centres with ICTs by 2015.

Target 4. Connect all public libraries, museums, post offices and national archives with ICTs

The massive investment in ICT Infrastructure fibre will result in requirement for high-speed Internet connectivity being achieved and this will catalyse connection of all public libraries, museums, post offices and national archives.

Target 5. Connect all health centres and hospitals with ICTs

In the health sector one thousand two hundred (1 200) cell phones were purchased for clinics to improve reporting on health data and enable the Ministry to identify and respond timeously to epidemics. All provincial health offices are radio connected while radio connection of district centres is work in progress with quite a number already connected by radio.

Target 6. Connect all central governments departments and establish websites.

The government is working on establishing a trust-worthy ICT legislative environment through the development of a specific legal framework. This is seen as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of E-government encompassing the areas of e-commerce, e-banking, and other online services. The following successes have been recorded:

All ministries have had websites developed and contact persons trained to upload content and maintain the websites;

All ministries' head offices are now linked the Internet:

All senior government officials have been issued with more secure government domain e-mail addresses.

Work is in progress to link all government offices to the Internet; Two hundred and five civil servants have received training in information and communication technology.

The Ministry of ICT is working with the Ministry of the Public Service in establishing units for capacity building in various centres to train more civil servants. So far the Public Service has thirty six (36) trained ICT trainers.

Target 7. Adapt all primary and secondary school curricula to meet the challenges of the information society, taking into account national circumstances.

Zimbabwe has an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy requiring all school and college students be exposed to computer skills. This is in view of the importance ICT literacy skills have assumed in today's world, especially for teachers who have the responsibility for preparing the nation's children for a future dominated by ICT technology.

Zimbabwe's education system has been regarded as one of the best in Africa but recently it has been falling behind the times. The global trends in the use of ICTs in education have left gaps in our education system and calls for the review of the education curriculum have currently been intensifying. The government has embarked

on a curriculum review process to try and transform the system and embrace teaching of skills in ICTs in schools. The education review process was started through consultations with teachers, parents, children and partners in the education sector.

Target 8. Ensure that all of the world's population has access to television and radio services

Going forward there are initiatives focusing on rural areas through PC per classroom project and setting up of information kiosks. The laying and completion of a dependable and robust national backbone remain the Government's top priority. "Seek ye first the kingdom of infrastructure and connectivity" and the rest will follow. Revamping of existing radio and television services transmission grid and building of new sites around the country is nearly complete. Phased digitalisation of transmission networks is in progress.

Target 9. Encourage the development of content and put in place technical conditions in order to facilitate the presence and use of all world languages on the Internet

Target 10. Ensure that more than half the world's inhabitants have access to ICTs within their reach and make use of them.

Information is an important business asset and is valuable to any organization. In present day business environment, information defines the performance of most organisations. Thus, it needs to be protected to ensure its confidentiality, integrity and availability. Government is in the process of setting up policies and procedures on how to protect Information. ICT will continue spreading its revolutionary power to modernize and catalyze growth of the economy and development of a knowledgeable information society and generally improve living conditions and opportunities of our people. The government committed to creating a national digital culture and provide ICT access for many, regardless of gender, region, or any other criteria. To date, our mobile penetration rates have increased from 9% in 2008 to over 60 % in 2010. Sim cards are now ubiquitously available. Its now a lose and buy affair. Internet penetration rates have risen from 1.5% to anything between 11% and 20% during the same period the quality and price of calls remain below expected standards and Potraz and the operators have been directed to deploy attention and action with immediacy and urgency. Speed and cost issues of internet are likely to be part of our history once we complete the fibre optic connection for a handshake with the rest of the world.

Preparations are underway for the conduct of a national survey on ICT Use and access by individuals in early 2013.

