E-Government Strategy for Swaziland 2013-2017

Kingdom of Eswatini

E-Government

Definitions of Data:

n/a

Main Focus of Document:

Collaborative measure initiated by the Commonwealth Secretariat to determine Eswatini's readiness for e-government.

Target Beneficiaries or Sectors:

n/a

Key Elements:

The policy recognises that e-government can only be possible if citizens have access to the relevant technology, can afford the technology and are able to use the technology. The strategy underlines that e-government can complement Eswatini's social and economic objectives in various ways, including the creation of new economic sectors into which investment and business ventures can potentially be attracted; and which can drive a myriad of e-commerce business to the country. Some key elements are detailed below:

Vision for e- / m-Government for Swaziland o The government will actively promote the creation of the information society and the information economy via the provision of transactional online e-/m-government services and will with intent leverage the e-/m-government strategy towards meeting national goals such as the MDGs. o The Government will leverage the most appropriate technologies at the right time in order to ensure that the underlying ICT solutions are not only effective but that they present the right return on investment and secure the necessary up-take to address fundamental public policy goals such as the reduction of poverty. o The Government will provide the necessary policy, institutional and regulatory framework that is required for the successful proliferation of e-/m-government in terms of accessibility and affordability whilst at the same time ensure trust and confidence as well as security. o The government will leverage the implementation of the e-/m-government as an important vehicle that will allow Eswatini's economy to diversify and embrace knowledge economy based sectors. o The government will actively pursue the achievement of digital literacy by all sectors of the population. o The necessary measures will be taken to build up a critical mass of ICT specialists that will be required to sustain the growth of the information society and the information economy.

ICT and Education ICT proficiency units can infiltrate the curriculum of various disciplines to varying degrees: one can envisage anything from a few course units to half a degree in a joint degree scheme dedicated to ICT. The latter can be an effective way in bridging: o Business management and ICT or business management and or public policy or e-government.
o Geography and Geography Information Systems (GIS). o Accountancy and financial management information systems. o Medicine and e-health. o Teaching and ICT in education.

A Cyber Legislative Framework for e-/m-government The key legislative instrument in Swaziland that regulates e-/m-government is the Electronic Records (Evidence) Act enacted on 11th August 2009. The Act gives legal effect to: o Admission and authentication of electronic records. o Evidence of electronic records; including secure electronic records. o Admissibility of electronic signature. o Integrity of electronic record. The Act is designed to reflect technology neutrality – placing technology criteria such as that relating to the criteria of what constitutes a secure electronic signature in an Annex to the Act.

The determination and function of a competent authority that is responsible for the regulatory framework relating to electronic commerce. This Strategy proposes that the Government of Eswatini should not seek to create a new entity to assume the powers and functions that the Act will establish. The creation of such a new entity would result in a fragmentation of scarce expertise and skills and would increase costs unnecessarily. It is to be noted, that in a number of EU jurisdictions, the competent authority for electronic commerce and transactions is assigned to the existing statutory regulatory authority responsible for telecommunications. The Strategy recommends that the same approach is adopted in Swaziland.

The Strategy recommends that the Government of Eswatini: (i) Explores the possibility of reducing the costs of ICT hardware and software to the private sector and citizens by means of reducing the excise duty and value added taxation in order to incentivise up take of e-government. (ii) Explores the possibility to work with further and higher education institutions to create content in the siSwati language. (iii) Ensures that all e-/m-software that is purchased for the government can be localised in the siSwati language. (iv) In the process leading to the roll-out of e-applications and government websites adopts an initial policy bias, at least during the term of this Strategy, should be directed towards bespoke development to spur the development of local ICT skills as well as local ICT businesses. (v) Stipulates in tenders for major applications a condition that mandates the presence of a Eswatini partner as a member of a consortium. (vi) Stipulates in tenders for major applications a condition that determines the % of the level of customisation or development that should be carried out in Eswatini and by local persons.

Authentication Digital government Digital literacy Electronic commerce Electronic records Electronic signature Legislative framework Neutrality Private sector Taxation

Policy/regulation mirrored:

Countries:

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