



Multistakeholder Consultation within the Framework of the National Review on the ICT Centric Innovation Ecosystem

4 August 2016

Kigali, Rwanda

Rwanda Stakeholder Statement

Based on the discussion, the participants identified the following set of challenges and recommendations, which may serve as a base for planning and implementing future activities fostering national ICT centric innovation ecosystem in Rwanda. The set of challenges and recommendations developed by the community gathered at this meeting are all equally important and are non-binding and only for consideration and to be used as an input to the national review being carried out.

Recognizing the critical role of ICTs across all sectors of the economy and the particular contribution of ICT centric innovation and entrepreneurship to socio-economic development, the following key challenges were articulated by the ICT ecosystem stakeholders present at the meeting:

Private sector and Entrepreneurial Support Networks

- A market platform and a marketplace are needed for products made in Rwanda.
- Awareness of the products available in Rwanda must be created.
- Marketing and hands on business skills need to be fostered.
- Smart funding for research and development is needed from the private sector.
- Tax policies are a barrier to research at this time.

- Policies must be adaptive in order to meet the needs of new and rapidly evolving ideas in the area of ICT.

Financial Sector

- ICT is a pillar for financial inclusion. One driver for all markets is achieving full financial inclusion.
- Robust platforms for security and compliance are needed.
- Friendly policies which ensure full compliance are needed. These policies need to be adaptive to the evolving needs of innovative sectors.
- Licensing requires incentives to support the role of the financial sector in the ecosystem.
- Funding for research and development is needed, along with efforts at developing talents. These solutions must include core banking systems which can foster home grown solutions in the area of innovation.

Public Sector

- The government should fast track the development of human resource development policies to focus on innovation and specialized skills
- The government must create mechanisms to foster public private partnerships, and ensure private sector investment in the supports of the innovation ecosystem
- The government should develop decentralized innovation programs, in order to better serve all communities across the country
- The government must create mechanisms to support innovative solutions which are relevant to the local markets
- The government must coordinate policies across all actors in the area of ICT, including research funding and means to reward successful ideas and recognize champions.
- Government efficiency must be enhanced, and bureaucratic barriers should be reduced.
- A unified, integrated platform should be developed in order to improve coordination and cooperation between government agencies.