WORLD GOVERNMENTS SUMMIT

PORTULANS INSTITUTE

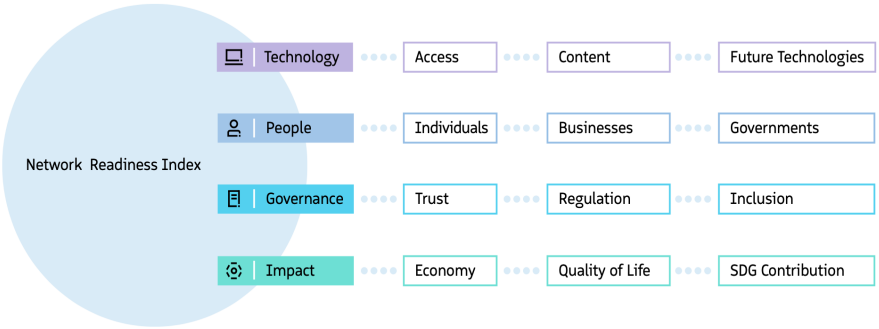
Network Readiness Index 2025

With support from: aws CNI

Zimbabwe

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is one of the leading global indices on the application and impact of information and communication technology (ICT) in economies around the world. In its latest version of 2025 the NRI Report maps the network-based readiness landscape of 127 economies based on their performances in four different pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact. Each of these pillars is itself comprised of three sub-pillars (see Figure 1) that have been populated by a total of 53 variables.

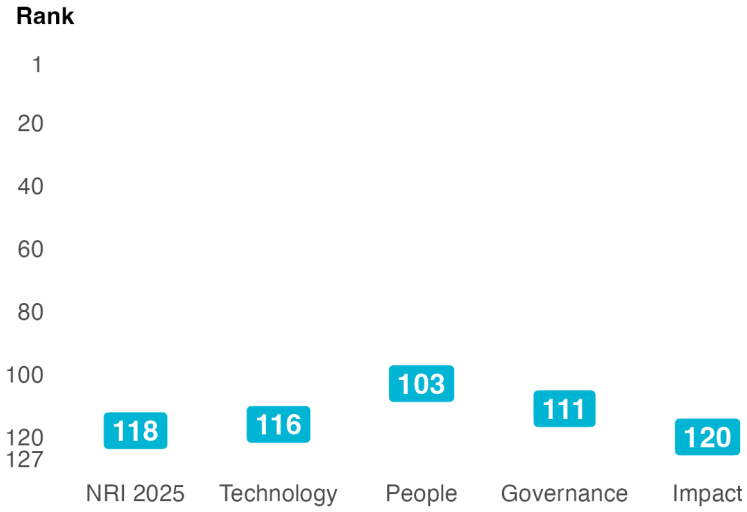
Figure 1: The NRI 2025 model



Global NRI position of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe ranks 118 out of the 127 economies included in the NRI 2025 (Figure 2). Its main strength relates to People. The greatest scope for improvement, meanwhile, concerns Impact.

Figure 2: Zimbabwe global ranking, overall and by pillar



Performance at sub-pillar level

When it comes to sub-pillars, the strongest showings of Zimbabwe relate to SDG Contribution, Governments and Businesses, among others (Table 1). More could be done, though, to improve the economy's performances in the Economy, Access and Quality of Life sub-pillars.

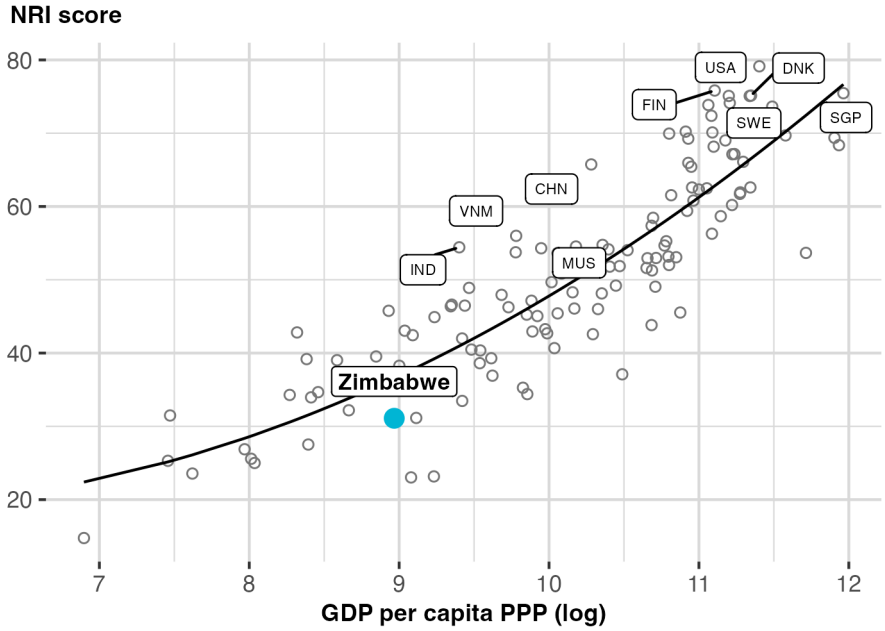
Table 1: Zimbabwe rankings by sub-pillar

Sub-pillar	Rank	Sub-pillar	Rank
SDG Contribution	80	Future Technologies	107
Governments	94	Regulation	114
Businesses	95	Trust	116
Inclusion	98	Economy	116
Individuals	100	Access	120
Content	104	Quality of Life	125

NRI score and income

Figure 3 shows the position of Zimbabwe in terms of both NRI score and GDP per capita (PPP). The trend line shows the expected NRI score given an economy's income level. As can be seen, Zimbabwe is well below the trend line, which suggests that it is underachieving and that one would expect it could raise its network readiness in view of its income level.

Figure 3: NRI score and GDP per capita PPP (log)



Note: USA = United States of America (rank: 1), FIN =Finland (rank: 2), SGP = Singapore (3), DNK =Denmark (4), SWE = Sweden (5), CHN =China (24), and IND = India (45).

Performance against its income group and region

Lower-middle-income countries

Zimbabwe is ranked 29th in the group of lower-middle-income countries (Figure 4, left panel). In terms of pillar performance, it has a score below the income group average in each of the four pillars. At the sub-pillar level, it outperforms lower-middle-income countries in two of the twelve sub-pillars: Inclusion and SDG Contribution.

Africa

Zimbabwe is ranked 18th within Africa (Figure 4, right panel). It has a score above the regional average in one of the four pillars: People. With regard to sub-pillars, it outperforms the average in Africa in five of the twelve sub-pillars: Content, Individuals, Governments, Inclusion and SDG Contribution.

Figure 4: Performance of Zimbabwe against its income group and region, overall and by pillar

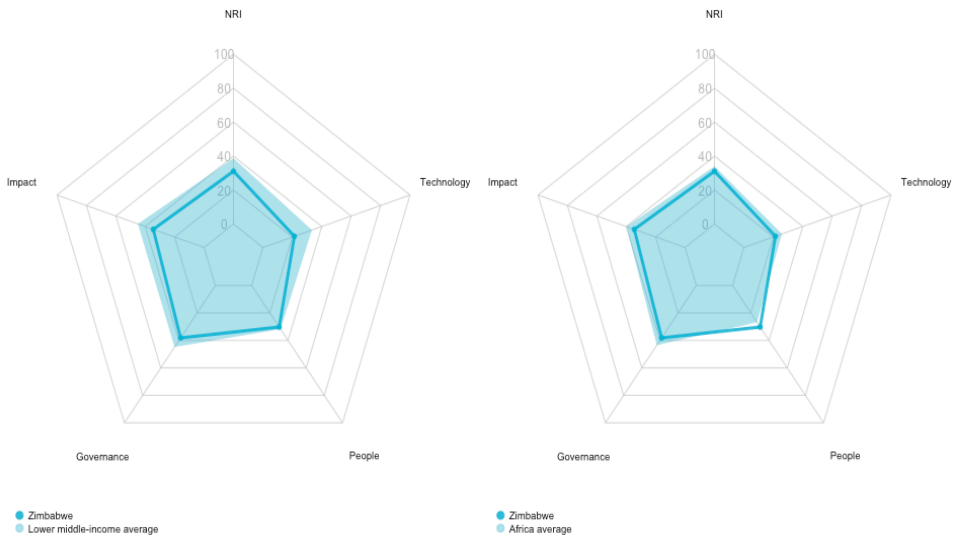


Table 2: Zimbabwe scores vs. averages of its income group and region, overall and by pillar

Dimension	Zimbabwe	Lower-middle-income countries	Africa
NRI	31.10	38.70	34.00
Technology	21.41	33.29	25.85
People	30.24	31.73	26.78
Governance	38.19	44.79	43.45
Impact	34.55	45.00	39.92

NRI 2025 At-A-Glance: Zimbabwe

Network Readiness Index — Rank: 118 (out of 127) — Score: 31.10

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
A. Technology pillar	116	21.41
1st sub-pillar: Access	120	30.14
2nd sub-pillar: Content	104	13.66
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	107	20.44
B. People pillar	103	30.24
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	100	38.64
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	95	22.98
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	94	29.11

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
C. Governance pillar	111	38.19
1st sub-pillar: Trust	116	27.29
2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	114	37.14
3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	98	50.14
D. Impact pillar	120	34.55
1st sub-pillar: Economy	116	17.77
2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	125	25.58
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	80	60.30

The Network Readiness Index in detail

Indicator	Rank	Score	
A. Technology pillar	116	21.41	
1st sub-pillar: Access	120	30.14	
1.1.1 Mobile tariffs	127	0.00	○
1.1.2 Handset prices	116	29.69	
1.1.3 FTTH/building Internet subscriptions	80	25.75	●
1.1.4 Population covered by at least a 3G mobile network	115	36.32	
1.1.5 International Internet bandwidth	96	66.54	
1.1.6 Internet access in schools	79	22.55	
2nd sub-pillar: Content	104	13.66	
1.2.1 GitHub commits	111	0.95	
1.2.2 Internet domain registrations	95	1.05	
1.2.3 Mobile apps development	101	48.72	
1.2.4 AI scientific publications	71	3.93	●
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	107	20.44	
1.3.1 Adoption of emerging technologies	90	42.08	
1.3.2 Investment in emerging technologies	123	12.25	○
1.3.3 Robot density	n/a	n/a	
1.3.4 Computer software spending	88	6.98	●
B. People pillar	103	30.24	
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	100	38.64	
2.1.1 Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country	98	4.47	
2.1.2 ICT skills in the education system	61	53.27	●
2.1.3 Use of virtual social networks	118	7.24	
2.1.4 Adult literacy rate	55	89.58	●
2.1.5 AI talent concentration	n/a	n/a	
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	95	22.98	

Indicator	Rank	Score	
C. Governance pillar	111	38.19	
1st sub-pillar: Trust	116	27.29	
3.1.1 Secure Internet servers	108	35.33	
3.1.2 Cybersecurity	113	27.74	
3.1.3 Online access to financial account	25	44.57	●
3.1.4 Internet shopping	115	1.50	
2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	114	37.14	
3.2.1 Regulatory quality	126	8.74	○
3.2.2 ICT regulatory environment	105	44.38	
3.2.3 Regulation of emerging technologies	n/a	n/a	
3.2.4 E-commerce legislation	72	75.00	
3.2.5 Privacy protection by law content	120	20.45	
3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	98	50.14	
3.3.1 E-Participation	112	23.19	
3.3.2 Socioeconomic gap in use of digital payments	88	55.34	
3.3.3 Gender gap in Internet use	8	73.20	●
3.3.4 Rural gap in use of digital payments	54	48.84	●
D. Impact pillar	120	34.55	
1st sub-pillar: Economy	116	17.77	
4.1.1 ICT patent applications	77	0.05	
4.1.2 Domestic market scale	94	41.81	
4.1.3 Technology-Enabled Work Flexibility	89	22.96	
4.1.4 ICT services exports	88	6.26	●
2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	125	25.58	
4.2.1 Happiness	124	3.04	○
4.2.2 Freedom to make life choices	111	46.09	

Indicator	Rank	Score
2.2.1 Firms with website	94	32.28
2.2.2 Number of venture capital deals invested in AI	n/a	n/a
2.2.3 Annual investment in telecommunication services	86	35.76
2.2.4 Public cloud computing market scale	97	0.89
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	94	29.11
2.3.1 Government online services	112	29.02
2.3.2 Data Capabilities	n/a	n/a
2.3.3 Government promotion of emerging technologies	78	29.20
2.3.4 Gross expenditure on R&D	n/a	n/a

NOTE: ● indicates a strength and ○ indicates a weakness.

Indicator	Rank	Score	
4.2.3 Income inequality	106	32.40	
4.2.4 Healthy life expectancy at birth	124	22.80	○
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	80	60.30	
4.3.1 SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	100	44.44	
4.3.2 SDG 4: Quality Education	n/a	n/a	
4.3.3 SDG 5: Women's economic opportunity	57	80.91	●
4.3.4 SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	88	66.74	●
4.3.5 SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	118	22.07	

Sources

Escalona Reynoso, R., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2025). The Network Readiness Index 2025: AI Governance in a Global Context: Policy and Regulatory Approaches. Washington DC, USA.

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2024). The Network Readiness Index 2024. Oxford, UK; Washington DC, USA.

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2023). The Network Readiness Index 2023: Trust in Network Society: A Crisis of the Digital Age. Oxford, UK; Washington DC, USA.

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2022). The Network Readiness Index 2022: Benchmarking the Future of the Network Economy. Washington DC: Portulans Institute.

Berry, B. (2019). berryFunctions: Function Collection Related to Plotting and Hydrology. R package version 1.18.2. URL: https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=berryFunctions

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2019). The Network Readiness Index 2019: Towards a Future-Ready Society. Washington DC: Portulans Institute.

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2020). The Network Readiness Index 2020: Fostering Digital Transformation in a post-COVID Global Economy. Washington DC: Portulans Institute.

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. (eds.) (2021). The Network Readiness Index 2021: Shaping the Global Recovery. How digital technologies can make the post-COVID world more equal. Washington DC: Portulans Institute.

Gohel, D. (2019). officer: Manipulation of Microsoft Word and PowerPoint Documents. R package version 0.3.6. URL: https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=officer

Gohel, D. (2019). flextable: Functions for Tabular Reporting. R package version 0.5.6. URL: https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=flextable

Milton Bache, S. & Wickham, H. (2014). magrittr: A Forward-Pipe Operator for R. R package version 1.5. URL: https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=magrittr

Nakazawa, M. (2019). fmsb: Functions for Medical Statistics Book with some Demographic Data. R package version 0.7.0. URL: https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=fmsb

R Core Team (2018). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL: https://www.R-project.org/.

Slowikowski, K. (2019). ggrepel: Automatically Position Non-Overlapping Text Labels with 'ggplot2'. R package version 0.8.1. URL: https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=ggrepel

Wickham, H. (2007). Reshaping Data with the reshape Package. Journal of Statistical Software, 21(12), 1–20. URL: http://www.jstatsoft.org/v21/i12/.

Wickham, H. (2016). ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis. Springer-Verlag. New York.

Wickham et al. (2019). Welcome to the tidyverse. Journal of Open Source Software, 4(43), 1686. URL: https://doi.org/10.21105/joss.01686