**Summary of Day 1 of Talk to the Senate (2017-2022 Priorities)**

**ICT Challenges, Risks and Opportunities in the Counties**

1. **Challenges**
   1. Poor coordination with the central government and between departments in counties.
   2. Limited capacity in ICT departments in the counties and also amongst other departments that use ICT.
   3. The Universal Access Fund is not properly utilised neither is its use monitored.
   4. Expanding the focus of ICT in counties from something that supports the county operations (i.e. internal) to something that drives county development (i.e. external).
   5. Less than 50% of the NOFBI is currently utilised yet phase 2 is almost complete- this is a utilisation deficit.
   6. Prices on the National Optic Fibre Backbone Infr astructure (NOFBI) are discriminatory; cost in far flung counties is much higher than in Nairobi yet this is government funded infrastructure.
   7. Role of the counties in ICT is not clearly set out in the ICT policy.
   8. Electricity is not affordable across the board.
   9. Poor and disjointed infrastructure deployment.
   10. Taxation on equipment affects the retail price of internet.
   11. Management of the spectrum is not efficient.
   12. Low uptake of local content in broadcasting.
   13. System interoperability is lacking
   14. Counties do not make adequate provision for ICT in their budgets.
2. **Risks**
   1. Misuse of the Universal Access Fund
   2. Low awareness of cybersecurity amongst county staff and citizens.
   3. Poor use of internet- the internet is used is only used to drive negative habits such as hate speech and betting.
3. **Opportunities**
   1. **Connectivity**

* Using the Universal Access Fund to ensure one hundred percent connectivity in the counties.
* The Senate ought to conduct a feasibility study aimed at bridging the digital divide across the counties.
* Counties should prioritise where there are gaps in connectivity and roll out projects connected to the National Optic Fibre Backbone Infrastructure (NOFBI)
* Coming up with County ICT Centres of Excellence to train both the young and the old at a subsidized cost.
* Counties to include telecommunications infrastructure in their road plans e.g. laying ample trunking for future leasing to any telecommunication company that would wish to run fibre optic cables.
* Counties to run their own metro fibre networks and lease the unused cores to the internet service providers.
* Co-operation between counties to inter-link the said metro fibre networks to ensure all regions are covered.
* Ensuring that all public institutions (health, education and police) have broadband.
* National Optic Fibre Backbone Infrastructure (NOFBI) to be made more accessible to all players, small and large.
  1. **The Universal Access Fund**
* The Fund should be devolved since its centralisation has failed to achieve the intended goal.
  1. **Huduma Centres and eCitizen**
* Strengthening, improving and further innovating Huduma Centres.
* Rolling out Huduma Centres to all the counties.
* Revamping the eCitizen platform to ensure full accessibility even with limited connectivity.
  1. **Inter-Agency Co-operation**
* Devolution stakeholders to synergise effort instead of pulling in different directions and duplicating efforts.
* Sharing of best practices and systems/solutions to get best value and reduce duplication.
* Involve the academia (universities and research institutions) and utilise their research to inform policy.
* Setting up of a tech research fund at the national and county level to motivate people to take up tech research.
  1. **Cybersecurity**
* Setting up county committees to identify assets in the cyberspace, assess security threats, county incidence reporting and implement cybersecurity guidelines.
  1. **Leveraging on ICT**
* Using ICT to drive and measure a better culture amongst county government staff focused on efficiencies and impact.
* Programs that provide the private and public sector with new ideas whilst giving the youth meaningful work e.g. the Presidential Digital Talent Programme.
* Open innovation from local start-ups, businesses and youth to find solutions to county problems.
* Subsidization of county-centred solutions.
* Marketing and uptake of locally developed solutions
* Certification of certain solutions and applications to be used in the public sector.
* Youth polytechnics that are under county governments should be included in big ICT projects for transfer of knowledge.
* Counties to play a key role in the national addressing system.
  1. **County Information Officers (CIOs) and County Data Officer (CDOs)**
* To run county systems and ensure compliance
  1. **Data Economy in the Counties**
* Counties ought to embrace tech positively e.g. invest in data collection and monetize this data within legislative boundaries.
* Counties to invest in mini bureaus of statistics and information dissemination offices.
  1. **Making Tech Less Elitist and Accessible to ‘Wanjiku’**
* Invest in changing attitudes and encourage adoption in villages.