



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

UGANDA JUDICIARY

**THE ROLE OF ICT IN IMPROVING COURT
EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY**

17TH ANNUAL JUDGES' CONFERENCE 2015

**Presenter: Hon. Justice Geoffrey Kiryabwire, JA
Chair, ICT/Law Reporting Committee**

22nd February 2015

OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

1. Introduction
2. Case Studies
3. ICT developments in Uganda
4. The future
5. challenges

Introduction

- **Lord Woolf Report “Access to Justice Report – 1996”**
- **Called for computerization of the civil justice system**
- **Labour intensive**
- **Cumbersome**
- **Too paper based**
- ***“Public awareness and culture is demanding that legal systems be more open and approachable”***

Waleed H. Malik

Senior Public Management Specialist Judicial Reform World Bank

Too Paper Based?



ICT & Public Confidence Building

Possible elements of public confidence building using IT

- Access to information
- Sensitization and legal information
- Improving user perception
- Feed back from the public

Making our procedures transparent and understandable helps to reduce corruption & enhances court user confidence

Case study Reform of the Utah State Courts 2007

- Utah introduced a new strategy to embrace ICT
“Judicial branch should develop & use technology to enable the courts to develop quality services at lower costs to the tax payer”
- Output included
 - e-record
 - e-document
 - e-payment
 - e-access on line
 - e-transcript

Case study Reform of the Utah State Courts 2007

- e-notice
- e-service
- e-training

Results by 2010

- ✓ better management of court processes using CORIS a single case management system through all courts
- ✓ e-record made transcripts available on line then outsourced giving a saving of \$ 1,350,000 per year
- ✓ 33% of court payments of \$ 1bn were handled on line
- ✓ time to produce records for appeals reduced

Case study Virtual Courts London 2007

- Established video link between 3 courts and 37 pilot police stations in London
- targeted first hearings after an accused had been charged with an offence where accused had hearings via video at police stations as opposed appearing in person in court.

Results by 2010 vide HM Govt Report

- ✓ 57% first hearing cases were heard by virtual court as compared to 12% by physical presence in court.
- ✓ Non appearance was 1% in virtual court vide 5% in court

Case study Virtual Courts London 2007

- ✓ less cell holding in police stations gave a savings of GBP 94,000
- ✓ Savings on police following up on warrants of arrests for non appearance GBP 33,000
- ✓ Reduced costs on transporting accused to court of GBP 23,000 @ GBP 34 per case.

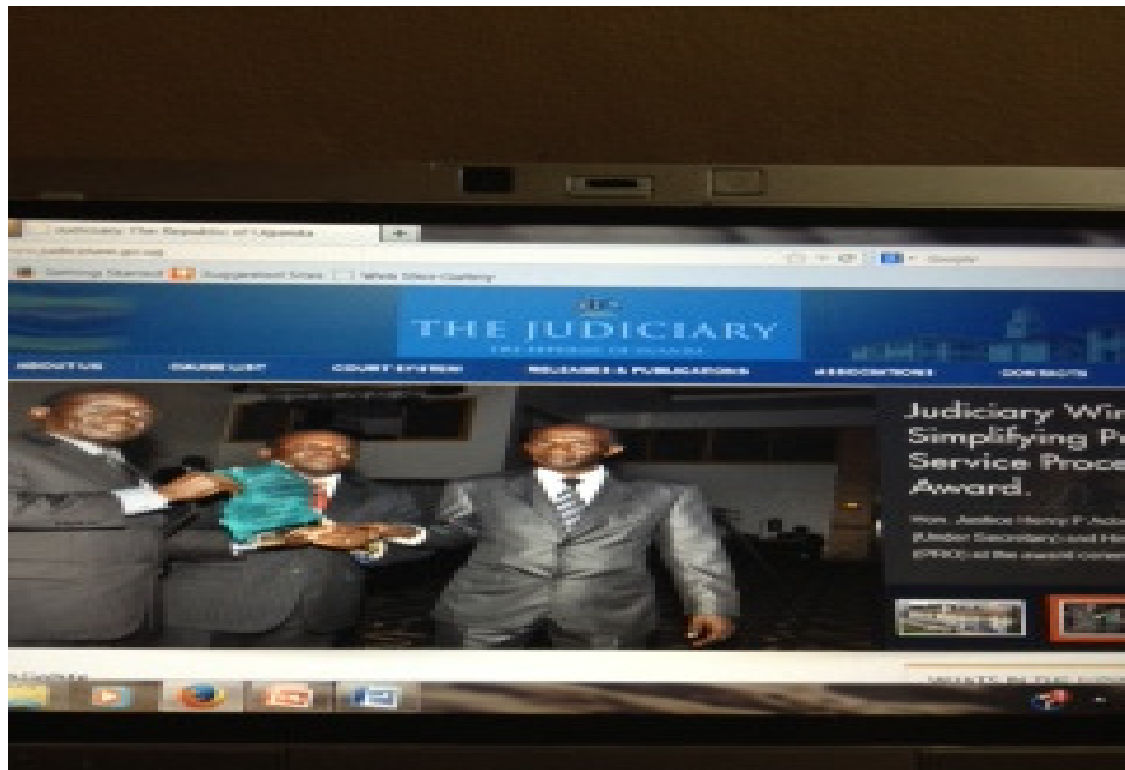
Main investment of technology was GBP 1.8M recoverable over 10 years

ICT & Public Confidence Building

- ICT Strategic Plan 2009-2013 just ended & under evaluation
- New plan will certainly take public confidence building as a priority. Input here welcome
- Still not there yet with IT wide internal Governance within the court's processes & Administration
- Desk top & laptop acquisition is component of what is happening
- Public confidence building however requires developing effective identification centres

What is in existence?

- Updated Judiciary Website which is interactive with regular updates unlike before (www.judicature.go.ug)



What is in existence?

- WWW.Ulii.org
 - All important decisions freely available to Legal fraternity & public
 - Improved layout
 - Better and simpler search engine
 - Links to other judiciaries i.e. KenyaLaw.org
- CD Grey book
- App for Samsung phones
- e-Newsletter

What is in existence

- E-Notice Boards (4 on pilot)



The Future

- SMS Community & Advocate Portal (CAP)



The Future

- Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) over telephone



The Future

- Self Service Information Kiosks



Being Set up

- Video Conferencing Centre Court Room No 1
- Model E Court at Commercial Division



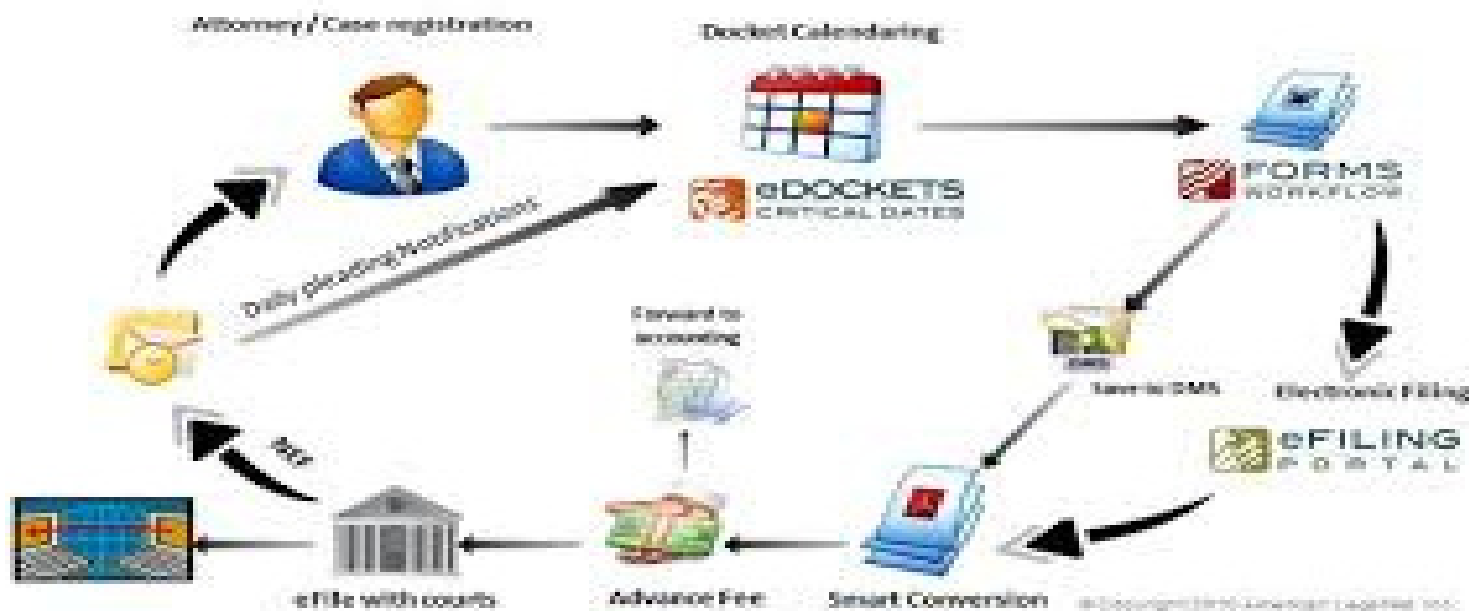
Importance of video in Court



Long Run Goal– E Filing



“Desktop to Courthouse”



Draft ICT Strategic Plan 2014-18

➤ Based on 9 pillars (est. Ug shs 36bn)

1. Enabling regulatory environment
2. Adequate MIS
3. Reliable hardware
4. Adequate software platforms & tools
5. Security of ICT systems
6. Human resource
7. Statistical & mangt resources & capabilities
8. Sponsorship & supportive decision making
9. Analytical Devpt & implementation methodolgies

Challenges

- Small budget allocation yet ICT is expensive
- Sequencing /prioritization
- Timing
- Different centres pushing technology which need to be harmonised for cost effectiveness.
- Bandwidth
- Quality of Court Buildings
- CCAS challenges
- Bringing the Bar on board

Question ?

Can we use ICT to improve
judicial performance and hence
public confidence?

Answer



Thank your kind attention
Justice Geoffrey Kiryabwire