Chapter 15
An Architecture Driven Methodology for Transforming from Fragmented to Connected Government:
A Case of a Local Government in Italy

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ABSTRACT

Connected government implies that citizens and enterprises can interact with government as with a single entity rather than with a number of different public authorities. In countries characterized by a highly fragmented system of Local Government, connected government at the local level can be achieved only through a process of progressive integration on a wider area of systems of local government already integrated at the local level. In the chapter, the author argues that this process should be based on a maturity model and a reference model that define the technological and organizational conditions that allow the establishment of more and more integrated aggregations of municipalities. With reference to a study funded by the Region Lombardia (Italy), the chapter introduces the concept of Integrated System of Local Government (ISLG) and describes the process that leads to the establishment of ISLGs as an intermediate step toward connected government at the local level. Moreover, the chapter discusses the conditions that can induce different aggregations of municipalities to comply with a set of standard requirements in the implementation of their integration processes.

FROM E-GOVERNMENT TO CONNECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

During the past years, a transformation in the concept of E-Government has been observed worldwide, at the point that a discussion was started concerning whether "E-Government is dead." Be this true or not, what is certain is that the high emphasis put on online services as the fundamental goal of E-Government has been constantly lowering in the past years and a new emphasis has been put on the transformational potential of ICTs for public sector transformation.

What such transformation amounts to is:

(…) a continuous process of changing the features of the public sector towards a desired set of features typically defined politically. These features are often service delivery features (e.g. choice of and access to services, speed of service delivery, responsiveness, etc.) or organisational features (e.g. institutional boundaries and responsibilities, cross-organisational collaboration and co-operation, collaboration and co-operation across levels of government, etc.) (OECD, 2007, p. 12).

Public sector transformation concerns both service delivery and organizational transformation. However, ICT enabled service delivery transformation and organizational transformation are strictly related. On the one hand, service delivery cannot be improved without transforming the way in which Government organizations operate to produce and deliver services to citizens and enterprises. As observed in the 2008 United Nations E-Government Survey "an increase in the value of services is not possible without consolidating the way the back-end systems and processes work to bring about the front-end of service delivery" (UNDESA, 2008, p. 5). On the other hand, organizational transformation cannot be considered as a value in itself; actually, Government organizations should transform themselves only insofar this allows them to deliver greater value to citizens.

Focusing on both service delivery transformation and organizational transformation leads to the so-called "Second Generation e-Government Paradigm" that according to the 2008 UN report can be considered as "an emerging paradigm that maintains that to achieve greater value in service delivery and reduce costs, integration and redesign of government organization and processes is a necessity" (UNDESA 2008, p. 5).

This paradigm characterizes the connected/networked government that "enables governments to connect seamlessly across functions, agencies, and jurisdictions to deliver effective and efficient services to citizens and businesses" (Pallab, 2010, p. 8).

Connected government is usually considered to be a multi-dimensional construct (Kaczorowski, 2004; Pallab, 2010), including dimensions such as:

- Citizen centricity as the guiding principle for the public sector transformation processes, whose goal is to create greater value for citizens, not only for citizens as users/consumers or beneficiaries, but also for citizens as taxpayers, as participants in the democratic processes, as policy makers and employees in public administration agencies and as suppliers and entrepreneurs as well (Castelnovo & Simonetta, 2007)
- Back-office reorganisation, to force the public administration agencies to "rethink their operations to move from being system-oriented to chain-oriented with respect to their structure, functioning, skills and capabilities, and culture and management" (UNDESA, 2008, p. 5)
- Networked organisational model, to transform a fragmented system of government agencies in a networked virtual organization that operates seamlessly toward a common mission, that is to deliver more

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