



**Republic of Zambia
Office of the President
SMART ZAMBIA INSTITUTE**

**TALKING NOTES FOR THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR, SMART ZAMBIA
INSTITUTE, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIBRE OPTICS TRAINING AT
THE ZAMBIA ICT COLLEGE, NDOLA**

**Prepared by the
SMART Zambia Institute (SZI)
Lusaka
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Mr. Bright Blagah Nundwe, Permanent Secretary – Copperbelt Province

SZI Directors Present

Executive Director – Zambia ICT College

Senior Government Officers

Participants

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to welcome you to this very important programme earmarked to develop skills and increase technical knowledge and capacity for staff under the SMART Zambia Institute (SZI).

The programme forms basis for capacity building and advancement of SMART Zambia Institute in meeting the expectation of advancing the Zambian Government into a SMART and Value Centered Public Service by developing practical capacities fostered at driving Digital Transformation.

In actualizing its mandate of ensuring a Digital Literate Government, SMART Zambia Institute (SZI) is determined to ensure increased utilisation of e-Services by all Government institutions and the citizenry in order to provide efficient and effective public service delivery and to improve the quality of life of the citizenry.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia through the SMART Zambia Institute in its quest to provide enhanced access and utilization of e-Services has made massive investments in ICT Infrastructure with intention to broaden connectivity and usability of ICTs by the Public Service, the business community and the Citizens.

This large-scale infrastructure investment requires implementation of continuous training and development programmes that are aimed at

developing the ICT staff's skills and knowledge for improved and sustained operation of the ICT Infrastructure.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

The Government of His Excellency President Dr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu through the SMART Zambia Institute (SZI) is focused on attaining the Vision of "A Zambia transformed into information and knowledge-based society supported by increased access to ICTs by all citizens by 2030".

In order to achieve its Vision, SZI, is determined to build capacity in the Public Service and the Citizenry by conducting digital literacy programmes aimed at imparting digital skills and knowledge and then increase efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery and quality of life for the citizenry.

In view of the foregoing, the Secretary to the Cabinet approved the Fibre Optics Training program for SZI staff after he recognized its great significance to the sustained operation of the electronic services infrastructure considering the high demand of electronic services in the government.

This Training Programme will help in reducing the cost of maintaining the ICT infrastructure so that government's dependence on Service Providers who charge high fees for their mAINTAnce services is reduced.

The Fibre Optics Training will ensure building a pool of officers with exceptional skills and knowledge within SMART Zambia to be able to carry out Infrastructural based installations and maintenance of fibre optic activities with minimal supervision and support from outside consultants. This undertaking will significantly save Government huge amount of funds, which will be allocated, to others demanding areas in the Economy

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Allow me to spell out the main and strategic objective of the Fibre Optic Training which is to “impart practical Fibre optics skills and knowledge to the officers who are tasked with operating and managing ICT Infrastructure in the government.”

Apart from the main objective of the Training Programme, the following are some of the benefits of the Training:

- 1) Reduce the Government’s dependence on Service Providers to maintain and restore damaged government ICT Infrastructure;**
- 2) Reduce downtime as Government Infrastructure Management personnel will be able to quickly mobilize and restore critical electronic Government services;**
- 3) Complete some of the SMART Zambia project undertakings which have been suspended with some networks at almost 90% complete remaining with only last mile connectivity;**
- 4) Provide hands-on ICT training to enable the ICT Infrastructure Management Team to undertake even more complicated Fibre optics network activities more easily;**
- 5) Reduce cost of managing the ICT Infrastructure.**

The Fibre Optics Training programme will be conducted for a period of three (3) weeks starting today.

Within this period of three (3) weeks, there will be three (3) different groups of ICT Infrastructure Management personnel that will undergo hands-on Fibre optics training for seven (7) days for each group.

INVITED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

This Training Programme is of paramount importance to the Government through the Secretary to the cabinet and his top management team considering the huge mandate that SMART Zambia Institute (SZI) has been given of coordinating, harmonising and implementing electronic Government. This calls for each and everyone who will be attending this Training Programme to demonstrate high commitment and apply themselves selflessly.

Fellow technicians , lets put in all the best in this training so that we go back to our labs and deliver the ICT services that our Head of State demands of us to deliver to his government. As your National coordinator, I will not tolerate any late down in that line.

Permanent Secretary Copperbelt Province, I sincerely thank you for hosting the Smart Zambia team in your city to undertake this training.

May I also take this opportunity to inform you PS and other permanent secretaries across ministries and provinces that the Secretary to the cabinet has also just approved that SMART Zambia should now attach an ICT staffer to yourselves again. We shall be doing that in the next six months.

To the Executive Director Zambia ICT College, please keep up with the good training works you are doing in ICTs in this country and we shall keep on supporting you.

With these remarks, may I now declare this programme officially open and wish you the best during your stay at the ICT collage.

God bless you all