STIP Review of Lesotho

An Implementation Strategy

Background

↗ The Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology (MCST) published the National Science and Technology Policy for Lesotho in 2003

↗ The Policy recognised technology and innovation as the key drivers of economic development in the long term.

Key sectors and products

- ↗ Renewable energy
- ↗ ICT programmes
- ↗ Biotechnology
- ↗ Traditional and indigenous technologies
- ↗ Tertiary manufacturing
- ↗ Animal products
- ↗ Water, medicine and cosmetics
- ↗ Horticulture

IMPLEMENTATION OF ICT INITIATIVES

- **Lesotho is implementing a number of ICT initiatives in the area of:**
  - E-government
  - E-commerce
  - Health
  - Education
  - Agriculture and Food Security
  - Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources

Challenges

↗ Lesotho's physical infrastructure is underdeveloped and limited in coverage

↗ Lesotho has a limited foundation for research and development, with very few institutions involved in scientific research

↗ Lesotho needs to make the transition to an information-oriented society and to build a culture of innovation

↗ High costs of access to internet resulting in low levels of connectivity.

Policy Review

- ↗ Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Lesotho was completed in 2009

- ↗ STIP review found that strengthening collaboration, coordination and coherence with the national development strategy was the key to enhancing the effectiveness of the national STI policies

- ↗ Telecommunications and ICTs services were another sector examined in the STIP Review

- ↗ Communications Policy was adopted and this was followed by the enactment of the Communications Act 2012 to embrace new developments in the communications sector

Key recommendations

- ↗ Setting up a Coordinating mechanism for STI – STI Steering Committee

- ↗ Establishing a Service Window – STI Hub

- ↗ Creating the Innovation Fund

Implementation

- ↗ National Strategic Development Plan of 2012

- ↗ *Enhance the skills base, technology adoption and foundation for innovation*

- ↗ Enhance technology transfer, diffusion and use
  - ↗ Develop a local intellectual property rights (IPRs)
  - ↗ Establish Science, Technology and innovation centers

- ↗ Develop innovation culture and capacity for scientific research
  - ↗ Establish Science and Technology Council
  - ↗ Develop a national research and development agenda
  - ↗ Improve infrastructure and facilities for science and technology with tertiary institutions
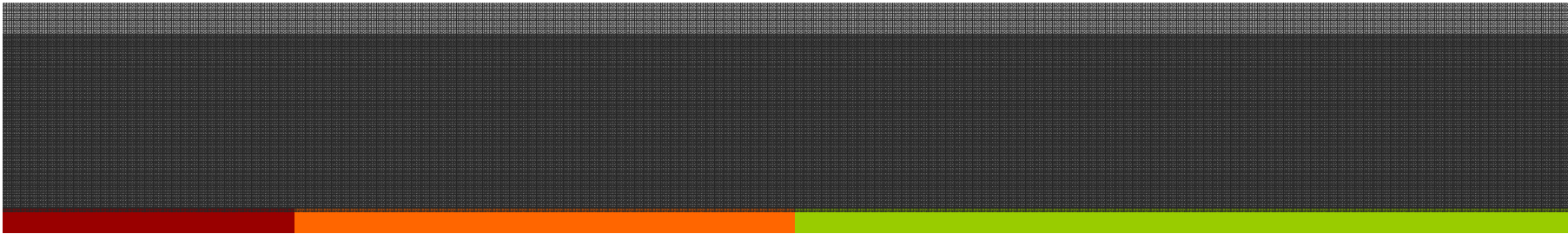
Ministry Strategic Plan

- ↗ Promote STI
  - ↗ Coordinating STI
  - ↗ Developing policy and legislation – review and draft
  - ↗ Protection of IP including traditional and indigenous knowledge
- ↗ Innovation
  - ↗ Strengthen research and innovation programmes
  - ↗ Establish Innovation fund

Way forward

- The STI Ministerial Council established and operational

- The STI Steering Committee established and operational

- A Head of STI and advisor on STI established and operational

- The STI Hub established and operational

- An Innovation Fund established and operational

- Lesotho has made provisional budget for counter-part contribution to establish the innovation fund

Thank you for your attention