

WHY IT PROJECTS FAIL

The country paper will highlight the experiences of the Zimbabwe Government in IT projects. Two case studies will be presented which will assist in responding to the issues raised by SAI – UK in the lead paper. The SAI has done audits of IT projects and is currently doing the audit of a major IT project for the computerisation of the government accounting system. The project which is being finalised has experienced major delays and has affected the production of financial statements for the whole of Government. The paper will highlight the main causes of failure, the effects and the learning lessons for the future . The methodologies used to audit IT projects will be highlighted.

The Zimbabwean Government started with a centralised approach for procurement which was not a success. The reasons for the failure will be highlighted. However after experiencing the worse effects of decentralisation, the Government is rethinking on the issue.

Key questions my SAI would like to be addressed:-

- At what point should the SAI be involved in the audit of an IT project?
Merits and demerits of getting involved at various stages.
- Is it possible for a large IT project to be implemented and run successfully without any hitches? Are there examples of such projects in other countries. Sometimes the impression is given that a certain amount of problems are normal for a big project.