

Capacity Development Workshop on
“ICT and E-Government in SIDS: Responding to the SAMOA Pathway”

AIDE-MEMOIRE

Organized by

United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG)

Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

And

Korean National Information Society Agency (NIA)

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I. Background and Context

The United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution (A/RES/66/288) entitled “The Future We Want” has reaffirmed the strong need to achieve sustainable development by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems. It stressed that all levels of government and legislative bodies play an important role in promoting sustainable development. Overall, “the goal of sustainable development is to ensure the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for the planet and for present and future generations. Sustainable development emphasizes a holistic, equitable and far-sighted approach in decision-making at all levels. It rests on integration and a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental goals and objectives in both public and private decision-making. It emphasizes intragenerational and intergenerational equity” (E/2013/69, para. 6).

World leaders met in Apia, Samoa, from 1-4 September 2014, at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, with the full participation of civil society and relevant stakeholders, to reaffirm their commitment to promoting sustainable development of SIDS. One of their proposed commitments, as outlined in the SAMOA Pathway of the 3rd SIDS Conference, is to support SIDS efforts to increase connectivity and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), through improving ICT infrastructure, training, national legislation as well as public and private sector involvement¹.

In addition, the SAMOA Pathway has recognized the importance of supporting SIDS in their ongoing efforts to ensure peaceful societies and safe communities, including through building responsive and accountable institutions. Transparency and accountability are significant aspects of good governance which is viewed as critical for sustainable development, and are essential in integrating and addressing social, economic and environmental challenges. For instance, establishing accountability for public expenditure and developing mechanisms for scrutiny of performance by public institutions will assist in fighting corruption, and in increasing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of public investments and financing for sustainable development programmes and projects. The development of national capacities in ICT and e-government is thus of paramount importance for promoting sustainable development and institutional building².

¹United Nations, General Assembly, Draft outcome document of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States: Note by the Secretariat, A/CONF.223/3* (17 July 2014), available from <http://www.sids2014.org/index.php?menu=1537>

²USG WU Hongbo: Opening Remarks at Panel on Safeguarding Financing for Sustainable Development (28 May 2013, New York).

Oftentimes good governance is also a prerequisite for receiving financial support from developed countries, and governance issues once incorporated in inter-governmental processes will nurture durable partnerships and sustainable financing for development.

The Samoa Conference has also highlighted a number of challenges that SIDS face, including climate change and adaptation, improving the health of the oceans and the imperative to safeguard it, and the search for sources of energy that are local, renewable and a permanent alternative to fossil fuels are formidable challenges for SIDS, and addressing them is a priority. To do so will require, among other things, the mastering of ICT, much capacity for managing complex data systems, including geospatial data platforms, and information dissemination hubs.

E-government is “the use of ICT and its application by the government for the provision of information and public services to the people” (Global E-Government Readiness Report 2004). The opportunities offered by the digital development of recent years, whether through online services, big data, social media, mobile apps, and cloud computing, are expanding the way we look at e-government. Experiences from around the world have proved that disaster prevention and preparedness, enabled by e-government, can be far more effective and less costly than ever before. SIDS are in turn applying various means of e-government to pursue sustainable development especially in effective disaster risk management.

As an integral part of DPADM support to the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, the United Nations Project Office on Governance has conducted an analytical study on the role of e-government for promoting sustainable development in SIDS from March to July 2014. This study reviewed the regional trends of e-government in SIDS, e-government policies and strategies, major barriers, and policy recommendations for e-government development in SIDS. The findings of this study have also been presented to the Capacity Development Workshop “Innovation and E-governance for Sustainable Development” during 2014 UNPSA and the Sixty-ninth Session of the UN General Assembly Second Committee Special Event on “ICT and E-Government in SIDS: Responding to the SAMOA Pathway Call for Action” held on 14 November 2014 in UN Headquarters, New York.

II. Objectives of the training workshop

The main purpose of the Workshop is to strengthen the capacity building of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in e-government development including building-up e-infrastructure for sustainable development. This Workshop is also a further follow up with the Capacity Development Workshop “Innovation and E-governance for Sustainable

Development” during 2014 UNPSA, when SIDS participants requested more focused training for SIDS only. In addition, this Workshop will also share with SIDS participants about the main themes and policy conclusions from the Sixty-ninth Session of the UN General Assembly Second Committee Special Event on “ICT and E-Government in SIDS: Responding to the SAMOA Pathway Call for Action” held on 14 November 2014 in UN Headquarters, New York.

With a view to regional trends and common features of e-government development in SIDS, UNPOG/DPADM and Korean National Information Society Agency (NIA) would like to co-organize the training workshop on ICT and e-government in SIDS: i) to discuss about the trends and common features and main challenges of e-government development in SIDS; ii) to share best practices of ICT and e-government for sustainable development including disaster risk management and enhance peer-to-peer learning; iii) to build up a strong CIO network and set up the mechanism/platform for sharing experiences and knowledge transfer with focus on innovative e-practices for sustainable development; and iv) to discuss about the role of development partners in supporting capacity building activities on ICT and e-government for SIDS; and v) to explore the ways of implementing the policy recommendations related to ICT and e-government development in SIDS emanating from the Draft Outcome Document of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

III. Themes to be covered during the training

- *Trends and common features of e-government development in SIDS*
- *E-government policies and strategies in SIDS*
- *Major barriers of e-government development in SIDS versus success factors*
- *Introduction of innovative e-government best practices for sustainable development including disaster risk management by selected countries*
- *How to strengthen the expert network in SIDS for peer-to-peer learning and sharing best practices with special focus on disaster risk management*
- *How UNPOG/DPADM and NIA can better assist SIDS in ICT and e-government development*

IV. Proposed agenda (to be specified later)

- *Day 1: ICT and e-government development in SIDS including presentations by selected countries and experts from UNPOG/DPADM and NIA*
- *Day 2: Policy recommendations for promoting ICT and e-government development in SIDS and discussions on building CIO network for knowledge sharing and enhancing*

partnership with international organizations, developed countries and in the framework of South-South Cooperation

V. Proposed list of participating countries and international organizations (TBC)

- *Fiji*
- *Maldives*
- *Marshall Islands*
- *Micronesia (Federated States of)*
- *Nauru*
- *Palau*
- *Papua New Guinea*
- *Samoa*
- *Singapore*
- *Solomon Islands*
- *Timor-Leste*
- *Tonga*
- *Tuvalu*
- *Korea National Information Society Agency*
- *KOICA*
- *Academia*

VI. Expected outcome

After the training, it is expected that the participating countries' capacities and competences will be strengthened in terms of designing ICT and e-government policy and strategy for sustainable development including disaster risk management, and overcoming the barriers in e-government development. It is also anticipated that the CIO Network among SIDS will be further strengthened for facilitating knowledge sharing and exchanges of ideas in innovative e-practices, including the South-South cooperation. UNPOG/DPADM and NIA would also better understand the demands for capacity building from SIDS. Moreover, UNPOG/DPADM and NIA would explore better ways for more technical and funding support from development partners to implement capacity building activities in SIDS.

VII. Contact Information

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