Chapter 10
E–Government Development:
Performance Evaluation Parameters

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ABSTRACT

Almost all of the countries in the world are developing their online-government, or e-government (EG), systems with the support of information and communication technology (ICT). Countries are gradually enhancing their service scope, functionality, and flexibility to meet strategic goals set at the policy stage and to satisfy user requirements. For investment justification, necessary modifications, further development, and future guidelines assessing the performances of those EG projects are imperative for any country. This chapter is designed to develop a comprehensive model (E-government Performance Matrix – GPM) from the practitioner's perspective to measure the performance of ongoing EG projects. This chapter has four sections with sub-sections.

1. INTRODUCTION

EG refers to the application of ICT in different wings of government to provide information and services to citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders. Using modern ICT, EG re-orients the business processes of the public sector to enhance competence and make them competitive with the private sector (Schware and Deane, 2003; Van Dijk

et al., 2008). It enables governments to provide stakeholders cost-effective and better quality services (Banerjee and Chau, 2004). EG provides an alternative source for receiving government service that is available from anywhere and at anytime, allowing citizens to receive government services without going to a government office. All the essential divisions of a country – legislative, judicial, and administrative – may use EG as a way to provide information, reduce the cost of services, improve internal management, enhance

efficiency of service delivery, and promote the processes of democratic governance.

Countries around the world differ significantly in digitization for restructuring public administration and re-orienting government business process due to differences in areas such as social, cultural, economic status and patterns, technological diffusion, infrastructure, and government policy perspectives. As a result, the vision, mission, objectives, and strategy for development of EG and reformation of public administration is likely to differ significantly in different countries. However, without very advanced technical, financial, and individual ability; political commitment; and socio-cultural reformation it is difficult to progress and achieve the fundamental mission of EG implementation (Shareef *et al.*, 2010a). If we explore the EG objectives, strategies, and end-goals of different countries, we observe that the initiatives primarily targeted the following tangible goals (Trusler, 2003; Steyaert, 2004; Accenture 2005; AGIMO, 2006; Gouscos *et al.*, 2007; Kim, 2007; Knight, 2007; Schedler and Summermatter, 2007; OECD, 2009; Shareef *et al.*, 2010a):

- Achieve the enormous benefits of ICT
- Ensure the application of ICT in government service to develop better quality management, transparency, and accountability
- Restructure public administration to make it more efficient and cost effective
- Develop citizen-centric government and enhance the service scope for citizens and business organizations with greater variety, choice, and convenience of access for customers from anywhere in the world
- Increase the participation and interactivity of citizens in government services
- Gain economic benefits from digital government
- Position the country's image globally.

Fundamentally targeting any, some, or all of those issues, countries across the world are adopting EG in the mainstream of public service reformation projects. Although EG initiatives have many different strategic aspects, EG is often regarded as the panacea to traditional government systems for improving overall performance and the quality of service delivery as well as the common feature of enhancing public participation for all countries (Fountain, 2001; Wang and Liao, 2008). Some countries – such as South Korea, Canada, US, UK, Singapore, Denmark, Sweden, Ireland, Japan, and Germany – are very successful in developing mature EG systems (West, 2006) although they vary in their end goals. Different EG projects in both developed and developing countries show that successful initiatives, development, and end-goal achievement are dependent on a country's multi-dimensional capabilities, which include financial, technological, socio-cultural, political, and institutional (Beynon-Davies and Williams, 2003; Steyaert, 2004; Montagna, 2005; Bertot and Jaeger, 2006; Tolbert and Mossberger, 2006; Kim, 2007). It is, pragmatically, a revolution not only for government and the public service but also related governance; the proper implementation of EG with a long-term vision is very complex and depends on many different factors. Moreover, since its purpose is citizen driven – cost effectiveness, better quality, higher efficiency, and better public management with higher accountability and transparency – its implementation, development, and performance should be such that it satisfies users, meets the goals of its developers, and achieves the implementation objectives. Therefore, the issue can be explored considering two perspectives: that of the developer or supply side, i.e., government, and that of the user or demand side, i.e., citizens and business. Governments should have the ability to implement EG with the proper application of ICT and achieve the desired goals; and citizens and business organizations should be satisfied by using EG.

Across the world, almost all governments are implementing extensive EG projects powered by ICT and trying to capture the benefits of a dynamic,

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