

Aide-Memoire
Consultation Workshop on E-Cities Project
Knowledge Network on Local E-Government in Asia and the Pacific

1. Introduction

The United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) in partnership with the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) is organizing a two-day event to be held in Seoul from 17-18 June 2010. The first day, 17th June, will be dedicated to the **International Conference on Good Governance for National Development**. On the 18th June the consultation **Workshop on the E-Cities Project will be held**.

2. Time and Venue

The Workshop will be held on the 18th June at the Seoul Millennium Hotel, Republic of Korea.

3. Participants

The workshop will bring together approximately 30 participants from Asia and the Pacific region consisting of approximately 12 country participants sponsored by UNDESA/ UNPOG and around 8 local government representatives based in Korea. These participants are mostly representatives of local government associations as well as representatives from cities/ municipalities in the area of e-Government and Ministries of Local Government. Participants will constitute the initial group members of the e-Cities knowledge network.

4. Background

A couple of years ago, for the first time, half the world's population started to live in urban areas. In future, population growth will be absorbed mostly by the urban areas of developing countries, with the world's urban population estimated to increase from about 3.3 billion today to over 6 billion in 2050. The process of urbanization can drive development towards a positive or a negative path. Urbanization poses many challenges related to poverty, education, health, gender equality, environment, as outlined by the Millennium Declaration and other internationally agreed development goals. On the other hand, cities are not just places of problems, but settings for solutions. I know it would be impossible to address the world's development challenges without working at the local level as well.

The ICT revolution has gone beyond information sharing and is profoundly influencing the way Governments perform and deliver services by potentially accelerating delivery times and improving the quality and quantity of services provided. This is particularly true in cities and towns, where urban functions can be improved by using ICTs through the use of Geographic Information Systems, digitized tax information, computer-aided urban design and planning, but also by promoting civic engagement and feedback from citizens, thus enhancing participatory urban development and local governance.

Today, nearly 80 per cent of the world's gross domestic product is generated by urban areas. The integrated challenges of water, sanitation, waste management, housing, transport, education and health care in urban areas create huge potential for job creation. A functional approach towards people-centered urban development in the information age has to go beyond the promotion of high-tech approaches to bridge people's ability to generate, manage, disseminate and apply knowledge to address these challenges.

Fostering exchange of experience and knowledge among governments is a major focus of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and of the United Nations Project Office on Governance UNPOG. We are well aware that knowledge creation and management have taken on increased importance becoming new forms of capital in the Information Age. As such, the United Nations, through DPADM/UNDESA and UNPOG has put special emphasis on the role of ICTs in promoting electronic government towards the realization of the United Nations Development Agenda, including the achievement of effective public sector reform, participatory approaches, improved governance and enhancement of the quality of life in cities worldwide.

5. Objectives

The specific objectives of the workshop are the following:

- Consult with local government leaders and stakeholders on the mission, objectives, modalities, structure, focus, and membership of the knowledge network; a **questionnaire** will be developed and shared with participants before their Workshop, so they can bring their views and answers with them.
- Discuss modalities for promoting city-to-city cooperation (twinning, C2C, “sister city” arrangements, others) on promoting and adopting local e-Government projects;
- Add knowledge value to the existing platform designed to accommodate the UN DPADM/UNDESA knowledge base, called, “**Public Administration Knowledge Space (PAKS)**”. The workshop will discuss the basis for developing a knowledge network on local e-Government in Asia and the Pacific;

6. Outputs

- e-Cities Knowledge Network , including clear function and objectives, governance, membership, focus areas, and communication strategies;
- Core group/initial members of the knowledge network on local e-Government established;
- Initial list/directory of who's who on local e-Government in Asia and the Pacific;
- Concrete workplan and roadmap for establishing and expanding membership of the UNPOG-managed knowledge-network

7. Inputs from participants

- a. Participants will bring to the workshop their answers to the questionnaire to be received from UNPOG. These answers will serve as a basis to launch and strengthen the network and contribute to guide the technical direction of the e-Cities Network.
- b. Participants are expected to make a commitment towards participating in the design and in contributing to the e-Cities Network and the PAKS platform.
- c. Participants are expected to appoint a focal point from their institution to become a contributing member of the network, including updating information into the e-Cities Network and the PAKS.
- d. Participants are expected to commit to disseminating the e-Cities Network and the PAKS among their members , institutions, networks and invite contributions to it.

Annex A
Additional information to participants

Participants are strongly requested to consult <http://www.unpan.org> and <http://www.unpan.org/paks>, before coming to Seoul. A few examples of DPADM / UNDESA's products , with key implications at national and local levels, include:

- a) the UN e-Government survey, a comparative assessment of 192 United Nations Member States' response to the demands of citizens for services and products through Information and Communication Technologies; (for more information:
- b) The Public Administration Knowledge Space (PAKS) promoting worldwide knowledge sharing and collaboration on e/m government between development stakeholders working to achieve national and local e-solutions;
- c) The Compendium of ICT applications on e-Government, a collection of summarized case studies showcasing software applications in solving specific development challenges;
- d) METER , the “Measurement and Evaluation Tool for E-Government Readiness”, which is a ready-to-use evaluative tool enabling a country to self-assess its preparedness for e-government.