



National ICT Policy

Connected to the Community, Connected to the World

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Forward

The importance of telecommunication as a service industry in itself as well as a critical support element for other service industries has been for the last few years and continues to be the subject of high level policy formulation in practically every country in the world and Seychelles is no exception. This has led to changes such as the separation of telecommunication operations and regulator, privatization of telecommunication operators and the introduction of competition.

Recognizing the importance and the potential of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the development of a country, the Government, took the initiative to form a National ICT Consultative Committee and tasked the committee with the responsibility to formulate a National ICT Policy (NICTP). Nevertheless, the publication of the National ICT policy is the output of the collaborative effort of several people from Government, private sector and civil society, including members and non-member of the National ICT Consultative Committee. The activities that have led to this publication served to further highlight the value of partnership, sharing of information and resources between various stakeholders.

The NICTP articulates five areas of focus namely; ICT infrastructure, Legal and Regulatory Framework, Human Resource Development, ICT Industry and Government. Mindful of the cross-sectoral nature of ICT, it is important to note that these five areas are all integrated and interdependent.

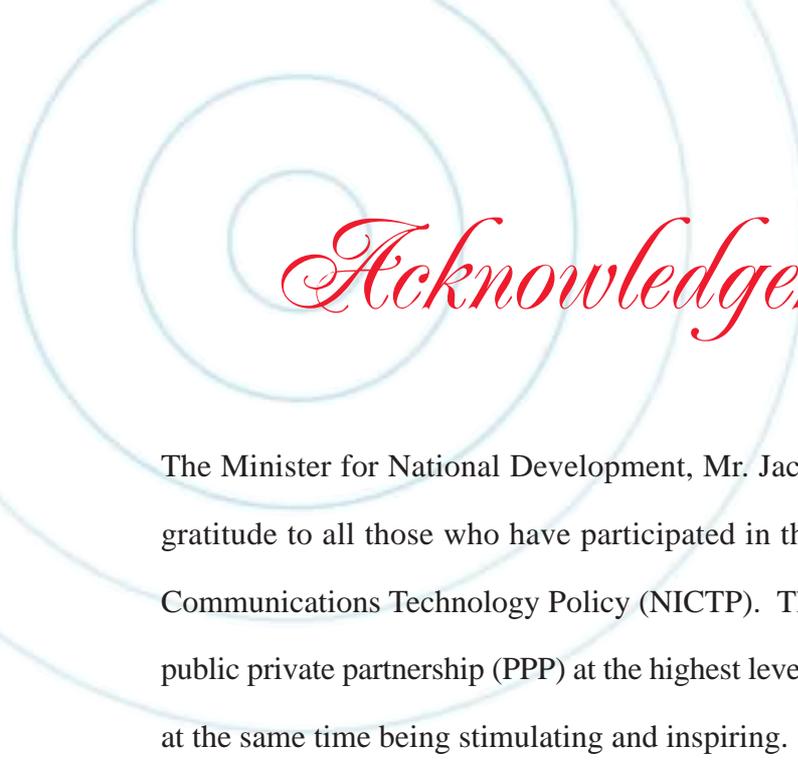
The publication of the NICTP lays the founding stone required for the development of a comprehensive National ICT Strategic Plan, which will be the roadmap to guide ICT development in this country.

I am therefore confident that each and everyone involved will rise up to the challenges and contribute to the creation of a conducive environment and make provision of the appropriate ICT tools for the social, economic and cultural development in the fulfillment of the aspirations of the people of Seychelles.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacquelin Dugasse', written in a cursive style.

Jacquelin Dugasse (Mr.)

Minister for National Development



Acknowledgements

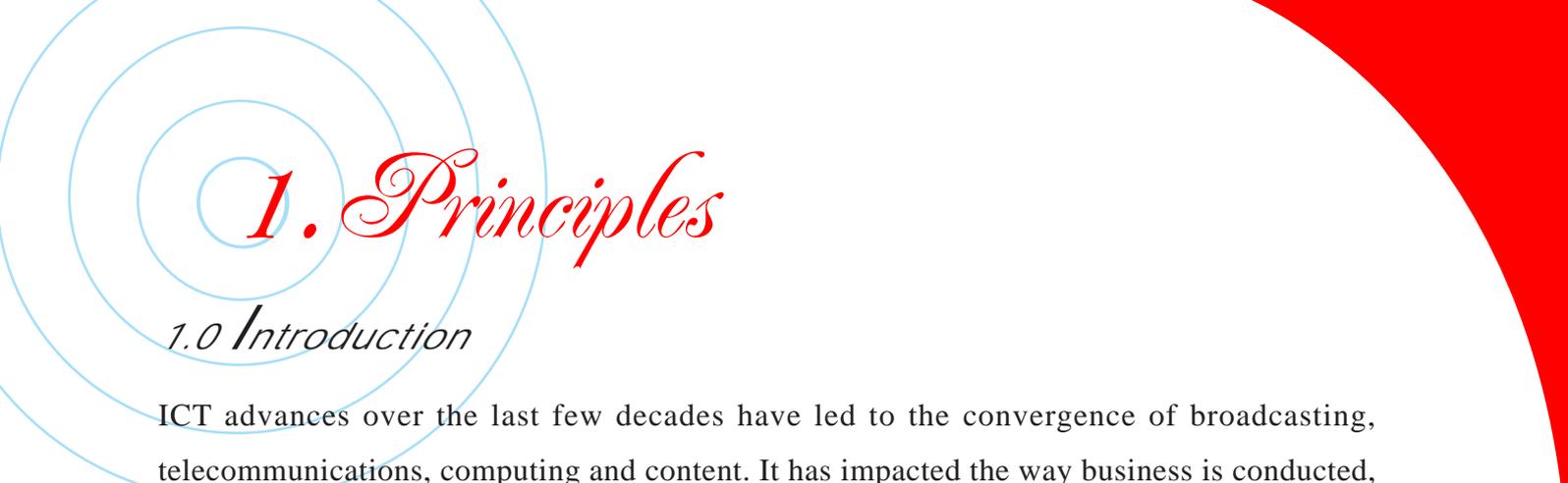
The Minister for National Development, Mr. Jacquelin Dugassee would like to express sincere gratitude to all those who have participated in the formulation of the National Information & Communications Technology Policy (NICTP). The development of the NICTP has truly been a public private partnership (PPP) at the highest level, which has involved a lot of hard work, whilst at the same time being stimulating and inspiring.

Firstly, special thanks go to all the National Information and Communications Technology Consultative Committee (NICTCC) members. This group of people have devoted much time and effort, in spite of their already busy schedules to make valuable contribution to the development of the policy.

Secondly, gratitude is also bestowed onto all our International partners in the whole process, especially the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. Thanks also go to all those people and organisations who took time to provide their input, in the process of finalisation of the policy.

Gratitude also goes to the Technical Team and Secretariat, which has been the link between the various stakeholders in the development of the NICTP. These two groups have worked behind the scenes carrying out research and policy drafting work and handling of all the necessary logistics for the meetings, document printing and distribution, etc.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all those, not mentioned above, who have had a role through the various stages in the development and publication of the policy. All of your contributions have been truly appreciated.



1. Principles

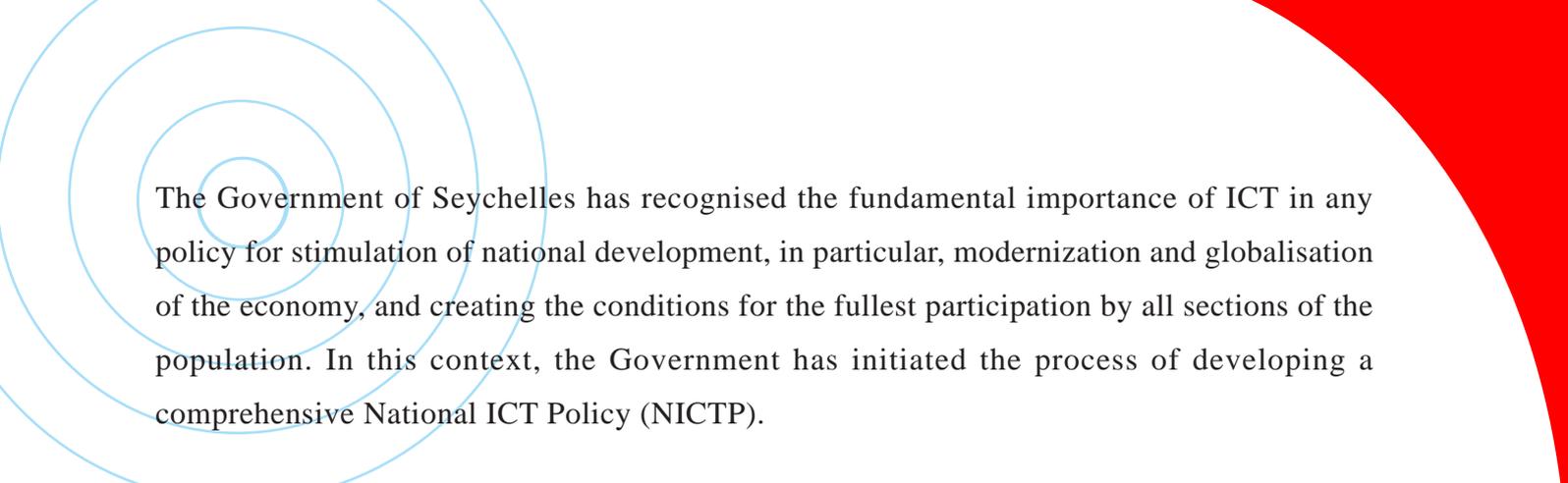
1.0 Introduction

ICT advances over the last few decades have led to the convergence of broadcasting, telecommunications, computing and content. It has impacted the way business is conducted, facilitated learning and knowledge sharing, and generated global information flows, empowered citizens and communities, resulting in a global information society. Increasingly, ICT is playing the central catalytic role in pushing the development process forward and boosting the efficiency of the increasingly integrated global economy. In industrial countries, it is widely acknowledged to be the engine of economic growth and directly linked to productivity. Hence, countries that have harnessed the potential of ICT have attained significant social and economic development.

Seychelles has always been among the leaders in the region in respect to the deployment of ICT. However, the future success of Seychelles in enhancing its competitiveness in the regional and global economy and improving the quality of life of its people is crucially dependent upon its capacity to develop as a leading ICT hub through international best practices in the use of ICT in all aspects and sectors of its economy.

Since most industrial countries and many developing countries including a few in the Indian Ocean region have already set-out to become leading regional and global ICT hubs, it is essential that a high level of priority and commitment by the Government and Private Sector of Seychelles is given to fast-track the successful implementation of the ICT Plan so that the objectives set-out above are achieved.

Success in achieving this objective requires sustained effort in setting policies, devising strategies, and adopting standards that ensure the full potential of ICT to be harnessed so as to meet the present and future social, economic and cultural sustainable development aspirations of the people of Seychelles.



The Government of Seychelles has recognised the fundamental importance of ICT in any policy for stimulation of national development, in particular, modernization and globalisation of the economy, and creating the conditions for the fullest participation by all sections of the population. In this context, the Government has initiated the process of developing a comprehensive National ICT Policy (NICTP).

The NICTP set out in this document serves to guide ICT development, accessibility and its utilisation on a national scale to meet the challenges of the information age and will lay the foundation for the development of a comprehensive National ICT Strategic Plan. The NICTP is based on five guiding principles: ICT Infrastructure, Legal and Regulatory Framework, Human Resource Development, ICT Industry and Government.

1.1 Vision

The National ICT Policy is aligned to the following vision statement:

A Seychelles that will be globally competitive, with a modern ICT enabled economy and a knowledge-based Information Society where strong, efficient and sustainable improvements in social, economic, cultural, good governance and regional integration are achieved through the deployment and effective application of ICT.

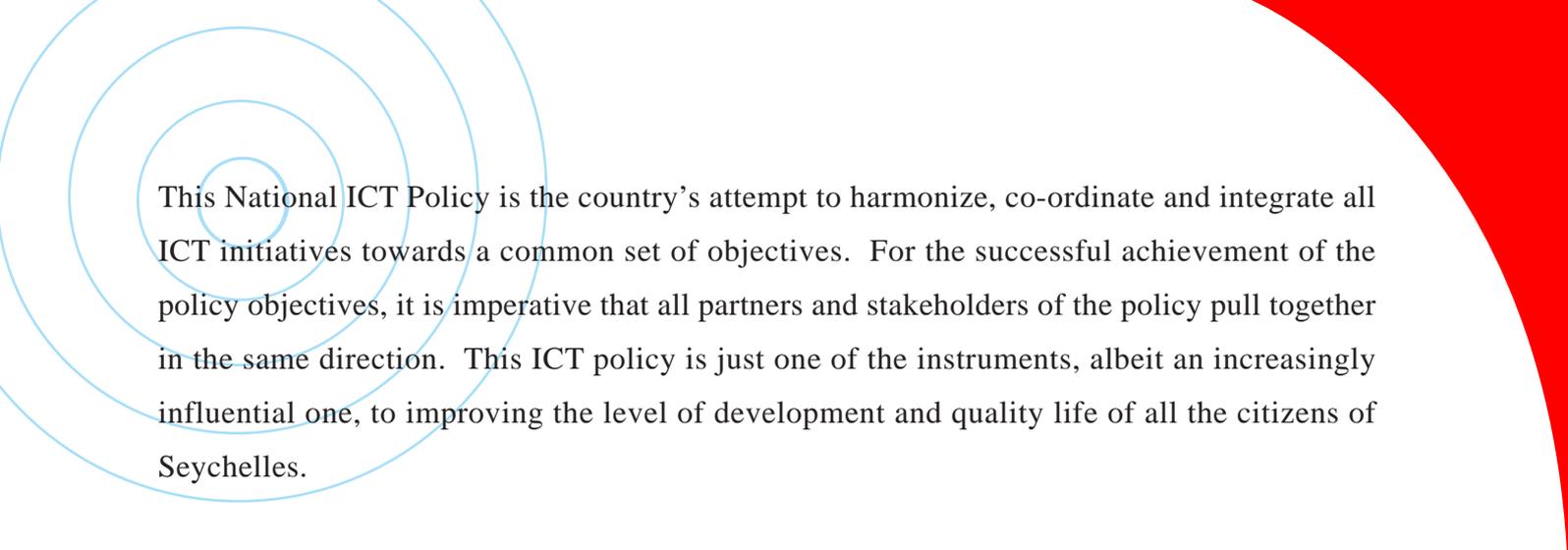
1.2 Mission

The mission of this policy is to improve the quality of life of Seychellois to the highest attainable levels by ensuring the availability of accessible, universal, affordable, modern and high quality ICT facilities and services within the Seychelles.

1.1 Policy Context

ICT is both cross-sectoral and a sector in its own right. This cross-cutting characteristic is one of the main reasons why a coherent, harmonized and over-arching National ICT Policy is needed. Therefore, a National ICT Policy must relate to other relevant sectoral policies.

An important precondition in the implementation of the National ICT Policy is that there should be constant and meaningful dialogue between Government and stakeholders.



This National ICT Policy is the country's attempt to harmonize, co-ordinate and integrate all ICT initiatives towards a common set of objectives. For the successful achievement of the policy objectives, it is imperative that all partners and stakeholders of the policy pull together in the same direction. This ICT policy is just one of the instruments, albeit an increasingly influential one, to improving the level of development and quality life of all the citizens of Seychelles.



2. Policy Objectives

The broad objectives of the National ICT Policy include five focus areas, namely:

2.1 ICT Infrastructure – Promote the provision of accessible, universal, affordable, reliable, modern and high quality levels of ICT facilities and services.

2.2 Legal and Regulatory Framework – Provide for the creation of an enabling legal and regulatory environment that ensures the growth and development of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector.

2.3 Human Resource Development – Promote the use of ICT to enhance education and skills development and build a growing ICT-savvy Nation.

2.4 Industry – Use ICT to create an enabling and conducive environment for the promotion of investment and the development of a vibrant and sustainable economy.

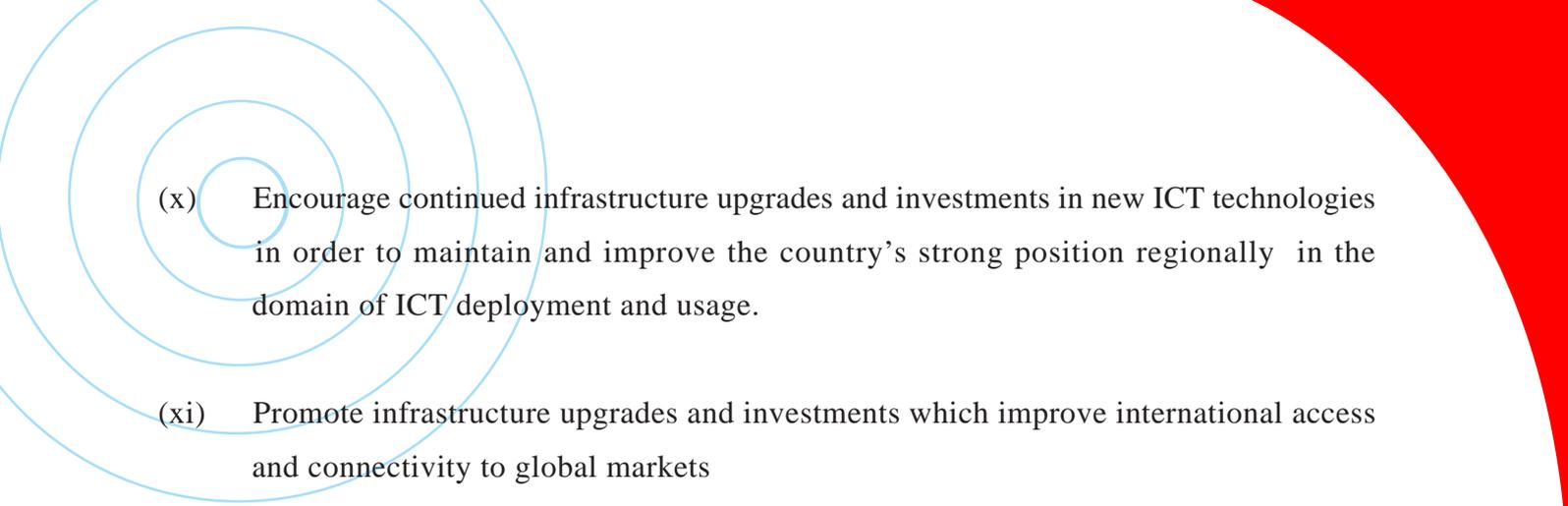
2.5 Government – Government as a user, purchaser, and regulator must support the use of ICT for the innovative, effective and efficient delivery of information and services to the citizen and within the public sector.

3. Policy Statements

Each of these Policy Statements will collectively contribute towards Seychelles achieving its National ICT Vision and hence contribute towards the social, economic, cultural and human resource development of the country.

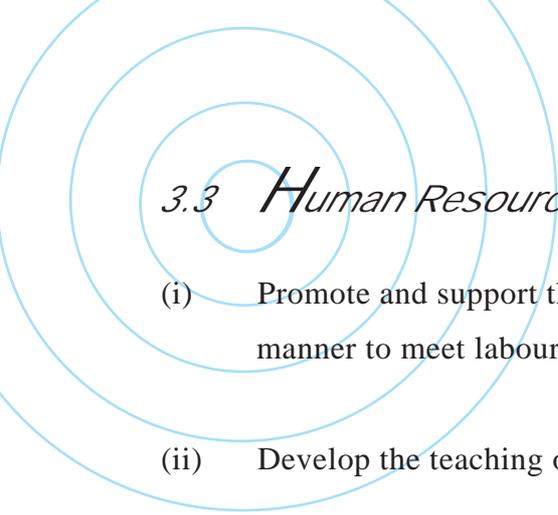
3.1 ICT Infrastructure

- (i) Promote and encourage the existence of a countrywide reliable and efficient ICT infrastructure which shall have sufficient capacity and network speeds, provide improved connectivity, be cost-effective and adaptive to the needs of the country.
- (ii) Encourage the private sector to continue their role as an integral part of the development of ICT infrastructure.
- (iii) Promote competitive markets for ICT service provision.
- (iv) Promote effective utilisation of all installed ICT infrastructure which shall be so harmonised to contribute to flexibility and redundancy on a national basis.
- (v) Encourage sharing and co-locating of infrastructure and facilities.
- (vi) Promote widespread accessibility to ICT services.
- (vii) Promote and encourage deployment and maintenance of networks that are interoperable on a national basis.
- (viii) Promote and encourage deployment of infrastructure necessary to allow e-commerce and secure transactions to take place.
- (ix) Introduce initiatives through which ownership by the public of ICT equipment (e.g. computers) can be increased.

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- (x) Encourage continued infrastructure upgrades and investments in new ICT technologies in order to maintain and improve the country's strong position regionally in the domain of ICT deployment and usage.
 - (xi) Promote infrastructure upgrades and investments which improve international access and connectivity to global markets

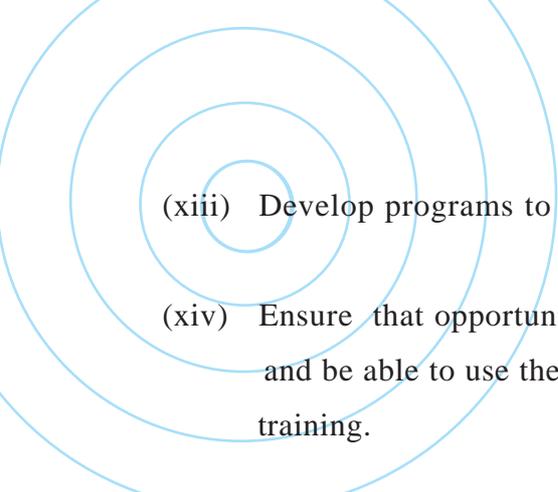
3.2 Legal and Regulatory Framework

- (i) Review the existing legislations, taking cognisance of international best practices, and foster a clear and supportive legal framework that promotes and supports the long term development of the ICT sector.
- (ii) Promote confidence for engagement with the information society through enactment of legislations addressing issues including, inter alia, computer and computer related crime, consumer protection, intellectual property rights, dispute resolution and security.
- (iii) Establish a comprehensive legal framework for e-business and innovation.
- (iv) Develop appropriate regulations that would ensure fair and equitable competition amongst service providers and promote rapid growth of new services and applications.
- (v) Promote appropriate training for the legal community on regulatory issues, including law enforcement agencies.
- (vi) Monitor trends in ICT legislation internationally and adopt legislations that will establish a framework for creation of an Information Society and Economy (IS&E).



3.3 *Human Resource Development*

- (i) Promote and support the development of qualified personnel in ICT in a sustainable manner to meet labour market needs.
- (ii) Develop the teaching of ICT at all levels of the formal education system.
- (iii) Promote the use of ICT in the informal education sector.
- (iv) Encourage activities relating to lifelong learning through the use of ICT.
- (v) Encourage the use of ICT by all educational, scientific and research institutions, libraries, archives, museums, and community centres .
- (vi) Encourage the use of ICT for the delivery of distance education.
- (vii) Encourage and support the training sector to adhere/adopt to internationally acceptable standards of examination and certification of ICT training programmes.
- (viii) Promote the development of national certification and accreditation systems in the ICT sector.
- (ix) Establish appropriate schemes of service for different cadres of ICT personnel in the Government.
- (x) Create an enabling environment for public and private sector participation in promoting ICT awareness programmes.
- (xi) Encourage gender mainstreaming - in ICT programmes and development.
- (xii) Promote and support the development of appropriately qualified ICT personnel, who will meet the needs of the public and private sector.

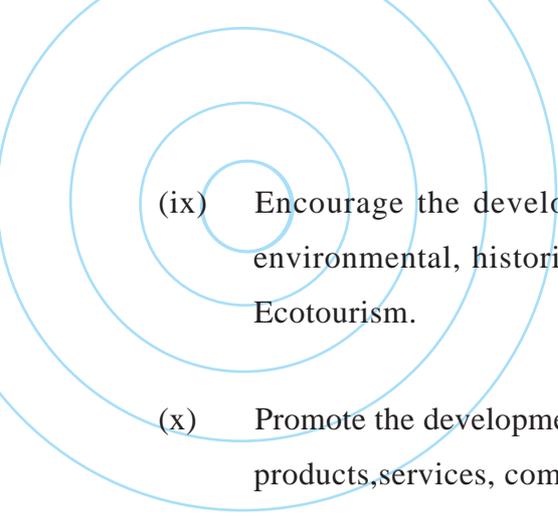


(xiii) Develop programs to attract and retain skilled ICT professionals in the economy.

(xiv) Ensure that opportunities exist which will enable all learners to acquire ICT skills and be able to use them confidently and creatively to access employment or further training.

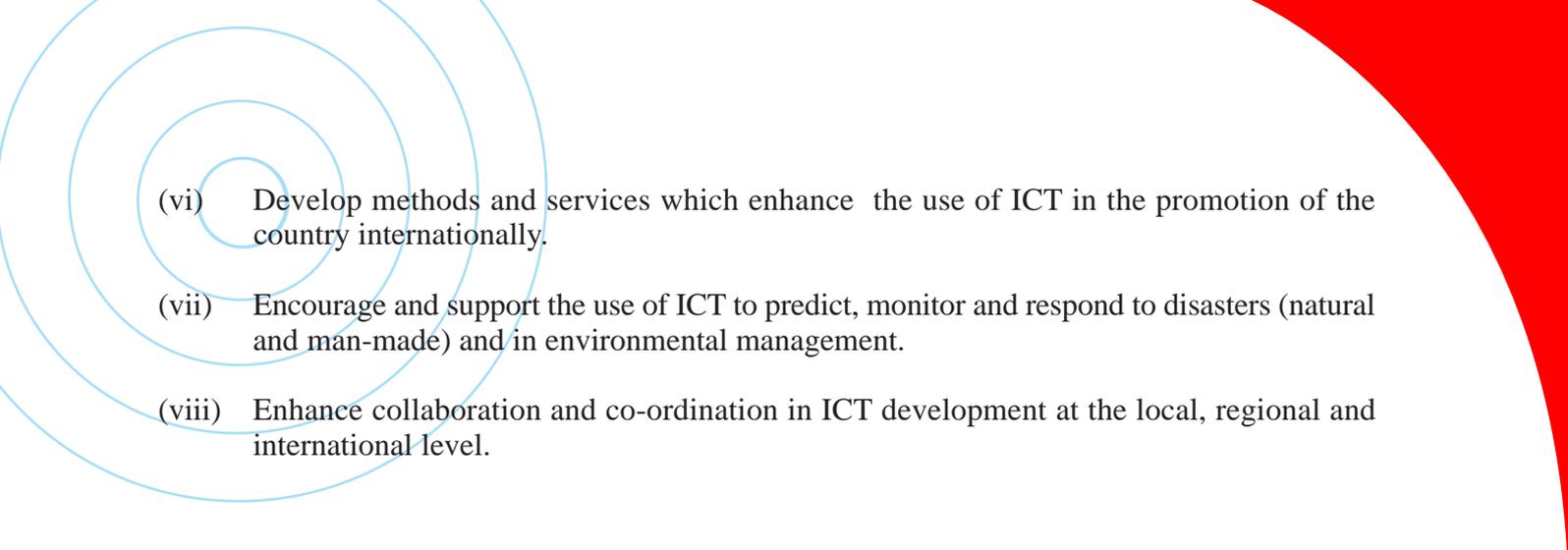
3.4 Industry

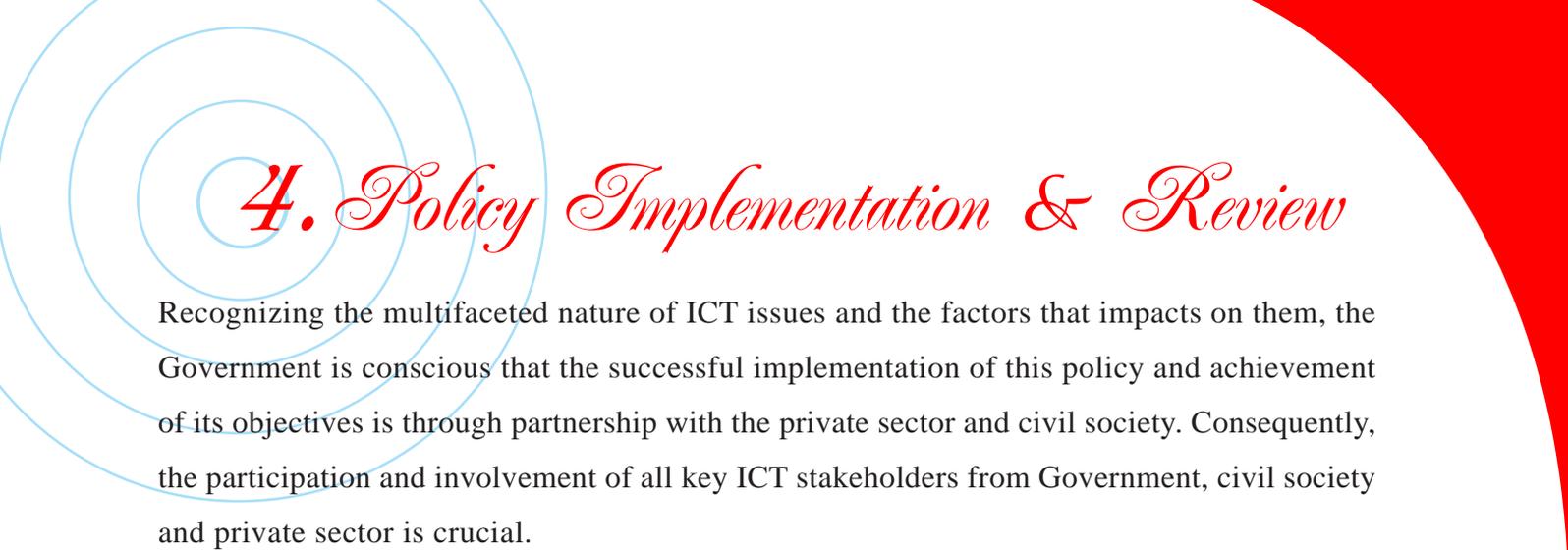
- (i) Encourage local ICT development for the local and export market by supporting and providing incentives for innovations and experimentation in software, hardware and ICT systems development.
- (ii) Encourage the growth of software development by increasing awareness among the public and private sector of the opportunities offered by different forms of software, including open-source, proprietary and free software.
- (iii) Promote the professional recognition of technical professionals in the ICT sector.
- (iv) Encourage Research and Development in the ICT sector.
- (v) Promote participation of local ICT organisations in international ICT events for acquaintance with the international market, trends and establishment of business contacts.
- (vi) Promote joint ventures between local and foreign entrepreneurs in the ICT sector.
- (vii) Create a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and technological sophistication in order to support the extensive and innovative applications of ICT.
- (viii) Promote ICT as a catalyst for business modernisation, principally for the tourism, fisheries, offshore financial services industries, and to support small and medium enterprises.

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- (ix) Encourage the development of electronic content for safeguarding the nation's environmental, historical, traditional and cultural heritage and in order to support Ecotourism.
 - (x) Promote the development of multi media based local content to support locally based, products, services, companies and activities.
 - (xi) Promote the development of multi media based local content to support locally based, products, services, companies and activities.
 - (xii) Support organizations that are actively involved in the development and application of ICT, especially in the areas of national significance.
 - (xiii) Encourage and promote appropriate mechanisms that foster a dynamic climate for entrepreneurs to venture into ICT and related sectors or ICT-intensive economic activities.
 - (xiv) Encourage deployment and usage of ICT hardware and software to support cost savings and increased productivity in service delivery, purchasing, communication, etc.

3.5 *Government*

- (i) Adopt high-level ICT leadership at the national level.
- (ii) Use ICT for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of Government operations and service delivery.
- (iii) Encourage public Internet access and the use of computers and other ICT equipment within Government.
- (iv) Encourage easy, secure and efficient access to appropriate Government information systems and services.
- (v) Promote affordable access to computers and the Internet at the community level.

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- (vi) Develop methods and services which enhance the use of ICT in the promotion of the country internationally.
 - (vii) Encourage and support the use of ICT to predict, monitor and respond to disasters (natural and man-made) and in environmental management.
 - (viii) Enhance collaboration and co-ordination in ICT development at the local, regional and international level.



4. Policy Implementation & Review

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of ICT issues and the factors that impacts on them, the Government is conscious that the successful implementation of this policy and achievement of its objectives is through partnership with the private sector and civil society. Consequently, the participation and involvement of all key ICT stakeholders from Government, civil society and private sector is crucial.

In addition, the Government has to continue to develop the necessary capacity and instrument, such as ICT indicators, to monitor the impact of the policies on social and economic development.

Mindful of the fact that the ICT industry itself is one of the most dynamic sectors necessary mechanisms will have to be put in place to ensure that the policies are reviewed from time to time. Enhancing of knowledge and information flows is one of the effective tools that would be used to stimulate innovation and facilitate fine-tuning of the policies for the maximum impact and responsiveness to changing technological and competitive conditions.