Chapter Six: Funding and Resourcing

Need for investment

6.1   While the Ministry of Education is realistic about the fiscal constraints affecting Government, it also accepts that bridging the digital divide and building an integrated e-Education System will require greater investment in the education sector.

6.2   Sustained and predictable funding sources for technology are needed in order to realise a large-scale impact over time. The initial upfront and long-term investments to achieve e-Education will be huge.

6.3   The ongoing costs of providing access to technology, including teacher development (capacity and skills building), pedagogical and technical support, digital content and telecommunication charges, as well as maintenance, upgrades and repairs are enormous.

Furthermore the funding of the change process, i.e. the attitudinal elements associated with the implementation and adoption of new models of learning is vital and need significant funding and is not isolated from ICT implementation and dependant on random or peripheral funding.
6.4

, This policy would like to highlight that certain inherent cost implications such as the cost of usage, networkt rental and maintenance, and the cost of protection are planned for.

Principles for funding and resourcing

6.5   The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) will provide a sustainable source for the implementation of e-Education, with a greater degree of predictability and accountability for the planning and funding of e-Education.

6 6   Given the magnitude of the task and additional resource requirements, investment in ICTs cannot be the sole responsibility of Government. Investment from the private sector and other resources will be required to supplement Government contributions.

6.7   The programme for rolling out ICTs across the system will require a long-term planning framework linked to a funding and resourcing model. The primary objective of such a planning and co-ordination mechanism will be to ensure that the deployment of funds and resources meets the equity and efficiency objectives of the system.

6.8   Implementing e-Education must ensure that available resources are maximized and utilised effectively through effective procurement, value for money, and management for sustainability. Funding models and procurement mechanisms should achieve economies of scale. Rollout plans should be affordable, scalable

and sustainable, based on generic activity-based design tools for teachers and learners.

Sources of funding

6.9 Based on the above principles, the Department of Education, with other government departments and the private sector, will mobilise additional funds and resources.

6.10 The continued role that Telecommunication Operators play in increasing access to ICTs is recognized and further obligation should be carefully developed and analyzed.

6.11 Sources of funding will include the following:
- licensing obligations of telecommunication providers;
- private sector donations and support from international development assistance agencies;
- appropriate public-private partnerships to ensure the sustainability of the e-Education policy implementation; and
- identification of research frameworks for academic research and development, for research bodies and institutions to solicit funding for research in e-Education.

6.12 The Department of Education will co-ordinate, with the Department of Communications and the Universal Service Agency, the utilisation of the universal service fund, generated through universal service agreements and administered by the Universal Service Agency. The co-ordination will involve direct subsidisation to GET and FET institutions in impoverished areas and differentiated pricing structures to enable access for all institutions.

6.13 One of the critical factors to the success of ICT implementation is sustainable connectivity and electricity services. The Department of Communications, through the Telecommunications Act 103 of 1996 and amended in 2001, called for the implementation of an e-rate for GET and FET institutions to address the recurrent costs to connectivity, which is based on ongoing cost requirements reviews. Similar rates will be negotiated for electricity.