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The challenges of rural connectivity: eight case studies of Thusong Service Centres in Mopani District

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To what extent does the legislative, policy and implementation environment for rural connectivity address the readiness, connectivity, capability and functioning factors?

Document name	Year	Policy owner/custodian	Purpose	Policy statement on connectivity	Policy strength	Policy gap	Implications	Opportunity
Presidential Review Commission	March, 1996	Presidency	To assist in the processes of transforming the state and its principal executive arm, the public service, from an instrument of discrimination, control and domination to an enabling agency that would consolidate democracy and empower communities in	Chapter six focus on the use of sytems and technology to manage information in the public service and acknowledges that the state may have a major role to play in promoting the information society and consequence use of IT in the South African society as	6.1.3 Recognises the need to enable the electronic delivery of certain public services through kiosks and other mechanisms to deliver services directly to the people. 6.9.6 the Commission proposed the acceptance and introduction of the lead agency concept	It limited the focus of IMST to the Public Service as defined in the Public Service Act, which exclude both local government and public enterprices	Does not promote holistic and integrated planning and creates a gap between local and national. Local government not beneficiaries of the TSC connectivity and a gap exist in enabling e-services at local level	
Communications 2000 known as Comstask	October, 1996	Presidency	To examine government communication at the local,provncial and international level to make recommendations on new policies, structures and budgets. Particularly to examine training and affirmative action	Chapter five focus on development challenges, particularly the flow of information which is hindered by factors such as lack of communication infrastructure and the digital divide which was perpertuated by policies of the	5.7.4 advocates for the utilisation of electronic devices wherever possible to enable people to make inquiries and retrieve information. Section 5.8 discourage the use of inappropriate and misleading technology solutions and emphasise the need to collabor for the benefit of both internal and broader communication with the public.	The scope or mandate of the GCIS does not highlight GCIS's role towards the development and facilitation of the technology infrastructure, integration of	This has created a gap in coordination and integration of connectivity to enable a two way communication system that is supported by the internet as a medium of communicatio. GCIS is responsible for ensuring that citizens have	
The White Paper on Transforming the Public Service Delivery (Notice 1459 of 1997)	October ,1997	DPSA	To provide a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery by proving efficiency and the effectiveness of the way in which services are delivered.		The Batho Pele priniciples outlined in the policy promotes the concept of TSC and the need to design innovative approaches that will fast track service delivery and promote the sustainable use of the fiscal resource.	Does not incorporate the PRC recommendation of using IMST to enable service delivery	This creates a gap towards departmental government planning. Connectivity should be seen as an enabler to support the adminstration aspects of the department and the actually delivery of services. If ICTs is integrated in the various Batho Pele principles	
Electronic government, the digital future, a public service framework	February ,2001	DPSA	spells out the e-government vision which strives to to dramatically improve their internal efficiency and effectiveness - the costs and quality of governance, define how progress is to be measured, sets priorities by identifying focus areas for immediate	The policy defines e-government based on three pillars,namely e-governance, e-services and e-business.	2.1 It emphasise on the value of IT in government processes and argues that value is achieved when IT enables the user to increase productivity, derive cost effectiveness and improved serviced delivery. 4.3 Recognises the need for coordination and M&E. Em	Does not recognise DoC as the champion for ensuring accessibility in the previously disadvantaged communities but recommends tha all state deparment should take a lead. It allocates a role to GCIS and	This promotes fragmentation and duplication of services.	
Electronic Transaction Act (Act No. 1046 of 2002)	August, 2002	DoC	area.	Object 2. (1)recognise the importance of the information economy for the economic and social prosperity of South Africa, it further aim to promote universal access tounderservserved areas and promote e-government services and electronic communications and	5. (1)Direct the DoC to develop a national e-strategy as a national priority in consultation with DPSA, DoC to determine roles and responsibiities, DoC to take ownership of co-ordination and monitoring the implementation of the e-strategy. 5. the national			Gives DoC the power to coordinate and issue regulations to Departments that are not integrating connectivity in thier service delivery model.
Electronic Communications Act (act no. 36 of 2005)	2005	DoC	To promote convergence in the broadcasting signal distribution and telecommunications sectors to provide the legal framework for these sectors, promote universal provision of electronic communications network and electronic	Chapter 13, 73 Internet services provided to schools and public education and training institutions must be provided at a minimum discounted rate of 50% off the total charge levied by the licensee providing Internet services to such institutions.	Universa laccess is provided in all areas and communities are able to obtain quality, affordable and usable access to a publicly available minimu set of quality in terms of voice, data, messaging, broadband connection and emergency services. Such places s	Does not promote the affordability of connectivity for citizens who access it from private internet cafe and does not provide subsidy or discount to TSCs. Does not mention or	Small entrepreneurs who provide internet access through private initiatives are not supported. There is no subsidy for or a formal intervention to contribute to the developemnt of thier business ideas regardless of the role they play towards closing the d	
Towards an information society in South Africa, ISAD Plan	2007	DoC	To establish South Africa as an advanced information society in whihc Information and ICT tools are key drivers of economic and societal development. It outlines the required institutional mechanism and ICT infrastructure and focus areas that will lead t	Chapter three focus on general pillars for the information society, ICT infrastructure & universal access form the basis for achieving the IS vision	4.4 section on governemnt service delivery hihlight that the TSCs will be used as one of the platforms to facilitate access	Unrealistic time-frames and does not allow does not provide a clear and coherent implementation plan. Suggested interventions are run in parallel	Leads to inconsistency and does not allow holistic planning that respond to people's needs. Fails to provide a phase approach that will ensure that a good foundation is laid in terms of a coherent e-strategy as recommended in the ECTA. It fails to lay dow	opportunity to review and align to current needs based on lesson learned from 1996
USAASA definition of universal service and universal access:D0C_Determination_Universal_Access__Service_20100208.pdf	February, 2010	USAASA	defines whatconstitute universal access by all areas and communities in South Africa to electronic communications services and electronic communications network services, and (b) universal provision for all people in South Africa of electronic communicati	Universal service for electronic commnication services is provided where all persons if they require it are able to obtaine quality, affordable and usable access to a minimum set of electronic communications network services and electronic communication s		Does not provide guidelines in terms of what is affordable connectivity. There is a disparity of household income in SA, therefore a blanket statement to say a rate that does not exceed a defined percentage of a household's total expenditure is problemati	different people charged different fees based on the provider's descrition and government entitities struggling to determine or develop funding models that are sustainable or to breakdown cost of accessibility. The speed of connectivity is not determined	
USAASA definition under-serviced and needy people and regulations	September, 2012	ICASA	To provide definition of what constitute an under serviced areas as per the prescripts of CEA 2005	Underserviced area is any area with a local or district municipality in which no electronic communication network has been constructed or network exiss but coverage is below the national average, network constructed but over which no	All the five municipalities under Mopani district are listed as underserviced.			
Broadband draft policy	2010	DoC	To facilitate the provisioning of affordable, accessible, universal access to broadband infrastructure to citizens, business, communities and the three spheres of government and to stimulate the usage of broadband services in order to promote economic dev	Interpret broadband as an always available, multimedia capable connection with a download speed of at least 256 kbps		Repeat of what the other policies highlight, poor on M&E tools (survey)...does not address impact assessment, focus on umbers		
Municipal Systems Act (Act No.21776 of 2000)	2000	COGTA		Does not make reference to information communication technologies				Chapter 4 (16) Provide an opportunity to integrate connectivity to municipal community participation , the
Thusong service cenres business plan	2006-2014. Approved by cabinet in 2005	GCIS	Position a new generation of Thusong Service Centres from the previous concept of the Multi-Purpose Centres. The business plan outlines the framework for rolling out the TSCs in all local municipalities by 2014. It provides guidilines on the establishment	Section 1.1.2 state that the rationale for the establishment of TSCs is to support democracy by taking a development communication approach which put emphasise on the need for a public communication and information system which put the information needs o	5.4.6"Recognises that connectivity at the centres is critical and requuires high level of coordination in order to achieve effective functioning of ICT systems at centre level. Provides clarification on connectivity roles and responsibilities by the di	Although, different stakeholders are identified for public access connectivity, there is no a comprehensive implementation strategy or section that outlines the roll-ot of connectivity, how it will be use and the role of the municipality. The dcument assu	Failure to advocate for one ICT strategy for ensuring public connectivity has led to the fragmentation of ICT interventions, lack of standardised technology, lack of guidelines and regulations on cost recovery fees. This has led to government departments	
Towards an ICT rural development strategic framework (Discussion document)	2011	DoC	To provide ICT infrastructure in rural areas by ensuring alignment to government strategy on rural development.	The framework objectives focuses on the accelaration of relevent ICT infrastructure for effective development in rural areas (include the roll out of broadband using wireless and fixed technologies) capacity building, local content, rural ICT enterprise d	Priority will be given to the under-serviced areas as per the ICASA regulations	Does not mention GCIS and DPSA as key stakeholders, despite mentioning E-gateway portal, TSCs and provision of e-government services. IT positions DLRD as a key stakeholder. Lacks clarity on the scope, process , roles and responsibilities as well as monit	It perpetuates dublication and disentergation of ICTs as an enabler for development and it fails to recognise that rural development is not a stand alone process, it requires support and interaction with other elements of development. It is not clear how	

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Limpopo provincial growth and development plan	2009-2011	Limpopo government		Recognises that ICTs play a role in rural development and poverty eradication programmes hence the use of ICT as a means and right to ensure that our people have access and hence are not left in the fringes as the sound	The strategy focuses its ICT interventions towards the achievement of broad-based development goals in areas such as health, education, economic opportunity, empowement and participation. This will be achieved by providing connectivity to the Thusong ser	Does not provide information on roles and responsibilities, no clarification on the role of the municipalit, DoC , GCIS and USAASA	The strategy does not take into consideration the existing ICT interventions, alignment to DoC, GCIS and USAASA programme and yet it highlight that there is a shortage of skills. There unresolved institutional arrangements with SITA.	