



ACCC

Auditing in Complex and Challenging Contexts

Getting Connected

Key points from the CBC Auditing in Complex and Challenging Contexts Workstream webinar 9 November 2021

If the Covid epidemic has taught us one thing, it is that the capacity to connect with one another electronically is vital to maintaining our capacity to function as SAIs. Yet for many in our community this is still intensely difficult. Internet connections are unstable, staff working at home cannot connect to their offices, and many auditees keep written records which can only be inspected through on-site visits.

This webinar saw the launch of a new ACCC infographic – Getting Connected – which seeks to collate good practices and provide handy tips on how SAIs can become better connected. It ranges from advice on choosing appropriate mobile phones to ensuring security of equipment when travelling in remote locations. At the strategic level it encourages SAIs to embed plans for strengthening communications within overall strategic plans. It is not a ‘how to manual’ but a way of ensuring that SAI management have a better understanding of what is needed and can enter into more informed discussions with ICT experts.

Fabian Tonda took us through the progress made by SAI Uganda over the last decade. When he began work, there were few computers in his institution. Now all audit staff have computers and mobile phones and deals have been negotiated with telecoms providers so that staff are able to work effectively whether they are in head office, in regional offices, at home or out on field audits.

Regions also have a vital role in supporting their SAIs in this area and Fredrick Bobo for AFROSAI-E spoke of the work being done by the Working Group on Information System Audit and Management (WGISAM). They have carried out wide ranging research to map the current position across the region and have launched a range of project to help provide standards, training and technical advice and guidance to their members.

In conversations following the presentations we spoke of the governance arrangements which are necessary as SAIs seek to improve their capacity to connect with staff, auditees, and others. Increasingly senior SAI managers are becoming more ICT literate and understand the vital role robust ICT systems can play in improving the productivity of their office. At the same time, it is important that ICT staff have a presence at senior meetings in SAIs and learn to present their work in ways non-specialists can access and understand.