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United Nations Department of Economic Social Affairs
Division of Social Policy and Development

Expert Group Meeting

E-Participation: Innovative Strategies, Services and Tools for the Empowerment of People through E-Participation

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About Me

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Professor & Chairman of Management and IT
St. Francis College, USA

Fulbright Scholar/Specialist in ICT

High-level Adviser, United Nations Global Alliance for ICT & Development; advised UNFPA, UNDESA, UNESCO, UNECA on Sustainability, PPP, E-government, E-Governance, and ICT

Private Sector & NGO Adviser, Various organizations including CIO, Computerworld, Microsoft, ICDW

Chairman of NABU-Knowledge Transfer Beyond Boundaries

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Agenda

- Role of E-participation
- Global Trends
- ICT Trends
- Innovative Use of E-participation
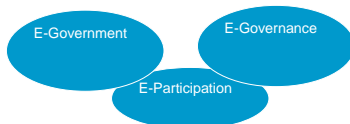- E-participation Strategy
- Q&A

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Emerging Importance of E-Participation

- In the recent years, e-participation has emerged as an important area particularly in e-government and e-governance. Proliferation of the Internet and mobile technologies has only accelerated the need for more e-participation from citizens around the world.
- Higher Demand for E-Participation

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E-participation

- E-participation "is the sum total of both the government programs to encourage participation from the citizen and the willingness of the citizen to do so. (United Nations E-government Readiness Knowledge Base)

E-Government

E-Governance

E-Participation

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Tools and Usages

- The World Bank describes e-participation in terms of a collection of tools that "are used to collect and discuss citizens' and businesses' views so their interests and need are better represented in government programs or processes." "The tools include online surveys and polls, electronic newsletters, e-mail, feedback forms, and web forums where citizens can express their opinions. They can be used to supplement public forums or meetings. E-Participation applications may have a publish feature, presenting relevant background information, decisions, and other materials to help citizens and business understand certain public policy or regulatory issues." (E-government Primer, The World Bank)
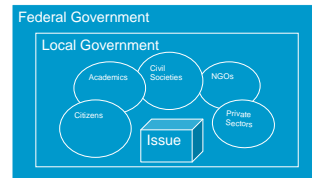
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E-participation is More

- E-participation is more than simply informing or consulting citizens, it is about engaging the citizens in decision making process and empowering them to participate in democratic governance so that a common goal is achieved.
- It is a give-and-take process that has to be integrated into all levels of decision making from local to regional to federal government. It is also about building consensus, which is necessary to make proper decision to act on.

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Ecosystem of E-participation

- local and federal governments, private sectors, NGOs, civil societies and academics to work together to share ideas that could help solve issues

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ICT Revolution

- ICT particularly the Internet and mobile technologies are fundamentally changing our society from the way we do banking to the way we receive medical services.
- In order for the Internet to lead this social metamorphosis, it has to be accessible to all, remain transparent and neutral and enable people to use the Internet for socio-economical development and human capacity building.

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Global Trends

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Global Issues

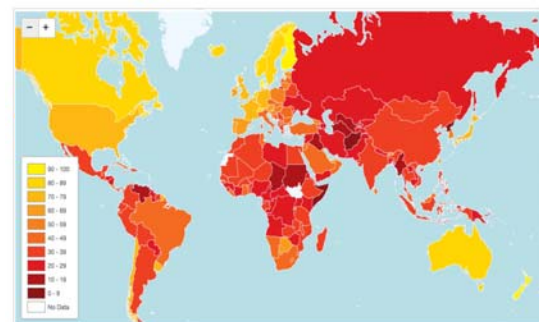- Rise of youth population in terms of population and level of dissatisfaction;
- Increase in global population which is expected to be over [...] and many of them will be in developing country;
- Limited food, water, energy and consumable resour[...]
- Climate changes and disastrous impacts;
- Less number of jobs for unskilled workers du[...] increase the unemployment and underemplo[...]
- Citizens are no longer tolerant to corruptions a[...] and social media technologies;
- Rapid ICT changes;
- Age of desktop is over and mobility is in; and
- Social media is connecting billions people around the world.

Increased Role of Government

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Corruption Perceptions Index 2012
Transparency International

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ICT is Connecting/Mobilizing People Around the World

- New technologies give mobility and access
  - Top 10 by number of internet users: China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Nigeria, Philippines, Brazil, Mexico, USA
  - Mobile Technologies (Over 6.8 billion mobile subscriptions; 2.7 billion online; not everyone has a smartphone)
  - Social Media Technologies
  - Preference of media has shifted to social media, rich media and mobile media

Source: United Nations, The ITU World in 2013 Report, Internet Trends by Meeker and Wu

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ICT is Connecting/Mobilizing People Around the World

- New technologies moving to mobile platform
  - Age of desktop computers is coming to end
  - Cloud computing is in
  - Tablet platforms
  - More and more people access services and information via mobile phones
  - Rapid Smart Phone Subscriptions, 1.5B subscribers, 31% growth, 21% penetration in 2013E
  - Beginning of Wearable Technologies
  - Beginning of Big Data Age

Source: Internet Trends by Meeker and Wu

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Mobile and Social Media Technologies for E-Participation

- Twitter, Weibo for information dissemination, sharing new initiatives, analyzing the needs of initiatives, etc;
- Social media networks like Facebook, VKontakte, Renren for sharing new initiatives, virtual town hall meeting, information sharing;
- Google hangout, Skype, etc. for small town hall meetings, information sharing, discussions, consultations, etc;
- Blogs for soliciting input;
- IM, QQ and other chat programs can be used to engage in one-to-one services;
- YouTube and other video sharing sites can be used to set up a comprehensive presentations and promotions of initiatives or projects; and
- IOS and Android mobile apps can be used to make information and citizen participation to the mobile platform like smart phones and tablets

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Innovative Use of E-Participation

- Emergency broadcasting system using texting;
- Apps to vote on local initiatives, i.e., building a shopping mall on the public land;
- Apps to collect input on proposed policy change;
- Google hangout meetings with experts;
- Facebook page on services and notices and get citizen's input on quality of services;
- Announcing new policy changes via twitter;
- Report issues to government office via twitter, i.e., unpicked up garbage @sanitation;
- C2C (citizen to citizen) forum, town hall meetings on YouTube, Facebook;
- Apps to report issues to the city, i.e., broken traffic light will issue a work ticket and citizen will be notified when it is fixed;
- E-voting on local elections; and
- E-consultation on issues through open consultation process.

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Examples : Participatory or Interactive E-government

Direct participation impacting government policies or politics

Mostly push out services

- White House We the People (online petition)
  - To cross the first threshold and be searchable within WhiteHouse.gov, **a petition must reach 150 signatures within 30 days.**
  - To cross the second threshold and require a response, **a petition must reach 100,000 signatures within 30 days.**

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Examples : Participatory or Interactive E-government

Direct participation impacting government policies or politics

- "Casting of ballots via mobile phone by over 70% of 300,000 voters in the Republic of Korea in the October 2007 poll for the presidential candidate for the United New Democratic Party."[1] and e-contracts using mobile public procurement service
- E-voting in Estonia using Mobile ID [1]
- Crime or complaint reports
- NYC 311
- Should we build a nuclear power plant in our city? Safety, Disaster Plan, Health Issues???

1. M-Government: Mobile Technologies For Responsible Governments and Connected Societies, ITU, OECD, 2011

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Social Inclusion

- E-participation must be available to all citizens particularly those who are traditionally marginalized and ignored like minorities, indigenous people, disabled people, senior citizens and women.
- The social inclusion has to be one of core fundamentals of any e-participation strategy. Not all citizens have the same access to technology or afford technology.
- In order to create an e-participation system for all, it is important to consider multi channels to make sure everyone will have a reasonable access to the system. A simple modification of traditional cell phone or kiosk could bring many people to participate in the process.

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Toolbox

National Strategy, Needs of Citizens, Government Efficiently and Transparency, Prioritization of Services, Culture, Political and Legal Reform, Citizen Participation, Partnership			
Whole-of-Government	One stop national portal lining all ministerial or secretarial services	Fully informational and functional online services	Policies, budget, legal documents, explanation of services, plans, data
	Availability/Access to information and data	Citizen Participation and Social Inclusion	Fully transactional based
ICT enabling m-government, multi-channel access	Internal and External Customer Needs		PPP, Open government data

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Thank you!

Q&A

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