

**50TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION AFRICA
REGION CONFERENCE ZANZIBAR-TANZANIA 30TH AUGUST-5TH
SEPTEMBER 2019**

**SECONDMENT OF MOTION BY HON. LUTFO DLAMINI, MP:
BRANCH CHAIRPERSON AND LEADER OF DELEGATION**

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS TOPIC:

Enhancing ICT use in providing life changing solutions in rural communities.

Mover : Nigeria
Seconder : Eswatini
Session Chairperson : Mozambique

Chairperson, Hon. Members, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am before you to second a motion move by the Nigeria Branch that speaks to enhancing the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in rural communities for the betterment of the people's livelihoods.

In dealing with this issue, I will confine my presentation to the use of ICT in Health (e-medicine), Agribusiness and business in rural areas. Enhancing the use of ICT in these areas can help reverse the rural-urban migration and dichotomy. It is important to mention from this very outset that ICT play an important role in addressing the challenges faced by rural communities and uplifting the livelihoods of the rural poor.

It is equally important to also mention that Rural Development forms an important agenda of a government. It is unfortunate however that the application of ICT in the Rural Development Sector has been relatively slow. The main reasons for this state of affairs are poor ICT

infrastructure in rural areas, poor ICT awareness among the people and agency officials in rural areas and local language issues.

ICT offers an opportunity to introduce new services and applications into rural areas and to enhance existing services. This can go a long way in combating rural and urban poverty and fostering sustainable development through creating information rich societies and supporting livelihoods.

Furthermore, an inclusive approach to ICT initiatives will help generate widespread recognition that is important for women and other marginalised groups to be able to access and use ICT particularly for agricultural efficiency.

Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to mention seven (7) success factors to empowering rural communities through ICTs:

1. Adapt content so that it is meaningful and relevant to them.
2. Create a safe environment for them to share and learn.
3. Be gender sensitive (in both rural and urban areas).
4. Provide them with access and tools for sharing (phones, laptops, internet connectivity etc).
5. Build partnerships between and among SMEs, local companies and producer organisations.
6. Provide the right blend of technologies and blend accordingly.
7. Ensure sustainability using the family approach.

As I am about to conclude, allow me Chairperson to inform this august gathering of a wireless livestock tracking system that Eswatini is about to introduce. The system is called Wireless Rumen Bolus (WRB) and is currently used in Canada for tracking livestock and wildlife.

The bolus is administered orally and stays in the rumen throughout the animal's life thus providing more accurate information and enabling herds to be closely tracked.

This system has not been implemented as yet in Eswatini because there is no legal instrument that can be used to endorse it. This calls for legislative reform so that the law can address this gap.

Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion it would be important that Parliaments in the Commonwealth of Nations should take a leading

role in promoting and enhancing the use of ICT in rural areas. This will be of great effect in arresting the problem of poverty, squalor and disease.

Thank you for listening.

