

STRATEGIC STUDY DRAFT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**STRATEGIC PROGRAM FOR INFORMATION
SOCIETY – ASSESSMENT AND PERSPECTIVES
FOR EVOLUTION**



The Centro de Políticas Estratégicas produced this strategic study technical note. This is the Executive Summary of the draft version of the Technical Note for comments and to be used for Forum Events. Please share comments at luci.fonseca@palgov.gov.cv.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Information Society Program (known by the acronym PESI), launched in 2005, formalized the options and guidelines for the development of the Information Society in Cabo Verde.

The PESI includes nine pillars of intervention (five content pillars and four context pillars) that, in an integrated manner, make up the vision of the future to be created in the country.

9 Pilares de Intervenção

5 de Conteúdo:

- Pilar 1 – Acessibilidade para Todos
- Pilar 2 – Uma Governação Mais Próxima dos Cidadãos
- Pilar 3 – Novas Oportunidades Económicas
- Pilar 4 – Incremento da Qualidade de Vida
- Pilar 5 – Capacitar para Inovar

4 de Contexto:

- Pilar 6 – Um contexto Estimulante
- Pilar 7 – Liderança na Acção
- Pilar 8 – Investir para Crescer
- Pilar 9 – Medir para Desenvolver

Assessment of the Implementation of the PESI

The implementation of the Program during the 2005-2013 period was spearheaded by the State, with the Program having been divided into several operational plans: the National Broadband Strategy; the Electronic Governance Action Plan (which responds to Pillar 2: A Government Closer to Citizens); the ICT Cluster Development Strategy; and the Mundu Novu Program (which responds to Pillar 5: Build Capacity to Innovate).

The implementation of the projects and activities outlined in the PESI allowed significant progress to be made, particularly in terms of infrastructures, access and Electronic Governance, as well as the resulting development of Cabo Verdean society and the country's economy, which may be confirmed by the positive trajectory Cabo Verde has followed in most of the main international indexes in the areas of Transparency, Democracy and Competitiveness, the Information Society and Electronic Governance:

- Transparency, Democracy and Competitiveness – Cabo Verde has stood out within the African panorama for its democratic maturity and for the transparency of its institutions. In terms of ease of doing business, the country showed highly positive progress between 2008 and 2012. Competitiveness, however, remains Cape Verde's main challenge as a small island economy, as is demonstrated by the Democracy Index, the Corruption Perception Index and the Doing Business index. The computerization of the services provided by the State, as well as the facilitation of the business creation process, form the foundation of the improvement seen in these indices.
- Information Society – The country has also shown positive evolution in the main indexes in the area of Information Technology, namely in the ICT Development Index (IDI), in which Cabo Verde went from a score of 2.18 in 2007 to 3.53 in 2012. The country currently occupies 96th place worldwide, out of a total of 155 countries. On the level of Africa, Cabo Verde comes in seventh place on the IDI, behind countries such as Seychelles, Mauritius and South Africa. The development of the Konekta free-access wireless Internet hotspots and the second international underwater optical fiber cable connection illustrate the PESI initiatives that have had a major impact on Cabo Verde's rating on these indices.
- Electronic Governance – Cabo Verde improved its ranking from 0.3346 points in 2005 to 0.4297 in 2012, despite having slipped several positions in relative terms on the overall ranking since 2010. The computerization of the country's tax payment system and the telecommunications infrastructure, which is more advanced than that of most African countries, are factors referred to in the reports as helping promote the positive evolution shown by Cabo Verde.

In practical terms, the implementation of the Program had a direct and visible impact on the country, on citizens, on businesses and on the functioning of Public Administration, having contributed not only toward increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the State, but also and above all toward:

A. Guaranteeing the public's access to the Information Society

The implementation of the PESI and the consequent investment in large-scale telecommunications projects, be they the underwater connection to international optical fiber cables, the National Fiber Optic Network or the State Network, created conditions in terms of infrastructure for widespread access to the knowledge and information society – in other words, the increase in the Internet penetration rate (in 2012, for every 100 inhabitants, approximately 35 had Internet access, while in 2005 the figure stood at only six) and the mobile service penetration rate (in 2012, there were already more than 425,000 mobile telephone users, when in 2005 that figure had not yet reached 82,000).

Nevertheless, despite the entry of a new telecommunications operator (Unitel T+) and the investments carried out, there remains a perception that price is still a barrier to universal access. In order to address the issue of price barriers to Internet access, initiatives such as Konekta (a network of hotspots with free Internet access) were developed. More recently, the National Broadband Strategy was launched as well.

B. Simplifying and improving everyday activities for citizens and businesses

The services developed by the Cabo Verdean government have allowed the State to improve its response to citizens' needs. Services were simplified and automated in order to reduce response time and reduce the number of contacts required between public entities and citizens.

The implementation of the PESI contributed to important improvements in the main events in the life cycle of citizens and businesses, namely through the implementation of the Casa do Cidadão ("House of the Citizen") and the Porton di nos ilha web portal, which made available a series of essential services to citizens in person and on the Internet, respectively. Among the other services and systems developed and made available to citizens and companies are:

- The registration of Cabo Verdean citizens in the hospital or health facility in which they were born. To complement this, parents may also request newborns' birth certificate on line (through Porton di nos ilha) or at the Casa do Cidadão;
- The registration of properties, which currently takes an average of 22 days (in 2006, according to Doing Business, the same process took 87 days);
- The possibility for citizens looking for employment, internships or professional placements and public companies and institutions with vacancies available to "meet" through the Qualification and Employment Exchange, available through the Porton di nos ilha web portal;
- The submission of income tax declarations on line using the Porton di nos ilha web portal;
- The on-line submission of income tax declarations for collective entities and value-added tax declarations by businesses;
- The requesting of birth certificates at the Casa do Cidadão;
- The telemedicine service, which permits communication between hospitals, as well as access on the part of citizens to medical specialists located on other islands;
- The electronic registration of patients, which allows physicians access to patients' clinical histories (currently in operation in hospitals and health centers on the island of Santiago);
- The creation of businesses in a single day, through the "Business in a Day" service, available at the Casa do Cidadão. Entrepreneurs may also license activities in 48 hours (a process that previously took approximately 15 days);



- The retirement pension payment and pharmacy co-payment management system;
- The electronic registration of citizens with biometric data, used, among other purposes, for voter registration and control.

Additionally, information is also made available to citizens and businesses on procedures such as driver's license requests, automobile registration, passport requests, identity document requests and death certificates.

C. Enhancing economic activity and innovation

The country has seen solid progress in the number of ICT businesses it hosts, which rose from 35 in 2005 to 87 in 2011. These businesses employ some 320 people and have a total business volume estimated at 1.1 billion escudos. The development of Electronic Governance projects allowed for the creation of a software development industry for the State in Cabo Verde that is recognized as a reference in Africa and which already exports Cabo Verde-made services and technology to other countries in the continent.

The development of the ICT sector and the incorporation of innovation has had its main promoter in the State, as one may deduce from the analysis of the *Network Readiness Index*, which highlights the importance of ICTs to the government vision (24th position out of 144) and the demand for cutting-edge technology on the part of the government (42 out of 144). The government's investment in the 7 development clusters (among them the ICT cluster) and the Praia Technology Park will reinforce this trend.

D. Capacitating Cabo Verdeans for the Knowledge Society

The implementation of the Mundu Novu Program permitted the modernization of schools throughout the entire country, the training of teachers, the computerization of school administration and the mobilization of educational agents for the knowledge society. Secondary school students have begun using ICTs within the school context, university students may access the Internet by way of virtual campuses and have access to contents and master's theses through the Knowledge Portal, and teachers have begun using ICTs as teaching tools. Outside of school, students at all educational levels may access the Internet to do their school work using the Konekta public hotspots, which can now be found in all of the municipalities in the country.

Perspectives for Evolution

The Strategic Information Society Program should have four main **guidelines** aligned with the country's strategy, with the state of the art of the Information Society and Electronic Governance in Cabo Verde and with major international trends:

1. Spread Access to and Use of Information Technology

- Promote access to ICTs for info-excluded adults and the rural population
- Increase the percentage of digital natives
- Ensure that communications prices do not constitute a barrier to access and use

2. Align Governance Services with the needs of Citizens and Businesses

- Make available multi-channel services aligned with the life cycle of citizens and businesses and supported by social networks

- Centralize the offer of services in physical (Casa do Cidadão) and virtual (Porton di nos ilha) one-stop shops
- Ensure the integration of systems and the use of single data sources for citizens

3. Lend Potential to Economic Development and Innovation

- Attract Foreign Direct Investment and strengthen the IT business fabric
- Facilitate the affirmation of the clusters that are strategic to the country's development
- Create market niches in which the country can affirm itself as a champion
- Position the country as a gateway to Africa and an International Service Provision Center

4. Build Youth Capacity for the Knowledge Society

- Enhance access to equipment and to the Internet for teachers and students
- Boost the production of contents made available on networks by teachers and students
- Build young people's capacity to respond to the needs of the job market

