



FINAL EVALUATION

UNITED NATIONS PROJECT OFFICE ON GOVERNANCE (UNPOG)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) was established in 2006 based on an Agreement between the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) to create an office that would promote efficient, participatory and transparent government. Its term is coming to an end in June 2016, after 10 years of operation. A trust fund was established to support the Project's activities, which include capacity development, research and policy development, as well as communication and outreach. The ROK has provided funds in the amount of \$1 million per year as well as in-kind contribution, including local staff resources on the basis of a non-reimbursable loan. UNPOG's strategic vision was developed by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), UNPOG and the ROK relevant ministry based on country needs assessments. A Steering Committee, including all three actors, was supposed to convene yearly to review the Project's achievements and activities, and reconcile the various viewpoints and visions. However, the Committee met only half the time it was supposed to.

This evaluation report assesses and evaluates the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact and sustainability of the Project. The methodology includes the following: a desk review of all relevant documents, the conduct of a survey of a sample of participants in UNPOG's activities, interviews with members of UNPOG, DPADM, and partners.

Despite its relatively small size (10 staff, including international staff and Non Reimbursable Loan staff), UNPOG has been very active globally and, more recently, regionally with a focus on the Asia and Pacific region. Over the past 8 years, it has organized or contributed to 73 learning and knowledge exchange activities, with the representation of 94 countries and the participation of approximately 3,500 people. There has been strong alignment with DPADM's priorities, which required joint setting (by DPADM and UNPOG) of the work programme every two years and the refocusing of the activities in 2010-2011. The results of past evaluations and the 2015 on-line survey of country beneficiaries support the view that UNPOG has been relevant to the needs of its stakeholders by staying ahead of the curve through its research activities and by selecting and identifying new and emerging themes in e-governance. Generally, the delivery and organization of UNPOG's outputs and services are considered efficient, but there are variations in ratings among categories of activities. Some organizational/structural issues may have prevented at times the Project from functioning at maximum efficiency. DPADM, however, took several steps to address the situation and the internal climate appears to have improved since the last two years.

There is also evidence that UNPOG's activities have been effective in promoting e-governance in the Asia and Pacific region where it is perceived as a hub of e-government, innovation and ICT for sustainable development. A majority of respondents in the on-line survey perceive that UNPOG's activities had an impact on their countries, in particular, in reviewing e-strategy policies and implementation, sharing knowledge and collaborating with other government officials. The survey's responses include suggestions on how UNPOG could become more effective and have a greater impact.

One of the major objectives of the Project was to establish networks, including communities of practice and partnerships. Since its establishment, UNPOG has contributed to the development of three networks. However, in two cases, the networks were of an ad-hoc and informal nature.

Beginning in 2014, UNPOG has taken steps to institutionalize the Chief Information Officers network in the Asia and Pacific region. Its approach in establishing partnerships has been more incremental than strategic. It is, however, practical and project-oriented based on its perceived comparative advantage in ICT and e-governance. However, there is room for strengthening existing partnerships and adopting a more strategic approach to the selection and planning of joint activities.

The report includes four lessons learned and eight recommendations. The most important recommendation aims at achieving greater impact at the country level and recommends that both DPADM and UNPOG should work on designing a comprehensive approach to assist countries most in need of assistance in e-government development. This approach would include: a systematic needs assessment, an implementation strategy designed through a training workshop, the preparation of an application for technical assistance, referral to a regional/international development bank, or to the relevant government agency responsible for aid-assistance to developing countries, and lastly monitoring and evaluating the outcome. Other recommendations include making the work planning process more transparent and improving the management information system, as well as measuring and reporting of achievements.