United Nations

E-Government Survey 2010

Leveraging e-government at a time of financial and economic crisis
Foreword

E-government – once a bold experiment and now an important tool for public sector transformation – has progressed to the point where it is now a force for effective governance and citizen participation, both at national and local levels. This is important. Until governments have the capacity to lead development efforts and deliver services that fully respond to the needs of citizens, the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals will continue to elude us. With the Millennium Development Goal time horizon of 2015 quickly approaching, it is no longer a question of whether we can afford information and communications technology in health, education, environmental protection and a multitude of other areas, but where to deploy them first and how rapidly gains can be realized.

The high demand for e-government knowledge and skills on the part of Member States has increased considerably in recent years. This upward trend in e-government development has accelerated despite, or maybe in part also due to, the current financial crisis and the pressing need for governments to be competent, transparent, accessible and efficient. The crisis makes a compelling case for e-government. The demand for social support has increased dramatically while revenues have declined precipitously. Public sector commitments to stimulus packages and financial sector support have yielded debt levels that may take a very long time to reduce.

Member States have had to coordinate, make hard choices and weigh spending options very carefully. But we must also consider in this moment that there is a reason why e-government matters beyond the need to maximize efficiency, or even beyond engaging citizens in urgent questions of public policy. The compelling factor and the bitter lesson learned from the crisis is that trust matters and lack of confidence in government, as in markets, can lead to calamity. The capacity to respond under difficult conditions and deliver expected results are cornerstones of effective government and a foundation of public trust.

The 2010 edition of the United Nations E-Government Survey, the fifth in a series begun in 2003, makes the case that e-government should play an ever-greater role in development. Many countries have made tremendous strides in the last two years, due in part to recent, exciting advances in the diffusion of technology. With its responsive, citizen-centric qualities, I firmly believe that e-government can make a decisive contribution to the achievement of the MDGs, particularly in developing regions.

This publication can become a useful reference to guide development efforts at international, regional and local levels.

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Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs
Preparation of the publication was undertaken by a group of senior e-government researchers and advisers at the United Nations, led directly by Haiyan Qian, Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The core research team comprised Richard Kerby, S. Ran Kim, Michael Mimicopoulos, Jonas Rabinovitch, Patrick Spearing and Keping Yao.

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Part Two on the state of e-government around the world was prepared by Richard Kerby, Deniz Susar, Carla Valle and Keping Yao with supplementary inputs from Michael Mimicopoulos, Jonas Rabinovitch and Patrick Spearing. The evaluation team for the methodology comprised Seema Hafeez, Richard Kerby, S. Ran Kim, Wai Min Kwok, Michael Mimicopoulos, Elida Reci, Silvia Schwarz and Deniz Susar.

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# Acronyms

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARR</td>
<td>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>Citizen-to-citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2G</td>
<td>Citizen-to-government</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief executive officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEPA</td>
<td>Committee of Experts on Public Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPSS</td>
<td>Committee on Payments and Settlements Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>Common services centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESRI</td>
<td>Environmental Systems Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAQ</td>
<td>Frequently asked question</td>
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<tr>
<td>FATF</td>
<td>Financial Action Task Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSA</td>
<td>Financial Services Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSAP</td>
<td>Financial Sector Assessment Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>G2B</td>
<td>Government-to-business</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCC</td>
<td>Gulf Cooperation Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographic information system</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communications technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IOSCO</td>
<td>International Organization of Securities Commissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunication Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTC</td>
<td>Over-the-counter</td>
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<tr>
<td>REDD</td>
<td>Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROSC</td>
<td>Report on the observance of standards and codes</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Skills matching and referral technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small- and medium-sized enterprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Short message service</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDESA</td>
<td>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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