United Nations Project of Governance - UNPOG
Project Group on
Global Leadership for Transformational E-Government and Digital Gap Reduction

Background:
Social, political and economic elements influence the implementation of E-Government greatly. These include information infrastructure of a country, human resources, leadership and vision, maintenance of a legal system, and a public administration system. The 2010 United Nations e-Government Survey presented various roles for e-government in addressing the ongoing world financial and economic crisis: (i) public trust that is gained through transparency can be further enhanced through the free sharing of government data based on open standards; (ii) the ability of e-government to handle speed and complexity can also underpin regulatory reform; and (iii) empowering citizens to question the actions of regulators and bring systemic issues to the fore. Effective strategies and legal frameworks could significantly compensate developing countries' achievement of successful e-government initiatives while simultaneously decreasing the digital gap. For developing countries, the challenge is to invest telecommunication infrastructure and human resources as well as reengineering their public administration system to narrow the current digital gap. UNPOG proposes to establish a research and Training Project Group to work on the subject matter of "Global Leadership for Transformational e-Government and Digital Gap Reduction" focusing on developing countries.

Leadership is critical for T-Government and the meeting will promote learning from shared experiences of leaders from developing countries.

Problem to be studied:
In the e-Governance literature there are different factors of failure when developing countries implement e-government: (i) unstable public administration system; (ii) inadequate plans and strategies; (iii) lack of adequate manpower; (iv) absence of investment plan; (v) shortage of IT and system suppliers; and (vi) immature technologies.

In other words, simply having a great website does little in e-service provision if the majority of people in the country cannot read or write, nor if they do not have access to the internet. The lack of adequate plans and specialists also result in the failure of system application, excessive investment, and high maintenance costs in the process of implementing e-government projects.

The search for how to reduce the digital gap between developed and developing countries requires a global agenda to speed up and share the achievement of the information technologies in a global society. Therefore there is a need to examine the various factors that may contribute to successful practices in digital gap reduction. The factors that this study is targeting are related to models of new public administration that focus on citizen participation and governance. Governance can be described as the outcome of the interaction of the public-sector and the broader environment including the private sector and civil society organizations.

Objective of the study:
The main objective of the Project Group would be to provide the global network and

partnership models and strategies in building e-government for developing countries. Research goal would be to focus on building an e-Government Model adoptable to developing countries beyond their different economic, political, cultural, and administrative environments.

Outcomes of the study:
 (i): a set of recommendations/guidelines on public policies directed toward digital gap reduction in developing countries
 (ii) a data base on e-government best practice models, policies and strategies that have been put in place around the world
 (iii) The development of course content examining issues of the digital gap for students at all levels of education through The Certificate of Advance Study for six months.

This would be compiled and included in the United Nations e-Government strategies as a UNDESA product to support information, and experience sharing as well as learning from best practices.

PURPOSE - EDUCATIONAL & CAREER OBJECTIVES

The proposed 6 months The Certificate of Advance Study (CAS) based on distance learning which intends to provide mid-career managers with a documented concentration in **Global E-Governance and Leadership**. The CAS is organized by three broad thematic areas: 1) leadership and management ICT applications of E-governance in public organizations, 2) technical design aspects of managing E-governance in public organizations, and 3) internship in the workplaces in government, private, and non-profit organizations.

The proposed process to decrease the digital gap begins with the establishment of the project group by 31 July 2013. Over the subsequent two years the group will prepare to meet at the Global E-Government Forum in 2013, compile relevant data and information, and prepare and publish policy recommendations and guidelines.