

# Is e-Voting a Possibility for Botswana's 2014 General Elections?

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the possibility of using the electronic voting in the forthcoming general elections in Botswana. Electronic voting has a variety of benefits including speeding up of the electoral process in terms of voter registration, casting of votes, counting of votes and releasing the election results. The application of ICT in the electoral process is gaining momentum in developed countries because of the benefits associated with it. This research explores the possibility of using this technology in the 2014 general elections looking at the ICT infrastructure, policies and facilities available in Botswana. Data was collected from various stakeholders including the Electoral Commission, political parties and secondary sources. The research has revealed that Botswana will not be ready to use e-voting technology in the 2014 elections due to many factors including the electoral law which has to be amended, long consultation process and the problem of access to the internet and computers by the electorate. E-voting is viewed as a dream for Botswana which will become a reality/come true in the near future.

**Keywords:** Electronic voting, ICT, elections, voter apathy, electoral process, electoral law, ICT infrastructure and policies.

## 1. Introduction

Information technology is viewed globally as an alternative to improve government service and product delivery. Electronic means of service and product delivery can also facilitate organizational transformation through change of systems, processes and methods of product and service delivery. Therefore investing in information technology will benefit any government in meeting developmental goals, improve accountability and create opportunities for citizen centred interactions thereby allowing citizen participation. E-voting, because of the flexibility, easiness in maintaining and efficiency in operation, is crucial for less developed countries which are concerned with involving their citizens in the democratic process. Another reason why e-voting is of benefit is through vote counting, where it is easier to initiate more frequent referenda and administer vote counts on proportional representation basis as well as timely release of results. The most important role of information technology in democracy lies in its potential capacity to strengthen the public sphere. E-Democracy, therefore, has the potential to increase and ensure better citizen participation in the democratic processes. And the facilitation of this e-democracy will be through services such as e-participation and e-voting. In any democratic dispensation participation is imperative and participation via the internet upholds this ideal. E-voting, because of the easiness in maintaining and efficiency in operation, is crucial for less developed countries.

The Benefits of electronic are undeniable and have been witnessed in the countries that have tried electronic voting. The process of voting electronically is said to be more reliable and less prone to human errors. E-voting is seen as a panacea for voter apathy. There is an

assumption that when citizens vote electronically there is a rise in turn-out. This was the case in the UK pilot e-voting where there was an average of 50 per cent compared to an average voter turn out of around 33 percent. And it was discovered, still in the UK, that the 18-24 year olds were attracted to the prospect of e-voting, even though the critics were of the view that this enthusiasm is based on novelty rather than substance (the Register). This system of voting is beneficial in that there is accessibility and a link between accessibility and voter participation has been established. However, accessibility will be dependent on the availability of computers (in public accessibility terminals). This still remains a challenge in a number of developing countries. The digital gap is not just a problem for developing countries and even developed nations are still grappling with this issue.

It is argued [1] that perhaps the most compelling argument in favour of on-line voting is the convenience factor and convenience will obviously encourage participation. It is further contended that people do not have to stand in line for long hours to vote because voting can be done from their homes and in this case absentee ballots can be reduced. Furthermore, e-voting is attractive because it is easy to maintain and efficient to operate. Vote counting is much easier than with the traditional voting. This is important given the fact that a number of problems associated with the traditional voting have to do with counting. Others [2] believe that as a result of electronic voting instant ballot casting and tallying prove extremely valuable when the polls come to a close and within minutes of poll closing the votes are automatically tallied and posted. The positives about electronic voting is that machines that were used in the 2004 Indian elections had thirty second delay before the next vote can be cast thereby eliminating rapid stuffing of ballot by one individual [3]. Fairweather suggests that if properly implemented electronic voting can allow people to vote securely and it is all inclusive, disabled people with impairments that make marking a cross in the appropriate place on a ballot paper difficult, e-voting can enable voting on equal terms with other people (this includes voter with visual impairments and motor control impairments).

However instrumental electronic voting maybe, the system is shrouded with flaws. Security is a major thing when it comes to e-voting. It is possible to implement e-voting from a secure location like a polling station but as Fairweather, argues secure and anonymous voting from home remain fraught with problems for example " how do you know who's in the room with someone when they vote and how can you be sure they are not trying to influence someone's vote. The system of electronic voting is also liable to manipulation in the form of hacking. This could be observed during the design and development phase of the voting system. And this manipulation can as well manifest itself in attacks from outside via a network manipulation of the actual voting machine [4]. Technology glitches is one form that e-voting has gotten a bad reputation. There is a higher likelihood of technology not working on the polling day as was the case in St Albans in the UK. In situations where the general trust in the electoral process is low, as it is the case in a number of developing countries, an introduction of electronic voting may only increase suspicion. One of the flaws is being alienation [5]. That with the introduction of e-voting both elections and the electoral processes are no longer controlled by voters, they become the property of those who run or manage them [ibid]. In this case, the voting machine maker or a multinational corporation controls the whole system and the voter is alienated from the electoral process itself. The election becomes an external phenomenon inaccessible to the voter who can no longer scrutinize it. Transparency as a basic principle of democracy is eliminated, because there is not an open and transparent counting of votes. The myth of election as a means of empowering the voter is eliminated, and the voter is alienated not only from the electoral process but also from his own vote. It is argued that whoever controls the voting machines can control who wins the votes [obcit]. Inability of the election commission to build trust for machines is another flaw identified. Others argue

that once the ballot has been entered, the voter has no method of confirmation to assure that the vote was captured as intended and that this has a lot of voters up in arms [6]. The lack of paper trail in case a recount is demanded leaves a lot to be desired and highly questions the desirability of electronic voting.

### *1.1 Electronic Voting in Comparative Perspective*

If Botswana is to seriously think about e-voting, it is very crucial that they learn the lessons from other countries that have engaged in electronic voting. There are quite a number of countries that have used electronic voting, but in this instance only a few of them will be discussed. India [3] is one of the countries that have been using electronic voting for quite sometime now. Brazil [7] conducted their elections in the 1990s using electronic voting. And the elections in October 1998 was one of the largest electronic elections in the history, with over sixty million voters casting ballots by computer for local and national candidates. 57 per cent of the voting population voted electronically in elections for local, state and national offices. By the 2000 and 2002 elections more electronic voting machines were used nationwide in Brazil and the results were tallied electronically within minutes after the polls closed. In May 2007 the UK has its e-voting trial in the local elections with over 1.5 million people in 18 local council areas through internet, text message, electronic kiosk and even digital television [6]. In the UK, the electronic voting trials were heavily criticised. Flaws were spotted in these trials. In one instance, there was one-system which violated its own security. This has led some critiques [8] to conclude that general election is such a high profile target for hackers-so the risks are severe. And in another instance, polling stations were without an internet connection on the polling day. In said that in ST Albans, technology on trial went on the blink, with local papers reporting that confusion was that it almost led to the vote being declared null and void. There are claims that the UK pilots did not have sufficient monitoring in place to be sure whether the results were compromised or not [9] and that it cannot be known what the levels of fraud were experienced during the piloting stage.

## **2. Objectives**

The paper investigates and explores the e-voting strategies, infrastructure and assess if these are appropriate to facilitate Botswana's general election in 2014. An evaluation of the government's readiness through its ICT strategy and facilities for this initiative was embarked upon. The Botswana Independent Electorate Commission (IEC) is the focus of this study since they are responsible for administering elections in the country. In addition, an assessment of the willingness of stakeholders to utilise e-voting facilities was explored.

## **3. Methodology**

Primary<sup>T</sup> and secondary methods of data collection were used. Regarding primary data, semi structured interviews were conducted with the IEC, members of the ruling party, members of the opposition parties and members of the academia especially political scientists. Secondary data was collected from ICT, e-democracy, e-participation and e-voting policy and strategy documents. Table 1 below shows the stakeholders interviewed who represent different views regarding the possibility of using electronic voting for the 2014 general elections. The respondents are from the Electoral Commission, an academia, the Department of Information Technology, in the e-government section of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the ruling party and two respondents from the opposition party, one of who is a member of parliament. Three different semi-structured questions were designed for the IEC, the Ministry of Science and Technology and politicians.

Table 1: Respondents Interviewed

Organisation	Position
Independent Electoral Commission	Deputy Secretary
Ministry of Science and Technology	E-government Section, Department of Information technology
Botswana Congress Party	Member of Parliament, Gaborone Central BCP Publicity Secretary
Botswana Democratic Party	Secretary General
Botswana National Front	Chairperson
University of Botswana Academic	Senior Lecturer, Political Science

The main interview questions for the IEC were on specific policies for e-voting, benchmarks for such policies, electoral law on e-voting, and can e-voting be a panacea for voter apathy. Interview questions for the Ministry of Science were mainly on the ICT infrastructure to facilitate e-voting, access of IT to citizens and Botswana's ready for e-voting by 2014. Politicians were interviewed mainly on preparedness and the role of government, private sector and political parties in e-voting, fairness, accountability, democracy, success stories and challenges of e-voting.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 E-voting Policies and Strategies

The Electoral Commission informed the researcher that they have developed specific policies to guard the electoral process regarding electronic voters roll. Other electronic options such as electronic voter registration and e-voting still need to be explored and the necessary policy guidelines developed. The Commission has, however, developed a voter's roll, which has been computerised and can be accessed by all citizens and political parties with personal computers. All those who have access to the internet can download this data by the use of a memory stick. The respondent explained that the process of voter registration commences with manual registration of voters. Though other voters names are still contained in the manual voters register.

### 4.2 e-Voting/ICT Infrastructure

An interview with the Ministry of Science Technology, Department of Information Technology's e- government section revealed that they deal with ICT at the strategic level. He said that e government infrastructure web portal is in the process of being developed by August 2008. People with the internet to access the portal will have access points within the country. Though there is the problem of internet availability in rural areas. The government plans to install 'Kitsong' centres (internet cafes) through post offices to facilitate access in rural areas. 24 of such centres have been developed so far. The government is also planning to establish tele-centers to intensify internet access. ICT access is further being developed through the recently introduced I- Partnership. This entails interest free loans availed to people to buy computers. The department of information technology is also involved in a project where all junior secondary schools are availed computers. The researcher was informed that the government is rated amongst the best in Africa in terms of ICT network, though the challenge is the population scarcity. The use of ICT in government has developed considerably as many processes have been computerised. Though one of those interviewed indicated ICT development and usage is lacking behind in local government.

As indicated by the IEC respondent, the Ministry of Science and Technology has an e-government structure which has laid foundation for e-voting, e-democracy and e-participation. The IEC has developed a website which can be accessed from within and outside the country. For example, other countries in the SADC region can access the IEC

through the internet and national television. The IEC is working closely with the Ministry of Science and Technology to regularly upgrade the website. The IEC respondent emphasised that access to the computer is the key to make e-voting a reality in 2014 general elections. She said that at the moment, access to a computer is a problem for many in Botswana. The IEC and other stakeholders have been exposed to various technologies to facilitate the electoral process. For example, these are machines/gadgets that allow voters to cast their votes by simply pressing a button at a polling station. However, the IEC and other stakeholders had reservations about such voting process and gadgets.

The Commission and others (politicians) are not against IT development and application in these areas as they facilitate and improve the electoral process. They are being extra cautious in introducing such measures without thorough evaluation and assessment. The IEC respondent gave an example of what the electronic voting did to elections results in Florida, USA, where the results had to be recounted. The same issue was raised by the politician interviewed who indicated that the USA experienced problems with election results where e-voting was used. The IEC respondent stated that organisations would like to embrace and apply technology to improve effectiveness and efficiency. The IEC is also eager to embrace technology as the foundation has already been laid down by the government. The Commission will explore the possibility of using electronic means of voting and benefits of using such technology. ICT facilitated voting is still a challenge even in developed countries as there are problems and people still have to queue up for voting.

The opposition political party member said during the interview that Botswana is advanced in technology. The main problem is the verification process of ICT usage in the electoral process. Verification of election results is always a problem. He said the private sector has a role to play in ensuring that application of ICT in voting runs smoothly. Another member of the opposition revealed that the private sector has a role to play. However, the government has to lay down the foundation in providing the infrastructure and the private sector will assist in providing the service and support needed. His main concern was that the ICT infrastructure is not yet fully developed as majority of people in the country do not have access to the computer and the internet. The respondent from the Ministry of Science and Technology indicated that the private sector has a role to play in terms of outsourcing services and providing support for the ICT facilities. On a positive note, the respondent from the ruling party indicated that ICT is useful tool for expediting the electoral process. The respondent further said that ICT enhances responsiveness and increases electoral fairness as unnecessary delays caused by manual ballot counting are eliminated. The major challenge is to improve ICT infrastructure and engage all stakeholders to facilitate electronic voting. Concerns regarding assured power supply after 2010 were raised by two respondents. Yet another member of the opposition said that the major problem of using electronic voting is the country's infrastructure which is not well developed. He further said most of the disadvantaged would be majority of those who do not have ICT skills, knowledge and access to PCs and the internet. The elderly would be disadvantaged as they do not have computer skills. Although he personally embraces technology as it has advantages including speed, innovativeness and access to information, though he cautioned against loss of employment due to automation. The academic interviewed stated that the level of computerisations and internet connectivity need to be established before such an endeavour is pursued.

#### *4.3 e-Voting and the Electoral Law*

According to the Independent Electoral Commission spokesperson, the current electoral law says that voters should present themselves to the polling station in order to cast their vote. This provision has to be reviewed and amended in order to allow or introduce internet or electronic voting. The process of changing this electoral law would entail thorough

consultation with all stakeholders including political parties, civil society, opposition parties and all citizens. Changing the electoral law is always a challenging, difficult and a lengthy process. The electoral law is available on the internet for all access, read and review. These laws are usually re-visited after every election and are uploaded on the IEC website for the public to access and read. The e government respondent revealed during the interview that legislative framework must be reviewed to accommodate electronic voting.

#### *4.4 e-Voting and Voter Apathy*

The IEC respondent further pointed out that e-voting will not necessarily result in improved voter participation. That the fact that e-voting might motivate potential voters to cast their vote was not foreseen. She said that voter apathy is due to a variety of reasons including voters' general feeling that their participation in elections will not improve their well being and get them a job. This apathy is particularly apparent with people who are currently unemployed. Even the respondent from a political party indicated that electronic voting is not a solution to voter apathy. The major problem is not complaining about ballot papers, but fear of being revealed on who they voted for. This would definitely reduce voter turnout. He said that similar fear was raised by parliamentarians.

#### *4.5 Internet Security*

The IEC respondent indicated that internet security is a major problem impacting on e-voting. This is a challenge especially regarding voters roll. The safety of the internet is a concern for voters to cast their vote and in the counting and announcement of election results. The security concerns includes fraud and rigging in vote casting and vote counting. However, the above concerns were cleared by the presenters of the voting IT and gadgets to IEC and stakeholders. The presenters emphasised that security concerns are usually taken care of during the design and piloting stage. Even the e government respondent said that security concerns can be addressed during the planning, design and piloting stage. He indicated that internet security is major component of ICT and the government will ensure that it is up to international standard., although they are always human elements when it comes to ICT usage, for example internet banking and fraud. A voter's identification can be verified electronically like in credit card or other means. The respondent from a political party said security will always be a concern as it was with the coming of telephones. The issue is to embrace technology and move ahead with the time in using electronic voting. The academic interviewed emphasised that electronic voting can guarantee fairness and democracy only if the system is protected from abuse.

#### *4.6 Is e-Voting a Reality for 2014 General Elections?*

The IEC respondent indicated that e-voting will not be a reality for 2014 elections. There are a variety of constraints, especially in Africa where elections are associated with issues of mistrust and rigging of results. Electronic voting will be a big challenge, particularly starting from acceptance by politicians to use the computer to allow people to cast their vote. The major constraint is the buy into the technology by all especially politicians as they consider problems of voter roll fraud and rigging of elections process and results. The computer will be seen as the place to intensify such rigging and meddling with the electoral process, especially voters registration, and the counting of votes. The ICT associated with voting can be used as countries develop and their democracies mature. Therefore, the Electoral Commission does not foresee e-voting as a reality in Botswana anytime soon.

Member of the opposition party interviewed also revealed that e-voting is not a possibility for the 2014 general elections because of a variety of reasons including challenges associated with access to ICT by voters. He lamented that e voting was tried in parliament and was not supported due to mistrust of the technology by members,

particularly fear that the computer might reveal who they voted for. He supports e voting as a good instrument to use at the national assembly level, for example to vote the president's choice of the Vice President. He does not support this technology at country level due to African political environment in areas of vote rigging and validations of results. More developed countries have used the technology and are advanced as compared to Botswana. However, another member of the opposition indicated that e-voting is a possibility if there is political will to teach the country about ICT benefits and use. He further emphasised that incorporating ICT into schools curriculum early will be an added advantage as well as ensuring that schools in rural areas have electricity. Exposing kids to computers will make their parents develop interest in using ICT. This was also emphasised by the e government respondent who lamented that a collective decision should be made to make the internet available to all during elections. He said electronic voting is a possibility for 2014 elections, what needs to be done is to further develop the ICT infrastructure by completing the e voting portal development, review electoral law, address security concerns, ensure wider access to computers, have stakeholders identify usage, testing/piloting and launching the system in the next few years. The response from the academic was that Botswana indeed has the resources to develop the infrastructure required for e voting. The major challenge is that stakeholders do not trust the use of computers during elections. He said that the mindset of stakeholders is the main stumbling block and a high level of enthusiasm will have to be generated to build trust. He said 'success comes from practice. If you do not introduce the system then we will never know what challenges it brings for our democracy'

#### *4.7 e-Voting Readiness*

The e government section respondent indicated that the infrastructure is available at the central level to support e voting in 2014. He said it is up to the main stakeholders being the IEC and legislators to decide whether they want it. They must prepare a web portal and approach IEC to identify the services they would need from the portal. They will develop structures to support e voting and will benchmark the system with international standards.

The IEC respondent indicated that it is important to note that the IEC is only ten years old and has just ordinary technology and ICT infrastructure and computer systems. The Commission has undertaken an ICT assessment to see the type of PCs and systems that to allow e-voting and participation in 2014. Other ICT service providers also have a role to play in assessing the current infrastructure and facilities to support and to make e-voting a reality. It emerged from the interview with the IEC representative that the electoral body is not yet ready for e-voting in the 2014 general elections. One of the major reasons for uneasiness is the constraints associated with e-voting including the problem of computer hackers meddling with election register and results, especially once votes have been inputted into the system for electronic counting.

The opposition party member interviewed indicated that he personally does not support electronic voting. He lamented that free and fair elections are a problem in Africa. Elections are associated with a high level of suspicion by other constituencies. The other factor is that political parties would not have the capacity to be part of e-voting. He further said that e-voting was discussed in parliament and MPs did not trust the technology. People are generally scared that the technology would reveal who one voted for. This even applies to members of parliament. On the contrary, the ruling party respondent supports ICT use and said that ICT will promote fairness in elections. He said the system should be implemented in stages, starting with bye-elections, primary elections and later roll out nationally. He said mobile phones are much easier to use to cast a vote. Even the respondent from the e- government section lamented that politicians and members of parliament do use computers or have even developed websites for their political parties. This represents lack of keenness to learn, apply ICT and innovations. The other member of

the opposition interviewed revealed that democracy is a complex issue. Using ICT in elections has challenges including the system being manipulated and people not understanding issues of governance and accountability when using ICT. There is need to have a highly developed ICT to successfully use electronic voting. He gave an example of South Africa using e voting and the system is being introduced by phases. He further said that the big issue is that politicians are not ready to use technology in voting. Members of parliament and politicians are computer illiterate so they are not ready to use ICT in voting. One of the academia emphasised that ruling parties in Africa will manipulate anything to remain in power. Regarding opposition parties, he said that they will find it extremely difficult to trust government officials to run elections electronically.

The major constraints to e-voting readiness include:

- The ICT infrastructure, which is not yet developed as majority of people, do not have access to a computer and the internet. This is a major problem for 2014 elections.
- There is need for thorough stakeholder consultation where all have to be consulted. In particular are the politicians in the ruling and opposition parties. These people who could resist such an innovation resulting in lengthy consultations.
- There will be a need to overhaul electoral laws in the country and these poses the greatest challenge. The law will have to be revised to accommodate the new change that includes electronic voting process. This, the IEC views as the major challenge. Amendment of the law is a long and difficult process.
- Electronic voting would not necessarily improve participation in the elections. The IEC respondent gave an example of the electoral law which was changed to allow those 18 years and over to vote. This provision has not improved voter apathy as the youth are still reluctant to go and vote. One of the reasons is that whether they vote or not they will remain jobless. The opposition party member also lamented that there is need to amend the electoral to allow ICT in voting.
- The other problem is the fact that voters still have to queue up to cast their votes even with electronic voting. This is a deterrent particularly to the youth as potential voters. Though e-voting might actual reduce the waiting time.
- The politician interviewed indicated that the major challenge in introducing ICT in elections is to educate all political parties and encourage buy in into electronic voting. This will largely be a political decision and there is need for thorough consultation.

## **5. Business Benefits**

Botswana has already invested heavily in ICT infrastructure and has developed policies and strategies to close the digital divide [10]. The government has invested heavily in e-government structures through the Ministry of Science and Technology. The Independent Electoral commission is part of the beneficiaries of such investments for example, through the development of an electronic voters roll. Citizens, political parties and civil society within and outside the country enjoy the benefits of accessing the voters roll and electoral laws through the internet and their computers. Hence the use of ICT in the electoral process would benefit a variety of stakeholders. Benefits include speedy casting, counting of votes and announcement of election results. Other benefits include increased voter participation, reduction in electoral costs and giving the impaired the opportunity to vote anonymously without help. Security, accessibility and flexibility are added benefits of electronic voting.

Even the Electoral commission indicated they would embrace electronic voting as it has many benefits including quick electoral process in voter registration, voting and counting of results. The overall application of ICT in the electoral process would improve effectiveness and efficiency of the process of conducting general elections. Other countries in the SADC region would benefit through lessons learnt and challenges from Botswana in



conducting electronic voting. These lessons would enhance other countries ability to utilise ICT in improving electoral process and enhancing their democracies.

There are indeed challenges and risks associated with e-voting including issues of governance such as transparency, trust and openness and accountability. In addition, problems of vote rigging and meddling by computer hackers and administrators manipulating the system by entering votes have been raised. Politicians do not seem to trust the use of computers in voting. However, these problems can be addressed by developing stringent security measures during the designing and piloting stages. Tight monitoring strategies can also enhance e-voting. In Botswana's case, e-voting can easily be integrated into the already existing e-government structures. The major challenge is for the government to intensify the promotion of access to computers and the internet to citizens and urge the private sector to play an active role in providing internet facilities and support services. It emerged that political parties should be pioneers in electronic voting as it is in their interest that voters use it. Political parties should be key players in issues of accountability and use of ICT to speed the electoral process including releasing of results.

## **6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The availability of state of the art information technology and supporting services has compelled governments in both developed and developing countries to embrace benefits associated with adapting ICT to improve service and product delivery. The main areas of adopting ICT into government systems and processes include e-government, e-administration, e-governance, e-voting, e-participation and e-democracy. The demand for electronic services has also been prompted by increasing knowledge and skills in the ICT field. In addition the upsurge for citizen involvement in the democratic processes has never been high with citizen demanding transparent and accountable governments. As a consequence governments are compelled to strengthen their democracies by initiating innovative strategies such as e-voting and e-participation in order to enhance citizen participation, improve electoral processes and at the same time benefit from relatively lower costs, increase in accessibility, flexibility, privacy, trust and security associated with electronic facilities. E-democracy need not be a quick fix for sickly politics. Without genuine thinking and changing the way that politics is run, technology will not help improve participation. Although electronic voting have been heavily criticised, there is however, benefit, if the pitfalls are addressed in this type of voting. Security issues needs to highly observed and seriously considered before embarking on electronic voting. Continuous monitoring of equipments during voting is very crucial and in case there are glitches there should be ready backup. Another crucial thing to the credibility of electronic voting is that there should be paper trail so as to ensure transparency.

The research revealed that the electoral body is not ready to embrace the ICT in 2014 general elections. It emerged that the Commission is neither ready nor enthusiastic due to many reasons including ICT infrastructure, access to pcs and the internet and changing of the electoral law. The Commission emphasised caution as the way forward despite many benefits and opportunities associated with electronic voting. The political parties are not very keen on electronic voting mainly because of insecurity and untrustworthiness of computers and the internet. The stakeholders generally do not trust ICT especially in the African political environment associated with irregularities and difficulties in vote counting, verification of ballots and vote rigging. The internet voting is viewed by some politicians interviewed as a tool used by those in power to rig elections. On a positive note, the e government section at the Ministry of Science and Technology is optimistic about the possibility of e voting in 2014. The respondent indicated that the infrastructure is available to support the technology. All that is needed is for the stakeholders such as the IEC and

legislators to decide whether they want to use e voting in 2014. The major challenge is for the government to further access to the internet in remote areas.

These results of this survey have revealed that though the ICT infrastructure is being developed to facilitate electronic voting, some stakeholders indicated that the country is not ready for e-voting in the 2014 general elections while others felt that the infrastructure exists, needs upgrading and full utilisation. The study suggests ways of improving the existing ICT facilities and services to support e-voting to include:

Botswana should take advantage of ongoing national ICT development and use it as a foundation to develop electronic voting process. Botswana has an advantage of a democratic system of consultation embedded in the Kgotla system. E-voting can follow the same consultation process used when formulating public policy and development activities.

All stakeholders should be trained and consulted through this process for education and buy in to the ICT facilitated voting. Direct interaction between the Electoral Body and all stakeholders will help the public appreciate benefits and opportunities associated with electronic voting. The elections officers could explain the e-voting process and its benefits before, during and after elections. Political parties should have vested interest in ensuring that voters are trained in the system. Politicians should also be trained to learn, appreciate, trust and use ICT in quick service delivery of election results and other services. The role of politicians to educate members to trust ICT and accept innovation was emphasised by an academic during the interview. He said IT infrastructure should be developed coupled with generation of enthusiasm for computer use and build trust among stakeholders.

The starting point could be an incremental process commencing with a pilot project. The IEC has already established voters roll this could be developed further to include establishment of electronic voters' card, user IDs, user passwords and explore various options of electronic voting such as postal voting, internet and mobile voting. The concerns about security, trust and accountability can be addressed by advance preparation and regular upgrading of structures, procedures and software. Monitoring before, during and after elections to detect any irregularities is another key factor that would improve voter participation in elections and the democratic process. The above would improve governance in the electronic electoral process.

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