



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## BEST PRACTICES IN ICT POLICY

# ENABLING E-GOVERNMENT FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

With the advent of the Internet and global networking, today's technology has the potential to fundamentally change the way people interact with government and each other.

However, to take advantage of these new opportunities, governments must make basic policy changes to address the need for new processes, interaction between different parts of government, issues around trust and security, and legal frameworks for these interactions.

Governments must have commitment from top levels, clear policy guidelines, and an understanding of who they serve and what the needs are.

## COMMITMENT FROM THE TOP

- E-government often means **changing how governments do business**, which usually requires political leadership, clout and changes in budgeting.
- The objectives behind e-government need to be **linked to broader, clearly defined policy objectives** (such as "increased efficiency in government" or "service delivery to underserved groups").
- E-government can **deliver integration of different services across government departments**. This integration can be difficult to attain (due to turf wars and budgetary commitments) unless there are champions at the very top levels.

## The Promises of E-Government

- Increase efficiency of government services and operation.
- Increase quality and the number of services able to be offered.
- Increase integration of government services across different ministries, focusing on those being served.
- Help achieve targeted outcomes and broader policy objectives.
- Contribute to government reform, especially anti-corruption and waste.
- Build democratic interactions between government and its citizenry by increasing the ease of communication and feedback.



dot-GOV, funded by U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Internews Network, Inc. works with USAID Missions and Bureaus to promote competitive policy and regulatory reforms in telecommunications and e-commerce to enhance economic and social development, and to attain universal access to information and communications technologies (ICTs).

## CLEAR POLICY GUIDELINES

- There must be a **legal basis** for e-government transactions. What is the status of online documents? Of electronic filings (especially for financial transactions)? What types of user verification are required?
- Building trust is essential in e-government projects. **Privacy and security policies** and expectations must be clearly defined and shared – within government, and with the general public.
- Who is responsible for **regulation and accountability**? Who will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of e-government programs?
- E-government projects must have the **funding mechanisms** in place to support the initial investments and both in the technical infrastructure and in the staffing requirements to maintain it.
- Clearly defined commitment to **integration of services and sharing of data** among departments. This includes common standards of interoperability for technology and data formats.

## WHO DO WE SERVE AND WHAT ARE THEIR NEEDS?

- Implementers need to recognize that e-government **is increasing the number of choices open to individuals** – not necessarily replacing an offline method.
- **Active participation of stakeholders** (businesses, citizens, local government counterparts) in the development of e-government processes will help insure that the services meet their needs.
- E-government can be used as a method to **increase access to ICTs by particular groups** (such delivering information on pension payments online as a way of increasing access to ICTs by the elderly).
- **Monitoring and evaluation systems** need to be able to **disaggregate by gender, area, education**, and other key indicators.
- Civil servants need **training and skill development** to effectively use and promote e-government tools.

### Suggested Reading

- **eGovernment Strategy: Theory and Practice.**  
Ari Schwartz, Center for Democracy and Technology.  
[http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile\\_id=139](http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile_id=139)
- **Government's Role in IT Security.**  
Ari Schwartz, Center for Democracy and Technology.  
[http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile\\_id=140](http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile_id=140)
- **eGovernment in Romania.**  
Jerker Tomgren, Internews Network.  
[http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile\\_id=138](http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile_id=138)
- **e-Government for Development in Macedonia: Recommendations from March 2004 Workshop**  
[http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile\\_id=142](http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile_id=142)
- **eGovernment in Macedonia - Security Issues.**  
John Adams Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.  
[http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile\\_id=137](http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile_id=137)
- **Implementing eGovernment: Some Considerations for Macedonia .**  
John Adams, Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.  
[http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile\\_id=135](http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/library/librarydetails.php?partnerfile_id=135)

For more information, please contact:

#### USAID

Laura Samotshozo  
dot-GOV Manager  
EGAT/EIT/IT  
202-712-4562  
[lsamotshozo@usaid.gov](mailto:lsamotshozo@usaid.gov)

Edward Malloy  
Telecommunications  
Advisor  
EGAT/EIT/IT  
202-712-1579  
[emalloy@usaid.gov](mailto:emalloy@usaid.gov)

#### dot-GOV

Sarah Tisch  
Program Director  
Internews Network  
202-833-5740 x 203  
[stisch@internews.org](mailto:stisch@internews.org)

George Sadowsky  
Sr. Technical Advisor  
Internews Network  
202 833-5740 x 200  
[george.sadowsky@internews.org](mailto:george.sadowsky@internews.org)

Alejandro Bermudez Del-Villar  
Program Associate  
Internews Network  
202-833-5740 x 205  
[ahbermudez@internews.org](mailto:ahbermudez@internews.org)



Funding for dot-GOV is provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture & Trade, Office of Energy and Information Technology (EGAT/EIT/IT) and Office of Women in Development (EGAT/WID), under the terms of Award number: GDG-A-00-01-00009-00. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

<http://www.dot-com-alliance.org>