

**MASINDI DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**DRAFT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) POLICY**

**May 2017**

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# Foreword

Masindi Uganda is a rural entity with an informed society, knowledgeable community known for its rich heritage, culture, resources and people. It has immense growth prospects for developing the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector. The District recognizes ICT as the enabling tool for development of the District and this policy will support, the promotion of IT in various sectors including Natural Resource Management (Oil and Gas). It will above all facilitate widespread roll-out of ICT services so as to actualize good governance and bring in efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

Against this back ground, the Information and Communication Technology Policy for Masindi has been developed in consultation with stakeholders in both the public and private sectors, with the aim of fostering the development of ICT usage in the District. The Policy has the following objectives:

1. To provide leadership direction and vision to guide ICT usage.
2. To develop a critical mass of educated ICT human resource at all levels to meet the local needs.
3. To promote widespread use of ICT applications in both public and private sectors to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.
4. To create awareness and avail information on the role of ICT and its usage for development
5. To develop an enabling legal and regulatory framework.
6. Promote use of ICT systems in all Local Government structures and businesses to usher in efficiency and effectiveness in-service delivery
7. To mobilize and sensitize the communities on availability of IT services.

The ICT policy will provide guidance to all stakeholders in the ICT sector and create a necessary environment in Masindi.

I urge all of you stakeholders, in both public and private sectors to embrace and implement the ICT Policy for the good of Masindi

**Byaruhanga Cosmas**

**DISTRICT CHAIRPERSON**

**May, 2017**

# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BPO Business Process Outsourcing

CIS Community Information System

EFTS Electronic Funds Transfer System

GoU Government of Uganda

HMIS Health Management Information System

ICT Information and Communication Technology

IFMS Integrated Management Financial System

IG Inspectorate of Government

IHRMS Integrated Human Resource Management System

IPPS Integrated Personnel Payroll System

IPv6 Internet Protocol version 6

ICT Information and Communication Technology

ITES Information Technology Enabled Services

ISP Internet Service Provide

LIMS Land Information Management System

LoGICS Local Government Information and Communication System

MoFPED Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

MoICT Ministry of Information and Communications Technology

MDLG Masindi District Local Government

NGOs Non-Governmental Organization

NBI National Backbone Infrastructure

NITA-U National Information Technology Authority-Uganda

POP Point of Presence

SME Small to Medium Enterprises

SMS Short Messaging Service

UBOS Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UPE Universal Primary Education

UCC Uganda Communications Commission

URA Uganda Revenue Authority

USE Universal Secondary Education

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

In its pursuit to enhance economic development, Government of Uganda recognized the use of ICT as an enabler to facilitate access to public services by her populace through the use of e-Government. E-Government is about the use of information and communication technologies and the Internet to improve the delivery of services. The ICT Policy will provide guidance on how the use of IT will facilitate interactions within the Local Government, between LG and business to simplify and enhance its internal and external communications.

## 1.2 Situational Analysis

Information and Communication Technology has emerged as the single most important enabler for improving efficiency and effectiveness of this institution. The District is in the process of recruiting ICT Officers to help address issues related to ICT. However, the challenge still lies on funding towards the ICT Sector and the use of IT has not yet been appreciated by many sectors as a strategic unit of economic transformation by both the private and public sector.

Masindi is still currently using IT services and other related equipment recognizing the enormous potential of ICT, major initiatives are being implemented, such as Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS), Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED); Integrated Human Resource Management System (IHRMS), Local Government Information and Communication System (LoGICS); E-Tax Payment with Uganda Revenue Authority (URA); Electronic Funds Transfer System (EFTS), Bank of Uganda (BoU)/MoFPED, Community Information System (CIS) and Integrated Personnel Payroll System (IPPS) and Ministry of Public Service (MoPS).

There is a high rate of IT illiteracy both in the Local Government and private sector. There is very low computer penetration,

**Human Resource Development**: Human Resource (HR) Development is imperative for effective ICT management. The ICT human resource base in both public and private sector is still inadequate. MOPS has cleared harmonized staff structures that cater for recruitment of ICT Officers at the District but challenges still lie on funding towards the sector to enable effective service delivery

The industry has got a big knowledge base of IT graduates although they lack specific professional skills. The government has in place Uganda Institute of Information and Communications Technology (UICT) to impart professional skills among the graduates but the school is inadequately funded and equipped to provide the required services to the population.

**Legal Framework:** The District still has a very weak legislation pertaining to this industry.Laws related to Intellectual Property Rights, Data Security, Privacy, Data Protection and cybercrimes are still in infancy and where they exist, enforcement is still low and others are outdated. The existing Acts need to be amended to address the gaps which have been identified in this IT Policy.

**Infrastructure:** The local IT industry requires a world class enabling infrastructure.

Masindi was covered under phase 2 of The National Backbone Infrastructure (NBI) waslaid in the District which will enable the District access high speed connectivity to the e- Government Infrastructure, Access to Government services and reduce on the costs of internet and connectivity. Reduced internet costs will lead to an increase of other value addition such as Business Process Outsourcing (BPO).

In addition to the fibre cables already laid down by the private sector and cover the larger part of the nation but are strategically laid in the more profitable urban areas. Government efforts should be geared towards establishing evenly distributed infrastructure with in the country.

**Software and Hardware Industry**: Software development is a high growth industry and formsa major segment of the vast IT market. It will continue to do so in the future. The software development industry is still on a very low scale and majorly consumed by only the local market.

**Research and development:** Research and development in this industry is currently very low.Activity in this area is mainly in institutions of higher learning which are doing it at a small

cale, with limited funds. Government has not prioritized IT research. Content development including translation of digital content to local languages is hardly done, and yet quite essential.

**IT Promotion and Awareness:** IT promotion and awareness creation has mainly been done inthe public sector but only to a limited capacity. As far as the private sector is concerned both promotion and awareness creation are still lacking. Currently, information dissemination on market prices, health tips, and information on social services is done through the Google SMS initiative by Mobile Telephone Network (MTN) communications network and Grameen Foundation. Business transactions platforms including mobile money transfers and Short Messaging Service (SMS) banking are also being provided by telecommunications companies. However, local language content to stimulate usage of IT is insufficient/ lacking.

**IT Security:** This is a lacking area in the District’s IT industry. MDLG is in the process of having the website as a tool to disseminate information to the public; others have taken on big IT projects as stated earlier. However, these have not been secured and a few cases of security breaches like website defacing, on Government websites have been reported.

## 1.3 Development Context

This policy has been developed in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) bearing in mind that IT is an enabler in implementing all the 8 MDGs. Goal number 8 - “Develop a global partnership for development” with specific emphasis on Target 8F:” In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications”.

Article 19 of the UN declaration of human rights outlines the human right principles regarding to the right to communicate. The African Unity, to which Uganda is a member, has also provided for the right to development in the African charter on human rights. This is further emphasized in

the constitution of the Republic of Uganda; Article 29 focuses on the freedom of expression, while article 41 talks of the right of access to information.

The policy is in context of Article99 of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community.

This policy has further been guided by the National Development Plan (2010-2015) with the theme of employment, income, and prosperity for all.

## 1.4 Rationale for the IT Policy

Recent technological advancements like the Internet have digitally broken the geographical, physical, political and even sociological divide, transforming the world into a „Global Village‟. As a result cybercrime is progressively increasing. This calls for regulated and guided interventions to address the IT related issues.

The utilization of IT (hardware, software and e-applications) is on the rise in both public and the private sector. There is need for proper laws and guidelines to be developed to guide its utilization.

The ICT sub sector is a new sector in the MDLG structure that needs critical attenstion for it to be made fully functional in order to fully implement the overall ICT policy.

## 1.5 Information Technology Policy for Masindi

It is the intention of the MDLG to consolidate its efforts and focus its energies to leverage the potential of ICT for the benefit of its people. Therefore, this comprehensive ICT Policy will guide and direct ICT development.

## 1.5.1 Vision

A knowledge-based District where service delivery, development and governance are effectively enhanced by utilizing and adopting Information and Communication Technology to achieve fundamental economic transformation.

## 1.5.2 Mission

To promote the efficient utilization of Information and Communication Technology in transforming Masindi’s economy

## 1.5.3 Policy Goal

To guide the optimal development and utilization of IT in the District

## 1.5.4 Policy Guiding Principles

The policy is guided under the following principles:

* Access to all: The District shall ensure access to ICT services to men and women throughout Masindi.
* The policy recognizes the importance of e-services.
* Community mobilization: MDLG shall encourage citizen participation.
* Public Private Partnership: The District shall recognize the contribution of the private sector.

## 1.5.5 Policy Objectives

The district ICT policy shall have the following objectives:

1. To provide leadership direction and vision to guide ICT utilization.
2. To stimulate and support research and design in ICT.
3. To promote widespread use of ICT applications in both public and private sectors to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.
4. To adopt standards and guidelines to support growth of ICT Sector in Masindi.
5. To develop an enabling legal and regulatory framework.
6. Promote use of ICT systems in all MDLG departments and businesses to usher in efficiency and effectiveness in-service delivery.
7. To mobilize and sensitize the communities on availability of IT services.

# 2 POLICY PRIORITY AREAS

## 2.1 Legal Framework

Given the nationwide drive and increased use of ICT services; electronic Business is on the increase and offers great new opportunities for economic growth. On the negative side, IT related crime is also on the increase. The existing legal framework is inadequate to address emerging complexities and where available enforcement is low. To this end the district shall:

**Policy Strategies**

1. Implement Ensure enforcement of cyber laws (Electronic Signature, Electronic Transactions and Computer Misuse).
2. Enforce laws and Acts in the existing legal framework for Electronic Transactions and cyber crime

## 2.2 IT Infrastructure

Masindi was covered under phase 2 of The National Backbone Infrastructure (NBI) waslaid in the District which will enable the District access high speed connectivity to the e- Government Infrastructure, Access to Government services and reduce on the costs of internet and connectivity. Reduced internet costs will lead to an increase of other value addition such as Business Process Outsourcing (BPO).

The national infrastructure network still has a low coverage to enable universal access and hence bandwidth is extremely slow and costly. There is heavy reliance on satellite connection to connect to the Internet. This has hampered the usage of IT in the country.

To this end District shall:

**Policy Strategies**

1. Extend internet to Government offices through networking computer to simplify the mode and speed of service delivery to the public.
2. Encourage participation of the private sector in IT infrastructure development.
3. Encourage Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to extend the access to internet in the Rural Sub counties of Masindi.
4. Automate Government processes and procedures to bring about transparency, reduce constraining controls, increase efficiency and productivity and reduce cost of service delivery.
5. Ensure Masindi is connected to the National web-portal through which all services and citizen charters will be available to citizens over the Internet.

## 2.3 ICT Human Resource Development

Manpower development is imperative for the local ICT industry to take root on a large scale in Uganda. For the MDLG to achieve this, the Position of an ICT Officer has finally been approved in the new structure and plans are underway to have the position filled.

However, currently the professional ICT human resource in both public and private sectors is inadequate lacks relevant professional skills. There is a high rate of ICT illiteracy in both public and private sectors. To this end District shall:

**Policy Strategies**

1. Develop a comprehensive plan for human resource development in IT to meet present and future manpower needs.
2. Encourage educational institutions to automate their management systems
3. Strengthen existing ICT training institutions in the district to develop the requisite skills in various ICT aspects includingsoftware and hardware development.
4. Encourage academic institutions to embrace e-learning so as to enable equitable regional access to IT training in the District.
5. Ensure equal opportunity in basic ICT training at all levels taking into consideration special interest groups namely; Women, Youth and PWDs.

## 2.4 IT Promotion and Awareness

IT promotion and awareness creation has mainly been done in the public sector but to a limited capacity. As far as the private sector is concerned both promotion and awareness creation is still lacking. To this end the District shall:

**Policy Strategies**

1. Put in place mechanisms to promote IT awareness and reduce the digital divide between urban and rural, urban and urban, men and women.
2. Promote IT usage in government by ensuring that all top leaders in government make transform the institutions under their control by automating their work as a priority.
3. Encourage production of local content in local languages over the Internet
4. Establishing interactive for a for all government offices to share information on new technologies and their benefits.
5. Encourage utilization and expansion of start-up activities set up by the government.
6. Mobilize and sensitize communities about the importance of usage of IT in their day-to-day economic activities
7. Facilitate and encourage the use of ICT by special interest groups to make them more productive in the society and utilize this largely untapped human resource. (Special interest groups include: women, youth and PWDs).
8. Encourage the use of Internet and Intranet for inter-office communication within the District.

## 2.5 IT Security

In an increasingly knowledge-driven and networked world where a considerable degree of anonymity is associated with activities, systems are prone to external interceptions that are in breach of lawful online conduct, misuse and abuse of ICT systems; such activities can lead to an erosion of trust and confidence. It is important therefore, that measures are undertaken towards creating an awareness of ICT security and building capacities for the same. To this effect District shall:

**Policy Strategies**

1. Develop a District Information security Strategy
2. Setup a District Information Security Working Group which will serve as a forum for setting, monitoring and sharing information security best practices.
3. Build capacity for technical officers to enable them acquire ICT security skills

## 2.6 Resource Mobilization

The ICT sub sector is grossly underfunded to meet the critical requirements that would enable it to take off. To this end District shall:

**Policy Strategies**

1. Increase the budgetary allocation to the ICT sub-sector
2. Put in place mechanism for resource mobilization from development partners

# 3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK & POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

## 3.1 ICT Policy Institutional Framework

## 3.1.1 Ministry of ICT

The Ministry of ICT shall be responsible for policy, regulation, standards, guidelines and quality assurance of the ICT sector. It will provide technical support, supervision and guidance, as well as undertake monitoring and evaluation. This will be through various activities which include but not limited to the following:

* Provide technical support in development of institutional ICT policy guidelines
* Develop a PPP policy to guide policy implementation within the private sector
* Be the responsible Ministry for all ICT Officers in government
* Ensure quality in ICT infrastructure and applications development
* Setup ICT skills development schemes for government (LGs and central)
* Take lead in ICT promotion and awareness

## National Information Technology Authority Uganda (NITA-U)

NITA-U‟s role in the implementation of the ICT policy is enshrined in the NITA-U Act (2009). This includes but is not limited to:-

* Regulate and enforce ICT standards
* Co-ordinate, supervise and monitor the utilization of ICT in public and private sector
* Provide technical support and advice for ICT systems in public and private sector
* Act as an authentication center for ICT training in Uganda

## 3.1.3 Local Governments

The LGS shall be the link with the communities and shall carry out sensitization about IT services as well as promotion and awareness campaigns in the communities.

## Private sector

Since the IT subsector is to a large extent private sector driven, the private sector shall operationalize the policy through planning and establishing IT businesses and firms. Private sector will also partner with government through PPPs to implement the policy.

## 3.2 Implementation Arrangement

MDLG shall develop a strategic plan for implementing the ICT policy detailing the time frame, baseline, targets, outputs and outcomes of the policy. This policy shall be implemented through collaboration with the private sector as highlighted in the institutional framework.

## 3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

Realization of the outputs of this policy will require consistent monitoring and evaluation of the outcome indicators. The District and other partners will carry out monitoring and evaluation at different levels.

A monitoring and evaluation framework shall be developed to ensure midterm review of the policy. The policy shall receive a mid-term review every five (5) years and a full review everyten (10) years. The analysis of annual ICT needs and usage survey shall be used as a basis for review on availability of new needs or information. This policy shall be adopted as soon as it is approved by the District Council

# GLOSSARY

Backbone A bulk data communication network

Best Practice Practice that is available for use by other projects or for incorporation into the

standard engineering process in order to improve development productivity or

product quality.

DatabaseA collection of related data stored in one or more computerized files in a

manner that can be accessed by users or computer programs via a database

management system

E-Governance The term used as a synonym to describe an ICT driven system of

governance that works better, costs less and is capable of serving the

citizens’ needs

E-Government Use of information and communication technologies and the Internet to

improve the delivery of services by government to its citizens and the

business sector

ICT The term information technology includes computers, ancillary

equipment, software and firmware (Hardware) and procedures, services

and includes any equipment or Interconnected system or subsystem of

equipment, which is used in the automatic acquisition, storage,

manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching,

interchange, transmission or reception of data or information.

ICT Infrastructure Sum of ICT related hardware, software, data telecommunication facilities,

procedures and documentation.

Plan A document that outlines how a requirements project's objectives will be

accomplished and what is needed to accomplish it.

Policy A document that provides guiding principle that sets an expectation of

behavior, actions, and deliverables.

Requirement A measurable statement of intent or expression of need about something

that the product or system must do, or a property that the product must

have, or a constraint on the system

Requirements Characteristics that identify the accomplishment levels needed to achieve

specific objectives for a given set of conditions

Stakeholder(s) Consists of all parties (people or systems) who will have a legitimate

interest in the outcome of the project or is affected by its outcome

Standard Mandatory requirements employed and enforced to prescribe a disciplined

uniform approach to software development, that is, mandatory

conventions and practices are in fact standards.

User groups The organization (s) or persons within those organization (s) who will

operate and/or use the system for its intended purpose.

Suppliers The term ‘suppliers’ includes contractors, sub-contractors, vendors,

developers, sellers or any other term used to identify the source from

which products or services are obtained