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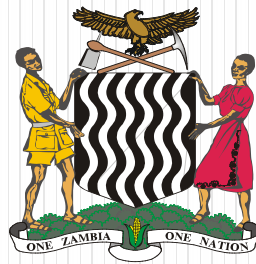
ICT for Education Summit 2012

26-27 January, Victoria Falls

Welcome

Hon. Dr John T N Phiri
Minister of Education,
Zambia





KEYNOTE SPEECH AT THE SOUTHERN AFRICA ICT FOR EDUCATION SUMMIT 2012

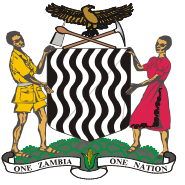
**BY HONOURABLE DR JOHN PHIRI, MP;
MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND
VOCATIONAL TRAINING, ZAMBIA**



Welcome

- **THE CHAIRPERSON- MR JOHN GLASSEY, MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR AFRICANBRAINS**
- **THE HOST, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SPORT, ART AND CULTURE, HONOURABLE DAVID COLTART**
- **ALL MINISTERS PRESENT**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

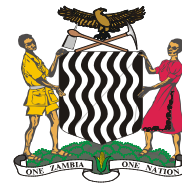
IT IS MY HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO BE PART OF THIS ANNUAL SUMMIT ON ICT FOR EDUCATION IN OUR REGION. I BRING WARM AND TENDER GREETINGS FROM MY PRESIDENT MR MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA AS WELL AS FROM PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA. AS A NEW MINISTER IN CHARGE OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING, THIS SUMMIT WILL GIVE ME AN INSIGHT INTO HOW MY GOVERNMENT CAN EMBRACE ICT INTO THE SECTOR TO ENHANCE EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AS WELL AS STIR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.



Why ICTs

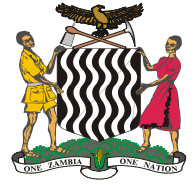
- LET ME START BY ALLUDING TO THE FACT THAT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INSURGENCY IS CHANGING EVERYTHING AROUND THE WORLD FROM THE WAY WE LIVE TO THE WAY WE CONDUCT OUR DAY TO DAY BUSINESS ACTIVITIES POLITICIANS INCLUDED. WORLDWIDE IT HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED THAT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES (ICTS) HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES, ENHANCE SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MOBILIZATION, CREATE JOBS, INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENTS AND FACILITATE THE SHARING OF INFORMATION WITH PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE POOR AND WOMEN, LIVING IN REMOTE PARTS OF OUR COUNTRIES.

Why ICTs



- **MR CHAIRMAN,**
- MANY COMMUNITIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AFRICA IN PARTICULAR, DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO ELEMENTARY SERVICES THAT WOULD ALLOW THEM BENEFIT FROM THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION. SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA HAS NOT BEEN SPARED FROM THIS DIGITAL DIVIDE. DESPITE THE POPULATION OF SUB SAHARAN AFRICA BEING ABOUT 10 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION, ONLY 0.1 PERCENT OF ITS POPULATION HAS ACCESS TO INTERNET CONNECTIVITY. THIS SCENARIO DEMONSTRATES HOW FAR SUB SAHARAN AFRICA IS FROM BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE. ICT IS NOW A VITAL FACTOR AND IMPORTANT ENABLER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COUNTRIES WITHOUT RESOURCES ARE BEING LEFT FURTHER AND FURTHER BEHIND. IT IS UP TO AFRICA ESPECIALLY US MINISTERS WHO ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE EXPLOSIVE GROWTH IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OPENS UP NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR OUR NATIONS' DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. FOR SURE, TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE USED AS A DRIVER TO IMPROVE OUR OWN PRACTICES AND OFFER THE POOR NEW CHOICES TO BETTER THEIR LIVES.

Advances in ICTs



- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

- ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY ESPECIALLY GLOBAL INTERNET LINKS ARE IMPROVING QUICKLY SUCH AS FIBRE OPTIC ROUTES REPLACING SATELLITE AND MORE ROUTES BEING LAID TO PROVIDE RESILIENCE AND DRIVE DOWN CONNECTIVITY PRICING. THESE DEVELOPMENTS AS YOU ALL ARE AWARE INCLUDE THE SOUTH ATLANTIC CABLE (SAT 3), WEST AFRICA SUBMARINE CABLE (WASC) AND THE EASTERN AFRICA SUBMARINE CABLE SYSTEM (EASSY) FIBRE PROJECTS IN AFRICA. I URGE YOU ALL TO UTILIZE THESE INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE THE ICT BACKBONE CONNECTIVITY OF OUR COUNTRIES.

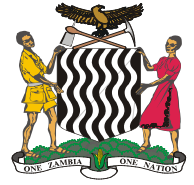
- IN VIEW OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS AND THE FACT THAT ICT PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ENHANCING EDUCATION PROVISION, AFRICA WHICH HAS WITNESSED AN INCREASED NUMBER OF SCHOOLS RESULTING INTO HIGH ENROLMENT LEVELS OF LEARNERS, SHOULD SEIZE THIS TECHNOLOGICAL SURGE. A MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR INCREASED ACCESS TO EDUCATION IS THE NEED FOR MORE TEACHERS AND TEACHING RESOURCES. ICT HAS BEEN SEEN TO HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF INADEQUATE TEACHERS AND TEACHING MATERIALS. IT HAS ALSO BEEN RECOGNIZED THAT INVESTING IN ICT WOULD GIVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY.



The benefits in general

- THUS, FOR AFRICA DIGITIZING THE LEARNING PROCESS AND RELATED PRACTICES CAN OFFER UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES TO ENABLE IT BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE. AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS IN GENERAL AND THE ZAMBIAN IN PARTICULAR, HAVE EXTREMELY LIMITED RESOURCES TO MOUNT A SERIOUS CAMPAIGN TO PROVIDE EDUCATION TO AS MANY OF ITS PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE. THE SAME LACK OF FUNDS HAS GREATLY IMPAIRED GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO TRAIN AS MANY TEACHERS AS POSSIBLE AND TO BUILD THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF LEARNING INSTITUTIONS.

Opportunities in Zambia



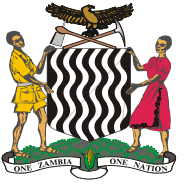
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

- IN ZAMBIA WE HAVE RECOGNIZED THE ROLE OF ICTS AS A POTENT TOOL IN REDUCING POVERTY, EXTENDING HEALTH SERVICES, EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENERALLY IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, THE PENETRATION LEVELS OF ICTS IN ZAMBIA'S EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS REMAINS LOW. IN ADDITION, MOST OF THE COMPUTERS IN SCHOOLS ARE MOSTLY SECONDHAND AND REFURBISHED. THE INTEGRATION OF ICTS IN LEARNING AND TEACHING PRACTICE HAS BEEN LIMITED, ALTHOUGH THE INTRODUCTION OF COMPUTER STUDIES AS A SCHOOL STUDY SUBJECT HAS BEGUN TO CHANGE THIS.
- THE ADOPTION OF A NATIONAL ICT POLICY BY GOVERNMENT, AS WELL AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DRAFT ICT POLICY FOR EDUCATION AND AN IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK, PROVIDES AN ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT TO PROMOTE FAR GREATER ACCESS AND USE OF ICTS ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF ZAMBIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING A SYSTEM FOR ENHANCING EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION, AND TEACHING AND LEARNING. WHILE THE GOALS AND TARGETS SET BY GOVERNMENT ARE REALISTIC, ACHIEVING THEM WITHIN THE ESTABLISHED TIME FRAMES REMAINS A CHALLENGE. AFRICAN COUNTRIES PLANNING TO MAKE ICT AVAILABLE TO ITS CITIZENS WILL NEED TO ADDRESS CONSTRAINTS SUCH AS INFRASTRUCTURE, INSUFFICIENT ENERGY FOR ICT, POLICY AND LOW LEVEL OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN ALL SECTORS.



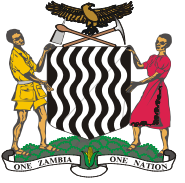
Challenges

- **MR CHAIRMAN**
- IN DEALING WITH ICT INFRASTRUCTURE, THERE IS NEED TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:
- **INTERNET CONNECTIVITY:** LEARNING INSTITUTIONS ARE NOT ABLE TO SUSTAIN THE HIGH COST OF INTERNET CONNECTIVITY. OTHER RELATED ISSUES INCLUDE INVESTMENT IN THE LAST MILE CONNECTIVITY, INTRODUCTION OF EDUCATION RATES (E-RATES) FOR CONNECTIVITY COSTS TO LEARNING INSTITUTIONS AND REDUCING COSTS OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
- **PLATFORMS FOR ELECTRONIC LEARNING (E-LEARNING):** DESPITE THE HIGH MOBILE PENETRATION IN AFRICA, VERY FEW COUNTRIES HAVE DEVELOPED PLATFORMS FOR E-LEARNING. IN FACT, ALMOST EACH HOUSEHOLD HAS MORE THAN ONE MOBILE DEVICE, BUT THIS HIGH PENETRATION HAS NOT BEEN EXPLOITED IN TERMS OF EDUCATION PROVISION.
- **CYBER CRIME AND SECURITY:** RELATED TO THIS WILL BE ISSUES OF IDENTITY THEFTS, PIRACY, AND UNAUTHORISED ACCESS TO INFORMATION.



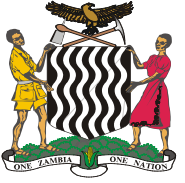
Challenges

- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**
- INSUFFICIENT ENERGY WILL REMAIN A MAJOR CHALLENGE TO ALL ICT INTERVENTIONS. FOR THIS REASON, COUNTRIES NEED TO INVEST IN EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF POWER LIKE RENEWABLE ENERGY, SOLAR AND EVEN GENERATORS TO INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING. FOR EXAMPLE, IN ZAMBIA, 80 PERCENT OF THE SCHOOLS ARE IN RURAL AREAS WHICH HAVE NO ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY (POWER) THEREBY MAKING POWER RELATED INVESTMENTS A NIGHTMARE.
- POLICIES THAT ARE NOT ICT FRIENDLY STIFLE INTEGRATION OF ICT INTO THE EDUCATION SECTOR. SOME COUNTRIES HAVE '**SYMBOLIC POLICIES**', JUST TO BE SEEN THAT THEY ARE DOING SOMETHING. POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES SHOULD GET MORE ATTENTION. THUS, THERE IS NEED FOR POLICIES FOR REGULATORY PURPOSES AS WELL AS MONITORING. FUNDING COMES BASED ON EXISTING POLICIES, THUS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT GOOD POLICIES ARE DEVELOPED. USUALLY POLITICIANS ARE BLAMED FOR POLICIES. HOWEVER, POLICIES ARE CREATED BY TECHNOCRATS AND THAT POLITICIANS ARE ONLY 'POLICY CHECKERS'.



Challenges

- IN AFRICA, WE CONTINUE TO HAVE LOW LEVELS OF HUMAN RESOURCE WITH THE REQUIRED ICT SKILLS. LACK OF SKILLED MANPOWER HAS BEEN RECOGNISED AS A CONSTRAINT TO REALISING THE POTENTIAL OF A SECTOR. THE SKILLS REQUIRED INCLUDE E-CONTENT DEVELOPMENT, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR AND BASIC ICT TROUBLE SHOOTING FOR TEACHERS.
- THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF A COUNTRY'S ASPIRATIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION DEPENDS ON THE CREATIVITY, DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF EDUCATION FOR ITS ENTIRE POPULATION. THUS, UTILIZATION OF E-LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE WILL NOT ONLY HELP IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, RESEARCH IN OUR UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH CENTRES, BUT WILL ALSO BE A WAY OF NARROWING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND KNOWLEDGE GAP THAT CURRENTLY EXISTS AND IS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO RURAL/URBAN MIGRATION AND BRAIN DRAIN.



Conclusion

- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**
- I URGE YOU TO EXPLORE ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES TO INTEGRATING ICT INTO THE EDUCATION SECTOR OF OUR COUNTRIES. AS WE DELIBERATE ON THE POTENTIAL OF ICT FOR EDUCATION, WE NEED TO TAKE COGNIZANCE OF THE CHALLENGES OF ROLLING OUT ICT PROJECTS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF SUCH INVESTMENTS. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE EXPERTISE IN THIS HOUSE WILL SHARE KNOWLEDGE ON THE BEST PRACTICES AND COME UP WITH WORKABLE SOLUTIONS FOR OUR COUNTRIES.