

## Chapter 5

# Multi-Dimensional Factors Impacting on E-Government Adoption in Botswana, Mozambique, and Malawi

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### **ABSTRACT**

*With widespread adoption of ICT usage in public service delivery platforms (e-Government) throughout the world, African countries have vowed not to be left behind in this marathon. Robust e-Government adoption depends on the strategy employed to implement it. This paper presents the different initiatives that have been employed to promote e-Government development and development in Botswana, Mozambique and Malawi thereby showing the impact of such initiatives on overall e-Government agenda. Using extensive document and literature reviews, this paper further intends to investigate the status of e-Government implementation in these three countries and understand the multi-dimensional factors that dictate adoption and use of e-Government services. The paper has found that deliberate fiscal ICT policies, trust of e-applications, availability of ICT infrastructures such as appropriate mobile phone and base stations technology, usability of ICT platforms, and relevant ICT skills of ordinary citizens have a lasting positive impact on people's intention to engage in e-Government.*

## INTRODUCTION

The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in public service delivery platforms (e-Government) is relatively a new wave that is sweeping through countries all over the world. This is because its effective implementation not only brings about many tangible benefits but also helps a country participate in the contemporary knowledge value chains (Ndou, 2004; Misra, 2007). ICT facilities facilitates mainstreaming of e-Government into the service delivery platforms of different government agencies and organs thereby culminating into efficient and quality service delivery (Lenk & Traunmüller, 2001; Pascual, 2003; Bwalya & Healy, 2010). Because of the major benefits that e-Government has to offer, it is slowly becoming a *sine qua non* for good governance and is seen as one of the most important pillars for effective and sustainable development of a nation.

E-Government not only provides a platform through which the citizens and different businesses can get in touch with the government, but also enables them to participate in decision making on issues of national importance (Bwalya & Healy, 2010). In addition it reduces the cost of public service delivery, encourages and enables participatory democracy and social inclusion (citizens, regardless of their socio-economic status, may participate in decision making and will be abreast with government information and policies), reduces corruption, and facilitates an efficient public service delivery system (Navarra & Cornford, 2003; Heeks, 2004; Bwalya & Healy, 2010). Service delivery improvement in e-Government is brought about by its provision of a platform where different departments can network and integrate their services by mainstreaming ICTs in their business value chains (Ngulube, 2007).

As of April 2010, a total of 184 countries have attempted implementing e-Government with a view of reducing the cost of their public service delivery and incorporating ICTs in their busi-

ness value chains and processes, and increasing effectiveness. However, it is important to note that the implementation of e-Government may be very difficult if the different modalities that aid successful e-Government implementation are not in place owing to its propensity to either fail or succeed (Hossan, Habib, & Kushchu, 2006; Dada, 2006). Successful e-Government implementation is dependent on an array of factors (multi-dimensional factors) which may be unique given the local context where it is implemented.

In a bid to amass the different benefits that e-Government has to offer, Botswana, Mozambique and Malawi have started putting in place strategic initiatives to aid e-Government development. The major objective of this paper, therefore, is to present these different initiatives both at the policy and implementation level and how these have impacted on overall e-government development. The paper intends to share lessons on the multi-dimensional factors that may be at play in e-Government development in Africa. It is a known fact that research on e-Government, especially on the African context, is still in a nascent stage so there is need to understand the factors that affect its adoption and use. The paper achieves this by using extensive literature reviews and document analysis.

The next section presents the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings that guide e-Government motivation, development, and adoption.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Countries that have successfully implemented e-Government prove that they have in place well-anchored robust strategies initiatives and novel implementation plans (Gil-García & Pardo, 2005; Sharifi & Manian, 2010). Examples of countries that have put in place robust strategic initiatives to aid e-Government development include Singapore which has an e-Government Action Plan (eGap); Tanzania and Mozambique which have put in

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