



# **UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS AGENCY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:  
2025/26 to 2029/30**

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## ACCOUNTING AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER STATEMENT

The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) plays a central role in ensuring that all South Africans have access to digital communications and technologies that foster inclusivity by bridging the existing digital divide. Established in terms of chapter 14 of the Electronic Communications Act of South Africa (Act 36 of 2005), USAASA's mandate is clear: "To promote universal service and universal access in underserved areas." As part of this mandate, USAASA administers the Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF), a key resource dedicated to funding initiatives that extend communication infrastructure to underserved and remote areas, making digital services accessible to all citizens, irrespective of their geographical location or socio-economic status.

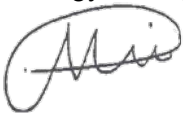
The priorities of the Government of National Unity (GNU) reflect a strong commitment to fostering inclusive growth and creating an environment where every South African can thrive. The key priorities of the GNU are: (a) driving inclusive growth and job creation; (b) reducing poverty and tackling the high cost of living; and (c) building a capable, ethical, and developmental state. The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies' focus in support of these priorities is to enable re-industrialisation, promote localisation and beneficiation, and drive increased infrastructure investment – all while ensuring that technology, and innovation are central to South Africa's growth. USAASA's role is integral to these outcomes, especially in terms of ensuring equitable access to digital communication infrastructure, which is foundational to economic growth and social development.

In the context of these national priorities, USAASA is committed to several outcomes that are designed to drive meaningful change for its beneficiaries. Through the increased deployment of sustainable and reliable digital communication infrastructure, including broadcasting services in underserved areas, USAASA is directly contributing to the reduction of inequalities and fostering a more inclusive economy. This outcome supports the government's focus on re-industrialisation, localisation, and beneficiation by ensuring that technology is not just accessible to urban areas but is extended to the most remote and underserved areas in the country. By leveraging infrastructure investment, USAASA helps to create the conditions for job creation and long-term sustainable development.

Collaboration and partnerships with relevant stakeholders – be it government, the private sector, or civil society – are at the core of USAASA's approach to fulfilling its mandate. These partnerships are instrumental in bridging the digital divide. USAASA's ability to engage with various stakeholders enables it to address the diverse needs of South Africa's digital landscape. Whether it's collaborating with local manufacturers for broadband infrastructure or partnering with educational institutions for digital literacy programmes, these efforts enhance the overall impact of digital

communication services in the country, ensuring they reach the most vulnerable and underserved communities.

Finally, USAASA's focus on conducting insightful research, rigorous monitoring, and evaluation ensures that all its initiatives are aligned with evidence-based decision making in the USAF projects roll out, translating into good governance and value for money. By prioritising the efficient use of USAF subsidies and funding, the Agency aims to ensure that resources are directed toward projects that have the greatest impact. This commitment to accountability, transparency, and value for money fosters a culture of performance and excellence, which is essential for building public trust and supporting the government's drive for a capable, ethical, and developmental state. Through continuous improvements in governance, research, and performance, USAASA contributes to the overarching goals of social cohesion, nation-building, and the sustainable development of South Africa's digital future. The Board is confident that the implementation of this strategy will significantly elevate the performance and impact of both the Agency and the Fund.



**Mr. Mandla Mnisi**

**INTERIM CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD**

## OFFICIAL SIGN-OFF

It is hereby certified that this 2025/26 to 2029/30 Strategic Plan:

- 1) Was developed by the management team of the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa, under the guidance of the Minister;
- 2) Takes into account all the relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa is responsible;
- 3) Accurately reflects the Impact and Outcomes which the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa will endeavour to achieve over the period 2025/26 to 2029/30.

  
Ms. Relebohile Mahloko

Date 31/01/2025

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Date 31/01/2025

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Date 31/01/2025

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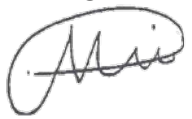
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Date 31/01/2025

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|         |                                                                    |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| APP     | Annual Performance Plan                                            |
| AU      | African Union                                                      |
| B-BBEE  | Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment                             |
| CEO     | Chief Executive Officer                                            |
| DCDT    | Department of Communications and Digital Technologies              |
| DPME    | Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation                  |
| ECA     | Electronic Communications Act                                      |
| ICASA   | Independent Communications Authority of South Africa               |
| IDA     | Infrastructure Development Act                                     |
| ICT     | Information and Communication Technology                           |
| M&E     | Monitoring and Evaluation                                          |
| MTDP    | Medium Term Development Plan                                       |
| NDP     | National Development Plan                                          |
| PFMA    | Public Finance Management Act                                      |
| RFSPAPP | Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans |
| SDG     | Sustainable Development Goal                                       |
| SIP     | Strategic Integrated Projects                                      |
| SITA    | State Information Technology Agency                                |
| SMART   | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound         |
| TIDS    | Technical Indicator Descriptions                                   |
| UN      | United Nations                                                     |
| USAASA  | Universal Service and Access Agency South Africa                   |
| USAF    | Universal Service and Access Fund                                  |

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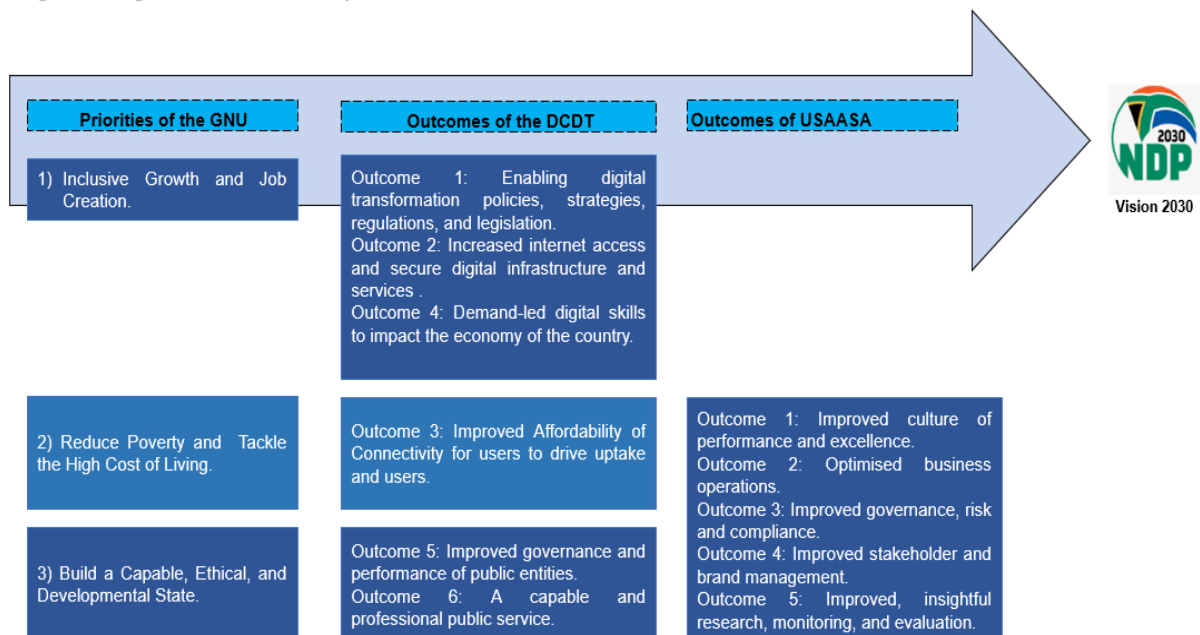
## INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Revised Framework for Strategic and Annual Performance Plans (RFSPAPP) requires all government departments, government components and public entities to produce and table their 2025/26 - 2029/30 strategic plans and the aligned annual performance plans (APPs) including annual operational plans (AOPs). Following the May 2024 general elections, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) has indicated that the RFSPAPP (2019) remains relevant and in use for the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) administration.

In the wake of the second Government of National Unity (GNU) soon after the May 2024 National and Provincial elections, the role of the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT) and that of the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) has taken on renewed importance.

The second GNU represents a coalition approach to governance aimed at fostering unity, stability, and inclusive growth amidst a backdrop of economic disparity, high unemployment rates, and demands for improved service delivery. The three (3) key priorities of the GNU, the strategic outcomes of the DCDT, and the outcomes of USAASA are thus aligned to ensure maximum impact along with seamless and accessible service delivery to citizens (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Alignment between GNU priorities, DCDT outcomes, and USAASA outcomes**



Under the GNU, USAASA's mission is to provide citizen-centric and participatory universal access and service to digital communication, infrastructure and broadcasting services in congruence with the DCDT's overall goal of being a leader in enabling a connected and digitally transformed South

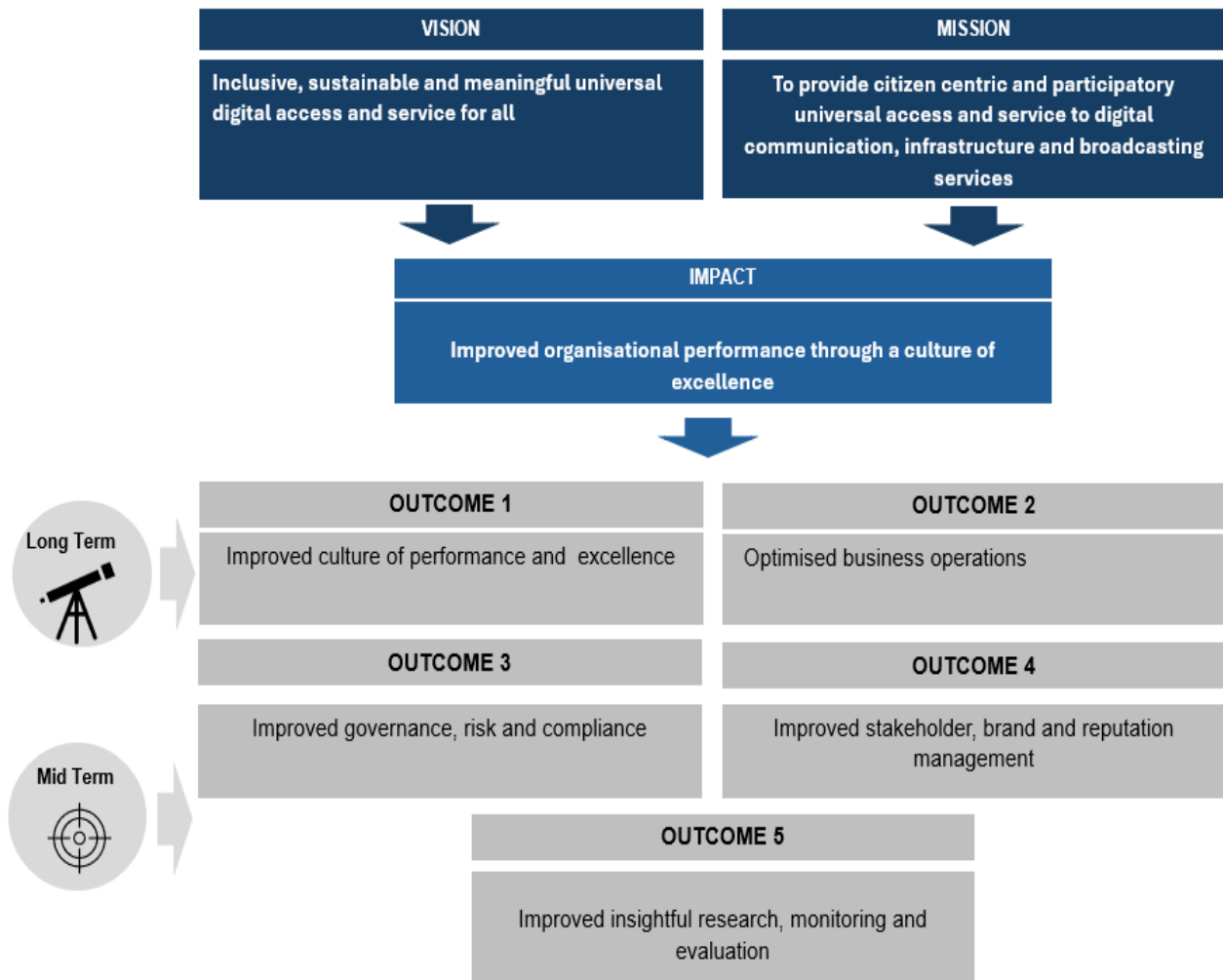
Africa. This mission is achieved through:

- Increased deployment of sustainable and reliable digital communication, infrastructure and broadband services to underserved areas.
- Collaboration and partnership with relevant stakeholders.
- Conducting insightful research, monitoring and evaluation.
- Improved governance of USAF subsidies and funding.
- Creating a culture of performance and excellence.

In addition, ensuring universal access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become even more critical for the development of underserved areas in South Africa. The coalition government has underscored the need for digital infrastructure as a cornerstone of economic recovery and a tool for empowering historically marginalised communities. This era of coalition government is thus characterised by an intensified focus on integrating ICT into the broader strategy for national development, recognising that access to digital resources is key to fostering equitable economic participation, educational opportunities, and social inclusion.

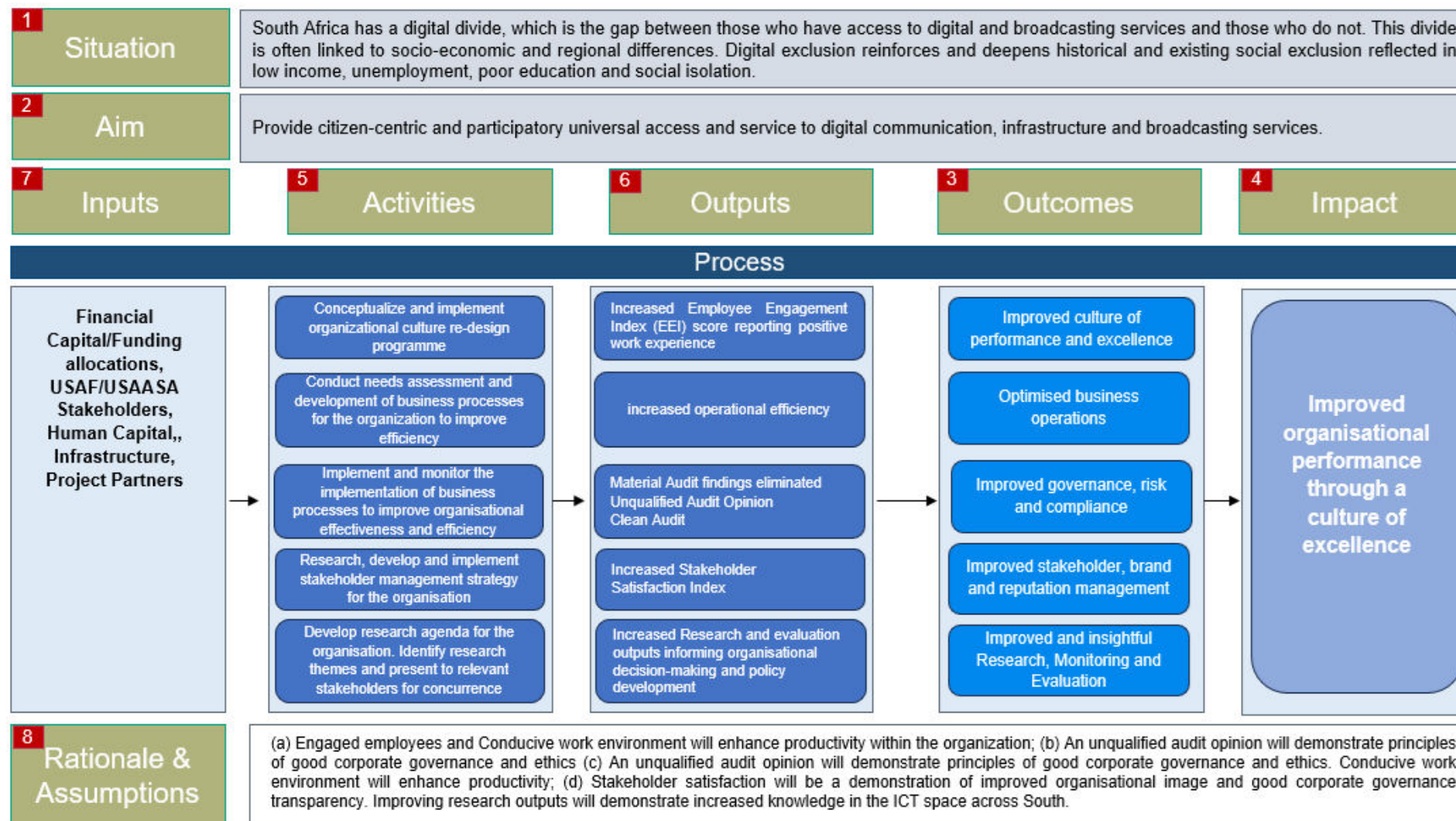
USAASA's efforts under the second GNU have been directed towards scaling up broadband access, expanding digital literacy programmes, and supporting public-private partnerships that facilitate technological innovation. This is achieved through collaboration with various stakeholders, including government departments, ICT service providers, and community organisations with an aim to close the digital divide that still persists, particularly in rural and underserved areas. The agency's expanded role aligns with the GNU's commitment to reducing inequality, creating jobs through a digital economy, and enhancing South Africa's competitive edge on the global stage. This renewed push for comprehensive ICT access not only supports economic and educational development but also fosters national unity by enabling broader participation in democratic processes, empowering citizens, and contributing to a more connected and informed society.

To this end, USAASA management, led by its Board has embarked on a strategic review and planning processes that commenced early in September 2024 until the end of January 2025 to develop the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan and the aligned 2025/26 Annual Performance Plans. In facilitating these processes, a logic model was followed to identify USAASA's/USAF's five-year priority outcomes, accompanied by a new vision and mission to be implemented towards achieving the 2025/26-2029/30 Strategic Plan objectives (see Figure 2). This logic model, particularly the outcomes identified, directly supports the work of the Minister for the DCDT to deliver on his executive authority duties.

**Figure 2: Logic Model of USAASA**

Deliberations during the USAASA/USAF strategic review and planning processes provided the building blocks for the development of a USAASA Theory of Change (TOC) model (see Figure 3) below. This TOC model outlines the processes USAASA will engage with over a five-year period (2025-2030) to facilitate change towards specific outcomes and impact. All factors contributing towards achieving USAASA's intended aim (inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact) were considered during the planning sessions, which resulted in the USAASA TOC model that should be interpreted from numbers 1-8 of the TOC below.

Figure 3: USAASA Theory of Change Model



## PART A: OUR MANDATE

### 1. CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

USAASA/USAF derive their mandate from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. According to Chapter 10 (Section 195 [1]) of the constitution, public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, including adhering to the following principles:

- High standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
- Public administration must be development-oriented.
- Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making.
- Public administration must be accountable.
- Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.
- Good human resources management and career-development practices, to examine human potential, must be cultivated, and,
- Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.

In addition, Chapter 2 (Bill of Rights), sub-section 16 of the constitution prescribes that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which among others includes:

- Freedom of the press and other media.
- Freedom to receive or impart information or ideas.
- Freedom of artistic creativity; and
- Academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.

Therefore, in the context of USAASA, the right to freedom of expression can be interpreted as a right to have access to resources, facilities and equipment to enable such freedom of expression. The right to have access to telecommunication resources, facilities and equipment is therefore a basic human right in South Africa.

## 2. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY MANDATES

USAASA/USAF draws its legislative mandates from Sections 80-91 of the Electronic Communications Act (ECA, 36 of 2005), which indicates that the primary mandate and functions of USAASA are, among others, to:

- Provide policy and regulatory advice to both the Minister and the sector regulator on any matter relating to universal access and universal service.
- Manage USAF in accordance with the provisions of the ECA and strive to promote the goal of universal access and universal service.
- Encourage, facilitate and offer guidance in respect of any scheme to provide universal service and access, services or telecommunication services;
- Foster the adoption of innovation, specifically the use of new methods of attaining universal access and universal service;
- Make recommendations to enable the Minister to determine what constitutes universal access, universal service and underserved areas;
- Conduct research into and keep abreast of developments in the Republic and elsewhere on ICT, electronic communications services and electronic communications facilities;
- Continually survey (monitor) and evaluate the extent to which universal access and service have been achieved;

The main aim of USAASA is to promote universal access to telecommunications and digital services, especially in underserved and rural communities. The key legislative mandates guiding USAASA/USAF's operations can be summarised as follows:

### *The Electronic Communications Act (ECA) of 2005*

- The ECA provides the legal framework for USAASA to promote universal service and access to electronic communications services.
- It mandates USAASA to ensure affordable and accessible digital services in underserved areas.
- The ECA also created the USAF, which is managed by USAASA to fund initiatives that improve digital infrastructure and access.

### *Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act*

- While not specific to telecommunications, this act encourages USAASA to support digital initiatives that contribute to socio-economic development, including empowering historically disadvantaged communities.

### *Public Finance Management Act (PFMA)*

- The PFMA governs the financial management of USAASA, ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective use of public funds.

*Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) Act*

- USAASA collaborates with ICASA, which regulates the broader telecommunications industry, to align on goals for universal service.

These legislative mandates within which USAASA/USAF operates aim to bridge the digital divide in South Africa by enabling USAASA to develop and fund initiatives that promote digital inclusion and economic growth through access to ICT and digital infrastructure. Other legislation impacting on the mandate of USAASA/USAF includes:

- *The Infrastructure Development Act* (IDA), 2014 (23 of 2014), as amended.
- *The Electronic Communications and Transactions Act* (25 of 2002), as amended,
- *The State Information Technology Agency* (SITA) Act (88 of 1998), as amended.

### 3. INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES OVER THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD

USAASA is responsible for promoting universal access to ICT services in underserved and rural areas across South Africa. Its corresponding institutional policies focus on achieving equitable access to digital and communication services aligned with the following policies at a global, national and regional level:

#### 3.1 United Nations Agenda 2030 and the African Union's Agenda 2063

The United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030 and the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063 (although their discourse is often in terms of a 2063 horizon, rather than 2060) both emphasise digital infrastructure access as a pathway to sustainable development and economic transformation. For instance, the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the UN Agenda 2030 also inform the work of USAASA/USAF:

- *Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure*

This goal specifically promotes building resilient infrastructure, fostering innovation, and increasing access to ICT.

- *Goal 4: Quality Education*

This goal includes supporting digital literacy and access to technology in education to improve learning outcomes and equip students with the ICT skills, that are necessary for the future workforce.

In addition, the AU Agenda 2063 document outlines several aspirations with priority areas focused on a prosperous, inclusive, and technologically advanced Africa. Some of the key sections that address digital access include:

- A Prosperous Africa Based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development.
- Aims for a 'world-class infrastructure that crisscrosses Africa', emphasising regional connectivity and digital infrastructure to support economic growth and integration. This includes affordable internet access and modern communication networks.
- Expanding ICT networks to enhance connectivity and ensure affordable internet access across Africa, and,
- Emphasises the role of youth and women in digital transformation, with goals that promote access to ICT skills, entrepreneurship in the digital economy, and a technologically literate workforce to drive economic change.

The above UN and AU frameworks together stress the importance of digital infrastructure to bridge socio-economic divides, foster economic growth, and drive innovation across Africa and the world. These frameworks view ICT as essential for sustainable development, equitable access to information, and creating opportunities for all segments of society.

### 3.2 National Development Plan (NDP)

The NDP (Vision 2023) articulates and outlines goals related to digital access, ICT, and infrastructure as highlighted in the following specific chapters:

- *Chapter 4: Economic Infrastructure*

This chapter discusses the development of robust infrastructure to support the economy, including digital and ICT infrastructure. It addresses universal broadband access, the expansion of digital networks, and the role of ICT in promoting economic growth and reducing inequality. This is reflected in and aligned to USAASA's objective of universal service and access to digital infrastructure for all.

- *Chapter 9: Improving Education, Innovation, and Training*

This chapter emphasises the need for digital literacy and ICT skills development to build a knowledge-based economy. It includes goals for improving access to technology in schools, training for digital competencies, and fostering innovation through digital resources. It is vital to note that one of the areas USAASA is required to address is the lack of infrastructure in government facilities, therefore there is a specific need to install digital infrastructure in schools, health facilities and other public facilities.

- *Chapter 10: Promoting Health*

While focused on health, this chapter also highlights the importance of e-health and telemedicine services, which rely on ICT infrastructure for improving healthcare delivery, especially in rural and underserved areas.

- *Chapter 13: Building a Capable and Developmental State*

This chapter addresses e-government services and the use of ICT to improve government efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. It aligns with the NDP's goal of making government services more accessible through digital means.

- *Chapter 15: Nation Building and Social Cohesion*

This chapter supports digital inclusion as a means to connect communities and promote social cohesion. The NDP recognises that ICT can help bridge gaps across socio-economic and geographic divides, fostering a more inclusive society.

All these chapters collectively reflect the NDP's commitment to building a digitally enabled South Africa, focusing on infrastructure, skills development, and service delivery.

### 3.3 The Electronic Communications Act (ECA)

The ECA aims to make electronic communications services available to all South Africans, including underserved and rural communities. It establishes USAF, which helps to finance projects that expand digital infrastructure, including broadband and telecommunication services, to areas where private investment may not be sufficient. The ECA is foundational for expanding digital infrastructure access in South Africa. It promotes universal access, supports infrastructure sharing, encourages competition, and enforces regulatory standards, all of which help make digital

services more widely available and affordable. The ECA plays a crucial role in driving digital inclusion, helping South Africa move toward its goals for digital transformation and equitable connectivity.

### **3.4 National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper**

The National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper (2016) and the role of USAASA are key components of South Africa's strategy to improve access to digital infrastructure and promote universal service in ICT. Some of the key pillars of the White Paper are:

- Prioritising universal access to digital infrastructure, emphasising that all South Africans should have affordable access to broadband and other ICT services. This aligns with the broader goal of achieving digital inclusion, especially for people in rural, underserved, and disadvantaged communities.
- The promotion of an open access network. The government advocates for an open-access model where telecommunications infrastructure is shared among service providers to avoid duplicative investment, reduce costs, and improve service coverage.
- Setting broadband and connectivity targets which include providing universal broadband access by specific dates to meet national goals for digital connectivity.

The above initiatives as articulated in the White Paper are intended to reduce the digital divide, enable economic opportunities, and make digital services accessible for all South Africans, fostering a more inclusive digital economy.

### **3.5 Infrastructure Development Act**

The primary focus of the IDA (2014) is to expedite and coordinate infrastructure projects across sectors in South Africa. This includes among others, energy, water, transport, and ICT. Although it is a broad legislative framework, it incorporates provisions that indirectly support access to digital infrastructure. Some of the ways in which the IDA addresses digital infrastructure access are:

- Establishing a framework for Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs), which are large-scale infrastructure initiatives that aim to address economic and social infrastructure gaps. Some SIPs directly address digital infrastructure, particularly projects focused on ICT networks, broadband expansion, and communications technology. These SIPs help prioritise funding, streamline approvals, and accelerate timelines for essential digital infrastructure.
- The IDA also mandates streamlined processes for approvals, permits, and licenses. This is critical for digital infrastructure projects, such as expanding broadband, building data centres, and setting up ICT hubs, as it reduces delays associated with regulatory and environmental clearances. By facilitating quicker implementation, the IDA helps to ensure faster deployment of digital infrastructure across South Africa.
- The IDA also encourages partnerships between government and the private sector, which are essential for financing and deploying digital infrastructure. Private investment can play

a major role in extending ICT networks, especially in areas where government resources may be limited. Through these partnerships, digital infrastructure projects can access technical expertise, innovation and funding, making digital technology more accessible.

- The IDA further focuses on socio-economic development as it recognises infrastructure as a means to drive socio-economic development, which includes enabling digital access that can support education, healthcare, job creation, and business innovation. By promoting digital infrastructure, the IDA contributes to broader economic goals, including creating opportunities for digital entrepreneurship and improving quality of life through accessible technology.
- And lastly, in terms of alignment, the IDA indirectly supports the NDP (Vision 2030) goals for digital access by enabling infrastructure projects that align with national development priorities, including universal broadband access and digital transformation. The NDP calls for robust digital infrastructure as a foundation for inclusive economic growth, and the IDA provides the legislative mechanism to prioritise and develop this infrastructure.

While the IDA does not focus solely on digital infrastructure, it establishes a legal and regulatory framework that enables the prioritisation, coordination, and acceleration of digital projects. This support is essential for advancing equitable digital access, closing the digital divide, and building an economy that can leverage digital transformation for broader development in South Africa.

### 3.6 State Information Technology Agency (SITA) Act

The SITA Act (1998) outlines USAASA's role in managing and promoting access to digital technology within government institutions, primarily focusing on enhancing IT service quality, security, and affordability across public entities. Some key focus areas that align with USAASA are:

- *Affordable Access to Digital Technology:* SITA is tasked with ensuring that public sector entities receive cost-effective access to IT infrastructure and services. The agency is responsible for procuring and maintaining digital technologies that support government functions, making sure they are accessible at an affordable rate, thus reducing overall costs for government technology investments.
- *Promoting Efficient Use of ICT:* The SITA Act emphasizes the role of ICT in enhancing service delivery, with SITA responsible for creating systems that support efficient, secure, and effective communication within government bodies. This includes developing ICT policies, implementing best practices, and supporting digital transformation across government services to improve accessibility for citizens.
- *Supporting E-Government Initiatives:* SITA plays a key role in South Africa's e-government strategy, which aims to make government services more accessible to the public through digital platforms. The SITA Act empowers SITA to support e-government services, which include online access to public information, electronic filing, and digital platforms that

citizens can use to interact with government services more conveniently.

In brief, the SITA Act positions SITA as the core agency for advancing digital technology in South Africa's public sector, ensuring that government services are accessible, affordable, secure, and aligned with national ICT policies. Through this mandate, SITA contributes to South Africa's broader goals for digital transformation, aiming to improve both internal government efficiencies and public access to digital services.

#### **4. RELEVANT COURT RULINGS**

At the time of developing this Strategic Plan for 2025/26-2029/30, there were no specific court rulings that have a significant and/or ongoing impact on USAASA/USAF's ongoing operations or business obligations.

## PART B: OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

### 5. VISION

Inclusive, sustainable and meaningful universal digital access and service for all.

### 6. MISSION

To provide citizen-centric and participatory universal access and service to digital communication, infrastructure and broadcasting services through:

- Increased deployment of sustainable and reliable digital communication, infrastructure and broadband services to underserved areas.
- Collaboration and partnership with relevant stakeholders.
- Conducting insightful research, monitoring and evaluation.
- Improved governance of USAF subsidies and funding.
- Creating a culture of performance and excellence.

### 7. VALUES

USAASA subscribes to the following internal values which are in line with the *Batho Pele* principles:

| Value          | Description – What it means in practice                                                                                                   |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Batho Pele     | We believe in providing excellent, efficient and effective service to all customers and stakeholders.                                     |
| Integrity      | We uphold high standards of trust, condemn bribery and corruption, and support honesty and respect in all interactions with stakeholders. |
| Accountability | We foster employee ownership and responsibility in ensuring quality service.                                                              |
| Innovation     | We support employee creativity in delivering all our services.                                                                            |
| Transparency   | We encourage openness in all our activities.                                                                                              |
| Teamwork       | We strive to create a harmonious work environment, where all employees and contributors are respected.                                    |

## 8. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

USAASA/USAF operates in a dynamic and rapidly evolving external environment impacting on the agency's internal capability and capacity to deliver on its legal mandate to promote and facilitate universal access to telecommunications and digital services, especially in underserved and rural communities.

Despite this fluctuating landscape characterised mainly by ongoing technological innovation such as artificial intelligence (AI), shifting consumer behaviours towards digital communication channels, increasing budgetary constraints, and regulatory changes, USAASA has remained focused on advancing its legal mandate through – for example – supporting initiatives such as the SA Connect Broadband Connectivity Project. This project is specifically aimed at expanding access to high-speed internet connectivity, particularly in underserved and rural areas. By deploying broadband infrastructure and promoting affordable internet access, the SA Connect Broadband Connectivity Project represents critical pillars of South Africa's digital transformation agenda aligning with global, regional, and national objectives of socio-economic development, job creation, infrastructure development, and enhanced service delivery.

Amidst such opportunities, USAASA identified critical challenges to infrastructure access in underserved and remote areas; and ensuring equitable access to communication networks and digital technologies. These challenges are mainly due to funding constraints and regulatory hurdles. In support of addressing these (and other) challenges related to expanding telecommunications and digital access, USAASA will be implementing interventions aimed at the strategic allocation of resources, enhancing operational efficiency and effectiveness through modernised (digitised) organisational systems and processes, and expanding inclusivity of its service delivery mechanisms in line with regulatory requirements. This includes expansive initiatives to leverage strategic partnerships and strengthen its internal research and reporting capacity.

### 8.1 External Environment Analysis

A SWOT analysis conducted during the USAASA/USAF strategic planning session identified several opportunities and threats in the external environment. The agencies should capitalise on these external opportunities and be aware of the potential impact of external threats to its performance and operations (see Figure 4).

| Figure 4: Opportunities and Threats                                                               |                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Opportunities                                                                                     | Threats                                                                              |
| Collaboration with other partners such as South Africa Connect, Broad Band Infracore (BBI), DCDT, | The possibility of other bodies and institutions encroaching on USAASA's mandate and |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| South African Post Office (SAPO), National Education Multimedia Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) and more.                                                                                                                            | environmental disasters that may wash away existing digital infrastructure.                                                                                                                                                  |
| Digital transformation (modernization) through deployment of cutting-edge technical solutions.                                                                                                                                          | Proposals to de-establish USAF might cause uncertainties in the operations of the organisation.                                                                                                                              |
| Availability of funding to fund USAASA additional projects and related activities to improve access to ICT in the underserved areas.                                                                                                    | Changes in the political regulatory requirements in future might affect USAASA's operations                                                                                                                                  |
| Rationalisation of the organisation, including embarking on organisational re-design and development including filling of vacant positions to support the organisation.                                                                 | Natural disasters may wash away installed digital infrastructure given the absence of back-up (contingency) measures and an approved business continuity plan.                                                               |
| Collaboration and partnership with institutions of higher learning and private partners to support USAASA's research initiatives.                                                                                                       | The lack of reliable electricity supply in South Africa can increase project costs and complicate USAASA's operations, especially in remote areas requiring stable energy for telecommunication towers and digital services. |
| Creating an accessible portal containing data, publications, and opportunities for partnership on digital transformation in South Africa and across the continent.                                                                      | Cyber-attacks might decrease the uptake and usage of USAASA's services.                                                                                                                                                      |
| Utilise its legislative mandate to promote B-BBEE by empowering historically disadvantaged communities through the facilitation of collaborative partnerships between disadvantaged communities and the private sector around ICT Hubs. | Duplication of mandates between SOEs.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Transformation of the sector through incubator programmes for Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs).                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Repurposing of the USAF into the Digital Development Challenge Fund.                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

In support of the USAASA/USAF SWOT analysis, a PESTEL analysis was also conducted which identified the following key macro-environmental factors impacting directly on the agency's ability to optimally execute its mandate (see Figure 5):

**Figure 5: PESTEL Analysis of USAASA**

| Dimension            | Key Macro-Environmental Factors impacting on USAASA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Political</b>     | USAASA operates within the regulatory framework provided by the South African government, primarily under the ECA and related national policies. USAASA's initiatives align with the country's push for digital inclusion, overseen by the DCDT, to bridge the digital divide and promote social equity. However, possible changes in political leadership may affect the delivery models and modes. This can create instability in the organisation if not appropriately managed. Changes in political leadership also create uncertainties and obstacles in implementing the programmes of the agency. There are also uncertainties over the stability of the 7 <sup>th</sup> administration (second GNU) as there was no outright winner and this might delay certain decisions to be taken. |
| <b>Economic</b>      | South Africa's economic constraints, including high unemployment, inequality, and low growth rates impact on USAASA's capacity to expand ICT infrastructure in underserved areas. Funding limitations and reliance on government budgets affect how USAASA pursues its mission, as economic downturns often lead to reduced allocations for the delivery of public services deemed 'non-essential'. Further budget cuts by National Treasury may negatively affect the operations of the agency.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Social</b>        | USAASA's focus on reducing the digital divide supports South Africa's broader goal of social transformation. Expanding digital access is essential for education, healthcare, and job opportunities, especially in rural areas. The agency also plays a role in supporting affordable broadband access, which is critical for social inclusion and economic participation. Conflicting needs of society, e.g. the need for water and electricity over the need for digital access, may adversely affect USAASA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Technological</b> | USAASA supports South Africa's readiness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) by expanding ICT infrastructure. This includes facilitating digital broadcasting for underserved communities and enabling technological advancements in these areas. However, challenges like insufficient infrastructure in rural areas and the high cost of technology continue to limit widespread access. Also, the fast rate of technological changes/innovations leaves USAASA with the risk of rolling out obsolete technology.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Environmental</b> | USAASA's ICT initiatives are delivered in the context of global debates on climate change. As such, the agency is faced with environmental concerns related to electronic waste management and the ecological impact of expanding ICT infrastructure. The agency's ICT expansion/accessibility mandate thus need to be aligned with the country's environmental goals, especially given the                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|              | rise in environmental consciousness globally.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Legal</b> | USAASA is governed by strict legal frameworks, including mandates from the ECA and the PFMA. These provisions ensure transparency, accountability, and equitable delivery services. However, compliance with complex regulatory requirements can at times slow down project implementation. Such lags should be factored into project design and implementation. The agency's adoption and use of the Public Service Act while it is a public entity makes it less agile to deliver on its mandate. USAASA's history of litigation with service providers has implications for its financial resources, operational focus, and reputation. Strategies for effective dispute resolution and contract management are critical to mitigate the risks. Barriers to entry for SMME's in the deployment of infrastructure is a limiting factor in promoting SMMEs in the ICT space. |

## 8.2 Internal Environmental Analysis

USAASA is organized into two (2) programmes consisting of specific sub-programmes identified below:

| Programme                           | Sub-programme                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Programme 1 – Business Support      | Corporate Services<br>Stakeholder Engagements<br>Information Technology<br>Finance & Supply Chain Management<br>Legal Services<br>Risk management<br>Internal Audit |
| Programme 2 – Business Intelligence | Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation<br>Research                                                                                                                       |

These two programmes contribute to the achievement of USAASA's outcomes through programme level outputs, output indicators, and annual and quarterly targets. Section 8.2.1 gives an indication of the past performance (2020-2024) of these programmes.

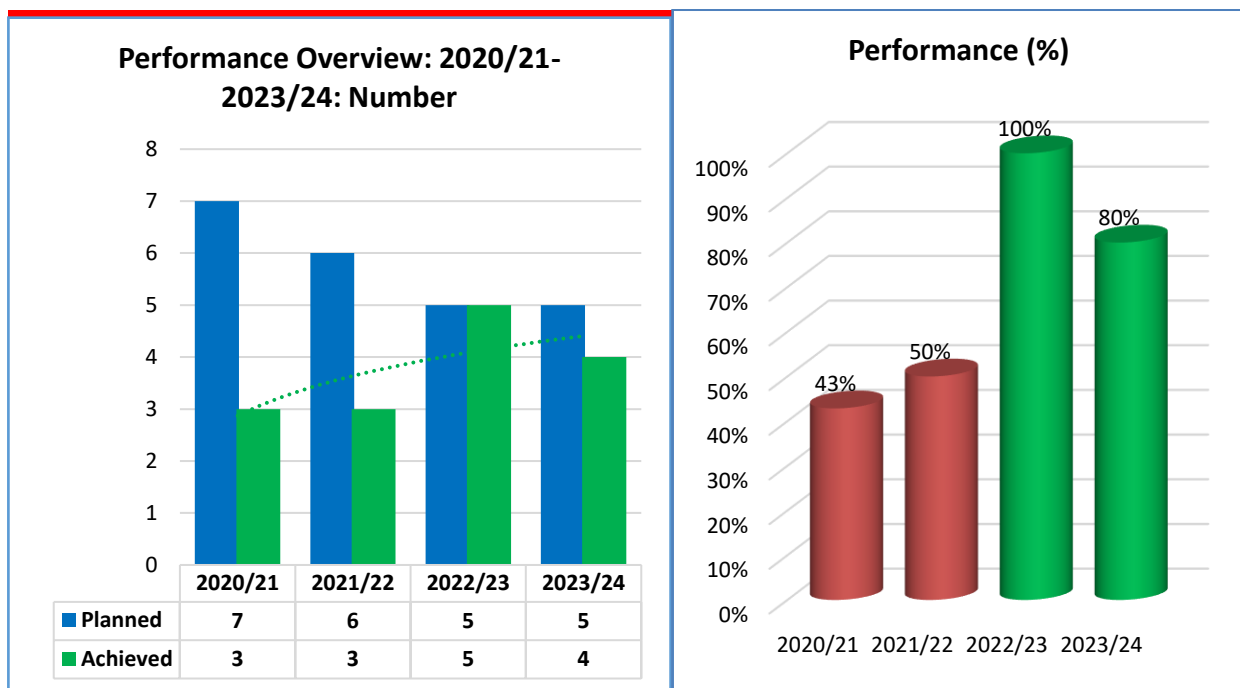
### 8.2.1 Analysis of Past Performance Against 2020 – 2024 Targets

USAASA/USAF's past performance must be contextualised in relation to the general challenges that affected South Africa during the period 2020-2024; one being the Covid-19 pandemic which required the closure of all non-essential government departments and entities for a specified period. Consequently, departments and government entities had to adopt new strategies to deliver on their performance targets. Amongst the new strategies was the adoption of hybrid work opportunities where time was divided between working from home (remote work) and office-based work. Despite

the introduction of such hybrid working arrangements, the USAASA annual reports assessed between 2020 to 2024 show that the overall performance of USAASA on its mandate has been adequate. Despite the adverse impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the operations of USAASA/USAF, the agencies succeeded in devising strategies to overcome the challenges emerging from the pandemic.

A trends analysis of the USAASA's past performance extracted from the annual reports and planning documents for 2020/21 to 2023/24 strategic period shows that USAASA has made considerable progress in maintaining strong governance through an unqualified audit opinion. However, more data and tracking are needed to assess progress towards other strategic outcomes, such as the National Operations Centre and the production of annual reports on universal access and service. The graphs below (Figure 6) indicate how the organisation performed over the period.

**Figure 6: USAASA's Performance Overview From 2020/21 to 2023/24**



Over the strategic period, USAASA shows clear improvement from 43% in 2020/21 to 100% in 2022/23, followed by a minor dip in 2023/24. Despite the dip in 2023/24, the organization is still performing strongly. This progression reflects a positive trend in meeting strategic outcomes, reducing the gap and improve future performance.

In addition, the organisation has shown specific progress in key areas like risk management and geographic mapping for broadband service. However, there are recurring challenges, particularly in financial management and project execution. Addressing these issues will be critical for the organization's continued success in delivering its mandate in the coming years.

In general, the trend shows positive strides in strategic initiatives, especially from 2021/22 onwards.

However, there were some missed opportunities in earlier years to track and address financial efficiency and organizational planning. Going forward, it is critical for USAASA to maintain focus on financial management, including the reduction of wasteful and irregular expenditure, while also continuing to strengthen its strategic planning and stakeholder engagement processes.

## 8.2.2 Organisational Strengths and Weaknesses

A SWOT analysis conducted during the USAASA/USAF strategic planning assembly identified the following internal strengths and weaknesses. The agency should capitalise on these strengths and address the weaknesses identified in Figure 7.

| Figure 7: Strengths and Weakness of USAASA                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strengths                                                                                                                                             | Weaknesses                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| The organisation has a clear mandate supported by political leadership, and autonomy and authority derived from the Constitution.                     | USAASA's high number of vacant, funded posts and acting leadership roles in addition to inadequate funding and a constrained operating environment.                                          |
| The organisation has unity of purpose among employees, management and the Board.                                                                      | USAASA's centralised model of digital infrastructure delivery hampers the wider reach and geo-specialisation in service delivery.                                                            |
| USAASA has autonomy and authority derived from the ECA to provide universal digital access and services to underserved areas.                         | Lack of sufficient integration between strategic planning, research, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) due to the absence of an M&E Business Unit with specialised skills in research and M&E. |
| The USAASA mandate is aligned with global, regional, and national socio-economic development priorities.                                              | No documented business processes and standard operating procedures.                                                                                                                          |
| Guaranteed appropriation from National Treasury.                                                                                                      | Poor and inadequate partnership with other stakeholders and lack of an implementation model leading to project delays and failures.                                                          |
| There is an established list of underserved areas to be connected for broadband programmes and for BDM households earning less than R3 500 per month. | Absence of a 'fit for purpose' organisational structure and resource capabilities aligned to USAASA's mandate.                                                                               |
| The ECA is clear that the money to close the access gaps must be collected through levies from licenses.                                              | Proposals to de-establish USAASA might cause uncertainties in the operations of the organisation.                                                                                            |

## PART C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

### 9. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### 9.1 Measuring the Impact

The abridged Theory of Change was used as a planning instrument to outline the change or impact required from USAASA/USAF for the next five years. The focus was on why and how a particular intervention would lead to change. All factors contributing towards achieving intended results (output, outcomes, and impact) were considered during planning sessions. This resulted in the identification of the impact statement below:

|                         |                                                                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Impact Statement</b> | <b>Improved organisational performance through a culture of excellence</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### 9.2 Measuring the Outcomes

USAASA defined five (5) outcomes for the 2025/2030 strategic period to direct its effort and focus (see Figure 8). These outcomes are aligned with priority 1 and 2 of the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) and key priorities of the DCDT.

| Figure 8: USAASA Outcomes             |                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MTDP (2025-2030) relevant priorities  |                                                                                                                    |
| Priority 1                            | Inclusive growth and job creation                                                                                  |
| Outcome                               | Increased infrastructure investment and job creation                                                               |
| Priority 2                            | Reduce Poverty and Tackle the High Cost of Living                                                                  |
| Outcome                               | Social cohesion and nation-building                                                                                |
| DCDT (2025-2030) relevant priorities  |                                                                                                                    |
| Priority 1                            | High performing and sustainable portfolio to enable achievement of their respective mandates and policy objectives |
| Priority 2                            | Digitally Transform Economy and Society                                                                            |
| USAASA/USAF (2025-2030) five outcomes |                                                                                                                    |
| Outcome 1                             | Improved culture of performance and excellence                                                                     |
| Outcome 2                             | Optimised business operations                                                                                      |
| Outcome 3                             | Improved governance, risk and compliance                                                                           |
| Outcome 4                             | Improved stakeholder, brand and reputation management                                                              |
| Outcome 5                             | Improved and insightful Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (R, M&E)                                               |

### 9.3. Stakeholders Analysis

USAASA/USAF undertook a series of consultations with internal management, the Board, and the entity's key stakeholders through virtual platforms during October, November 2024 and January 2025. These engagements were aimed at gathering perspectives, insights, and areas of collaboration to assist USAASA/USAF in finalising its 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

A two-fold approach was used to solicit insights/inputs. Firstly, a questionnaire was circulated to the stakeholders to provide their responses regarding their observations of USAASA. Secondly, the completed questionnaires formed the basis for discussions during consultation sessions. The stakeholders deliberated on a number of issues, including their perspectives on alignment and potential areas of collaboration with USAASA. Figure 9 presents a stakeholder matrix indicating the stakeholder group, their level of influence, areas of possible collaboration, and expectations from USAASA.

**Figure 9: USAASA/USAF Stakeholder Matrix**

| Stakeholder Group                                                 | Level of Influence | Areas of Collaboration                                                                         | Expectations                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT)      | High               | Policy development, Governance and reporting                                                   | Partnership, Programme implementation and accountability   |
| .ZADNA                                                            | Low                | Domain name creation and email addresses for our customers                                     | Digital identity of the schools and other service centres  |
| Broadband Infraco (BBI)                                           | High               | Implementation of broadband                                                                    | Partnership and broadband rollout                          |
| State Information Technology Agency (SITA)                        | Low                | Hosting and managing the BDM portal/system                                                     | Partnership and Efficient and effective management systems |
| South African Post Office (SAPO)                                  | Low                | Management and storage of USAASA inventory, distribution and registration of BDM beneficiaries | Processing of the data and verification                    |
| Postbank                                                          | Low                | Not defined                                                                                    | Not defined                                                |
| National Education Multi-media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) | High               | Training and development, Communications, Research and publications                            | Funding                                                    |

**Figure 9: USAASA/USAF Stakeholder Matrix**

| Stakeholder Group                                             | Level of Influence | Areas of Collaboration                                                              | Expectations                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sentech                                                       | High               | BDM rollout                                                                         | Installed STB's, Proper BDM installation                                            |
| South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)                 | High               | Awareness raising and Promotion of BDM, Increased registration of the BDM           | Drive campaigns to increased citizens knowledge about BDM and other USAASA services |
| Films and Publications Board (FPB)                            | Low                | Not defined                                                                         | Not defined                                                                         |
| Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)  | Medium             | Updated list of under-serviced communities or municipalities                        | Sharing the list of under-serviced areas throughout the country                     |
| Provincial government and Municipalities in underserved areas | Low                | Identification of underserved areas, protection of infrastructure against criminals | Awareness through community dialogues and authorities regarding the USAASA services |

USAASA's Outcomes, Indicators, and Targets for 2025 to 2030 are listed below:

| USAASA's Outcomes, Indicators, and Targets (2025-2030)    |                                                                                    |               |                                                                                                       |                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome                                                   | Indicator                                                                          | Baseline      | Mid-Term Targets                                                                                      | Five Year Targets                                                                       |
| Improved culture of performance and excellence            | Increased Employee Engagement Index (EEI) score reporting positive work experience | New indicator | 100% implementation of the climate and culture programme document                                     | Sustain, monitor and evaluate impact of the climate and culture programme document      |
|                                                           |                                                                                    | New indicator | 70% (cumulative) implementation of the organisational redesign strategy                               | 100% (cumulative) implementation of the organisational redesign strategy                |
| Optimised business operations                             | Percentage implementation of the digital transformation strategy                   | New indicator | 50% (cumulative) implementation of the digital transformation strategy                                | 100% (cumulative) implementation of the digital transformation strategy                 |
| Improved governance, risk and compliance                  | Percentage reduction of material audit findings                                    | New indicator | 100% reduction of USAASA material audit findings<br><br>50% reduction of USAF material audit findings | 100% (cumulative) reduction of USAF material audit findings                             |
| Improved stakeholder and brand management                 | Percentage implementation of Stakeholder Engagement Plan                           | New indicator | 50% (cumulative) implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan                                    | 100% (cumulative) implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan                     |
|                                                           | Percentage implementation of the brand Management Plan                             | New indicator | 50% (cumulative) implementation of the brand management plan in line with the strategy                | 100% (cumulative) implementation of the brand management plan in line with the strategy |
| Improved and insightful Research, Monitoring & Evaluation | Number of research articles published                                              | New indicator | 10 (cumulative) research articles published                                                           | 18 (cumulative) research articles published                                             |
|                                                           | Percentage implementation of the M&E framework                                     | New indicator | 50% (cumulative) implementation of activities in the M&E framework                                    | 100% (cumulative) implementation of activities in the M&E framework                     |

| USAASA's Outcomes, Indicators, and Targets (2025-2030) |                                       |          |                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome                                                | Indicator                             | Baseline | Mid-Term Targets                                                                                 | Five Year Targets                                                                                                |
|                                                        | Number of evaluation reports produced |          | One mid-term evaluation report on the USAF projects implemented from 2025/26 to 2027/28 produced | One consolidated end of term evaluation report on the USAF projects implemented from 2025/26 to 2029/30 produced |

### 9.3 Explanation of Planned Performance over the Five-Year Planning Period

USAASA will continue working towards fulfilling its constitutional and legislative mandates to contribute towards efforts to ensure universal service and access to underserved areas in South Africa. The agency will achieve this by deploying sustainable and reliable digital communication, infrastructure and broadcasting services to underserved areas. This connection will improve the access of households and communities in underserved areas to digital infrastructure therefore enabling them to participate in the digital economy. In addition, the USSASA will implement projects to increase community Wi-Fi hotspots operational in the underserved and rural communities.

The agency will further implement programmes to improve organisational performance aimed at building a culture of excellence by implementing an organisational culture renewal in the next five years. As part of continuous improvement, the organisation will review its business processes and determine which processes requiring digitisation (modernisation). Additionally, the agency will develop a research agenda to map out areas of research to develop insights that will also contribute to the improved performance of the organisation including the development and dissemination of thought leadership articles. This will also include development of M&E systems to ensure reporting compliance by 2027.

One of the planned targets for the next five years is to improve the governance of USAF. The focus will be on ensuring that subsidies are used effectively to achieve universal access to telecommunications services, particularly in underserved and rural areas. Key aspects of improved USAF governance include the following:

- *Enhanced Transparency and Accountability:* Improving governance would focus on making fund allocations and disbursements more transparent to stakeholders, including government bodies, telecom operators, and the public.
- *Better Targeting and Resource Allocation:* Governance improvements aim to ensure that funds are directed towards high-impact projects, specifically targeting areas with the greatest need for connectivity. This can help optimise the reach and effectiveness of subsidies, ensuring that funds go to initiatives that provide meaningful improvements in access.
- *Strengthened Compliance and Monitoring:* Enforcing full compliance and monitoring measures to ensure that subsidies are used in alignment with the USAF's mission. Improved governance would also involve regular audits, progress reporting, and adherence to eligibility criteria, reducing the risk of fraud or inefficiency.

The USAASA/USAF plan to improve governance over subsidies and funding is a proactive approach to ensure that universal service goals are met, funds are used efficiently, and projects are sustainable.

## 10. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION OF RISKS

| Outcome                                                      | Risk                                                                       | Mitigation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Improved organisational culture                              | Poor organisational and employee performance and productivity.             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of change management strategy.</li> <li>• Employee engagement and active participation.</li> <li>• Practice USAASA values for improved organisational culture.</li> <li>• Establishment of leadership and governance charter.</li> <li>• Performance incentives.</li> </ul> |
| Optimised business operations                                | ICT and business continuity risk.                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Improved governance, risk and compliance.                    | Non-adherence to good governance and ethical behaviour.                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean audit opinion.</li> <li>• Optimised business operations.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Improved stakeholder, brand and reputation management.       | Reputational risk: negative media reports and stakeholder dissatisfaction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Stakeholder Relations Plan, Crisis Management Plan, as well as stakeholder, brand and reputation management strategy.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                 |
| Improved and insightful research, monitoring and evaluation. | Limited resources                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational redesign.</li> <li>• Partnerships with research institutions.</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate the social impact on digitalisation in underserved areas.</li> </ul>                                                                                                          |

## 11. PUBLIC ENTITIES

Neither USAASA nor USAF have any public entities.

## PART D: TECHNICAL INDICATOR DESCRIPTIONS (TIDS)

|                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator Title                                    | <b>Increased Employee Engagement Index (EEI) score reporting positive work experience</b>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Definition                                         | This indicator measures the shift in organisational culture by assessing employee engagement, sentiment, and experience. An increase in EEI score and positive work experience reports indicate improved culture, while a decline suggests areas for improvement. |
| Source of Data                                     | Baseline data on the current culture                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment                 | Annual employee surveys, focus groups, or culture assessments                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Means of verification                              | Report on the employee culture shift                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Assumptions                                        | Employee participation and buy-in<br>Honest feedback from employees                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries (where applicable) | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Spatial Transformation (where applicable)          | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Reporting Cycle                                    | Annual progress against the five-year target                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Desired Performance                                | Meeting, or potentially exceeding, the target for the strategic plan period                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Indicator Responsibility                           | Executive Manager Corporate Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator Title                    | <b>Percentage implementation of the digital transformation strategy</b>                                                                                                                               |
| Definition                         | This indicator measures the implementation of the digital transformation strategy to achieve optimised business operations by assessing cost reduction, process efficiency, and overall effectiveness |
| Source of Data                     | Digital Transformation Strategy<br>Implementation Plan                                                                                                                                                |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment | Numerator: total number of activities in the Digital Transformation Strategy implemented<br>Denominator: total number of activities in the Digital Transformation Strategy                            |
| Means of verification              | Digital Transformation Strategy implementation report<br>POE supporting the reported performance                                                                                                      |
| Assumptions                        | Honest responses from stakeholders<br>Uptake and usage of the new systems<br>System implementation<br>Adequate budgeting                                                                              |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries    | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Spatial Transformation             | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Reporting Cycle                    | Annual progress against the three-year target                                                                                                                                                         |
| Desired Performance                | Meeting, or potentially exceeding, the target for the strategic plan period                                                                                                                           |
| Indicator Responsibility           | Executive Manager Corporate Services                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                  |                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator Title                  | <b>Percentage reduction of material audit findings</b>                                                             |
| Definition                       | The indicator measures the number of material findings reduced                                                     |
| Source of Data                   | External Audit Report from the AGSA<br>Integrated Audit action plan<br>Internal audit reports                      |
| Method of Calculation/Assessment | Numerator: Number of material findings reduced<br>Denominator: Number of material findings from the previous audit |
| Means of verification            | Progress report on the implementation of the integrated audit action plan<br>POE supporting activities implemented |
| Assumptions                      | There will be adequate resources and skills to implement the action plans                                          |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries  | Not applicable                                                                                                     |
| Spatial Transformation           | Not applicable                                                                                                     |
| Reporting Cycle                  | Annual progress against the five-year target                                                                       |
| Desired Performance              | Meeting the target for the strategic plan period                                                                   |
| Indicator Responsibility         | Chief Financial Officer                                                                                            |

| Indicator Title                                    | Percentage implementation of Stakeholder Engagement Plan                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Definition                                         | This indicator measures stakeholder satisfaction, reflecting improved relationships, brand perception, and reputation. Including evaluating stakeholder perception of the organisation |
| Source of Data                                     | Board approved stakeholder and brand management strategy<br>Stakeholder engagement plan                                                                                                |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment                 | Numerator: number of activities in the of the stakeholder engagement plan implemented<br>Denominator: total number of activities in the of the stakeholder engagement plan             |
| Means of verification                              | Report on the implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan<br>POE that supports reported performance                                                                              |
| Assumptions                                        | 1. Survey questions effectively capture stakeholder satisfaction<br>2. Stakeholder support and buy-in<br>3. Budget availability                                                        |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries (where applicable) | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Spatial Transformation (where applicable)          | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Reporting Cycle                                    | Annual progress against the five-year target                                                                                                                                           |
| Desired Performance                                | Meeting the target for the strategic plan period                                                                                                                                       |
| Indicator Responsibility                           | Executive Manager Performance Management                                                                                                                                               |

| Indicator Title                                    | Percentage implementation of the Brand Management Plan                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Definition                                         | This indicator measures brand awareness, sentiment, media coverage, and effectiveness to evaluate public perception of the organisation.                                                      |
| Source of Data                                     | Board approved stakeholder and brand management strategy<br>Brand management plan                                                                                                             |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment                 | Numerator: number of activities in the brand management plan implemented<br>Denominator: total number of activities in the brand management plan                                              |
| Means of verification                              | Report on the implementation of the brand management plan                                                                                                                                     |
| Assumptions                                        | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Survey questions effectively capture stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>2. Stakeholder support and buy-in</li> <li>3. Budget availability</li> </ol> |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries (where applicable) | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Spatial Transformation (where applicable)          | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Reporting Cycle                                    | Annual progress against the five-year target                                                                                                                                                  |
| Desired Performance                                | Meeting the target for the strategic plan period                                                                                                                                              |
| Indicator Responsibility                           | Executive Manager Performance Management                                                                                                                                                      |

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator Title                           | <b>Percentage implementation of the Board approved research strategy</b>                                                                                                                        |
| Definition                                | This indicator measures the percentage implementation of the Board-approved research strategy to ensure that the organisation's research efforts align with its overall strategic objectives    |
| Source of Data                            | Board approved Research Strategy<br>Board approved 5-year research implementation plan                                                                                                          |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment        | Numerator: number of activities in the approved 5-year research implementation plan implemented/<br>Denominator: total number of activities in the approved 5-year research implementation plan |
| Means of verification                     | Progress report on implementation of the approved 5-year research implementation plan                                                                                                           |
| Assumptions                               | Budget allocation                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries           | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Spatial Transformation (where applicable) | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Calculation Type                          | Cumulative (Year-to-Date)                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Reporting Cycle                           | Quarterly                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Desired Performance                       | Equal to, or higher than targeted performance                                                                                                                                                   |
| Indicator Responsibility                  | Senior Manager Research                                                                                                                                                                         |

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator Title                           | <b>Number of research articles published</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Definition                                | This indicator measures the number of research documents compiled by the Agency in benchmarking and keeping up with the trends to ensure that the Agency stays abreast of the rapid change in technology in the ICT landscape |
| Source of Data                            | Board approved Research Strategy                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment        | Simple count                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Means of verification                     | Research paper published*<br>Platform where the research paper was published                                                                                                                                                  |
| Assumptions                               | USAASA will be able to get a medium for publishing its research pieces                                                                                                                                                        |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries           | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Spatial Transformation (where applicable) | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Calculation Type                          | Cumulative (Year-to-Date)                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Reporting Cycle                           | Quarterly                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Desired Performance                       | Equal to, or higher than targeted performance                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Indicator Responsibility                  | Senior Manager Research                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

\*Publishing is the process of making information or content available to the public either free of charge or at a cost using any medium of communication. The research topics will be identified and agreed upon 6 months before they are public

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator Title                    | <b>Percentage implementation of the M&amp;E framework</b>                                                                                                           |
| Definition                         | This indicator measures the impact and utilisation of research and evaluation findings, reflecting improved insightful and credible monitoring and evaluation (M&E) |
| Source of Data                     | M&E framework                                                                                                                                                       |
| Method of Calculation / Assessment | Numerator: number of activities in the M&E framework implemented<br>Denominator: total number of activities in the M&E framework                                    |
| Means of verification              | Report on implementation of the M&E framework                                                                                                                       |
| Assumptions                        | Leadership stability that will foster research initiatives<br>Adequate funding<br>Stakeholder support and buy-in                                                    |
| Disaggregation of Beneficiaries    | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                      |
| Spatial Transformation             | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                      |
| Reporting Cycle                    | Annual progress against the five-year target                                                                                                                        |
| Desired Performance                | Meeting the target for the strategic plan period                                                                                                                    |
| Indicator Responsibility           | Executive Manager Operations                                                                                                                                        |

## ANNEXURES TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

None