

A I D E M E M O I R E

United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG),
“*International Conference on Good Governance for National Development*”
17 to 18 June 2010

SPECIAL WORKSHOP ON ICT ACCESS AND e-GOVERNMENT FOR ACHIEVING THE MDGs

Seoul, Republic of Korea
18 June 2010



UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

*Meeting organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)*

Introduction

The Special Workshop on ICT Access and e-Government for Achieving MDGs, to be held on 18 June 2010, is organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). It will gather e-government policy-makers and decision-makers of public administration to exchange perspectives and share unique insights and experiences on forming effective and sustainable development strategies through good governance.

Time and Venue

The Conference, which will be conducted in English, will be held at the Millennium Seoul Hilton, Republic of Korea, 18 June 2010.

Participants

The workshop will bring together approximately 50 participants from Asia and the Pacific region consisting of 5 presenters (whose travel will be funded by UNPOG), 3 to 4 ESCAP and 2 to 3 DESA staff members. Key participants will be senior government officials in the area of public administration from developing countries in Asia and the Pacific region.

Background

A number of ICT applications and initiatives have been implemented among the countries in Asia and the Pacific, as evidenced from the UN e-Government Survey. However, there is limited effort to analyze existing national ICT policies which provide a national framework of ICT development and share good practices and lessons learned on how to expand ICT access and maximize the use of ICT services and facilities at the regional level, taking into account ever advancing technologies and their integrated applications and services, which hold great promise to lower entry points for rural residents with lesser literacy skills. This is one reason why UNDESA is in the process of implementing its Public Administration Knowledge Space (PAKS). PAKS is an integrated portal that will allow countries the opportunity to share lesson learned and successful e-government practices.

The analysis of ESCAP has highlighted the differential growths in the uptake of key ICT among ESCAP member States. The slow growth of access to the Internet and information services and applications among the least developed countries (LDCs), land-locked developing countries (LLDCs) and small islands developing states (SIDS) is especially a worrying sign. In addition, the current gap between developed and developing countries in terms of infrastructure development is also worrying.

The disparity is even more obvious with the development trend of broadband technologies which is rapidly penetrating all ICT application fields with a converged platform, and providing a new opportunity for ICT infrastructure and information service and application development that may skip many costly traditional ICT development and application modes.

Without widely available and affordable ICT access in under-served areas of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, and citizen-centered e-services and applications, it would be almost impossible to achieve sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development.

In this connection, in October 2009, ESCAP organized two sub-regional workshops in Bangkok back-to-back to introduce the concept and collect baseline information on the status of ICT penetration and access from government experts from participating countries. A comprehensive study and in-depth analysis on the policy options and recommendations on how to provide affordable ICT access and applications to under-served areas of LDC, LLDC and SIDS was completed and disseminated to target policy and decision makers. The findings were shared during the workshops.

Building on the ESCAP workshops and the UN e-government Survey, the workshop will look to develop policy recommendations taking account emerging trends and appropriate technologies.

Objectives

The objectives of the Workshop are the following:

- Discuss key issues and trends on e-government and highlight the role of good governance and public administration for national development and the MDGs;
- Provide a platform for policy dialogue and knowledge networking among e-government practitioners and decision-makers;
- Facilitate the sharing of lessons, experiences and best practices on governance and public administration in the region, including ICT applications in the public sector;
- Increase UNDESA's e-government knowledge in the Asia-Pacific region and identified case studies to populate the Public Administration Knowledge Space (PAKS); and

- Improve cooperation and collaboration with ESCAP.

Outputs

The conference will produce the following outputs:

- Country cases and presentations which will be uploaded as contributions into the Public Administration Knowledge Space of the UNDESA/DPADM/KMB.
- Publication summarizing workshop proceedings and reporting on outcomes and next steps.

Inputs from participants

- Participants will make country presentations on the status of the e-government programme and how it links to achieving the MDGs;
- Participants are expected to make a commitment towards participating in the design and in contributing to the PAKS platform through UNPOG.
- Participants are expected to appoint a focal point from their institution to become a contributing member of the network, including updating information to PAKS.