

Chapter 17

E–Governance for Development: Designing an Operational Roadmap for ICT–Enabled Public Administration Reform

Gianluca Misuraca

Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Switzerland

Gianluigi Viscusi

University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss a conceptual framework on e-Governance for development developed by the authors and the model underpinning it with particular regard to the relationship between Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and Governance in developing and emerging countries. The final goal is to exploit both the framework and the model to propose operational guidelines for designing a roadmap towards the implementation of e-Governance and Public Administration Reform (PAR). In defining the organizational and institutional dimensions underpinning ICT-enabled Governance, indeed, the chapter positions e-Government activities within the broader framework of e-Governance (i.e., the governance with and of ICT), as a learning type of dynamics characterized by a multidimensional and multi level area of intervention. In order to test the framework and model proposed, the chapter discusses selected case studies supporting the definition of the key issues to be considered as guidelines to implement e-Governance interventions as part of broader PAR programmes.

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INTRODUCTION

Governance, as a concept and practice, it is of course linked to Government. Nevertheless governance is about more than just government. It is a complex yet universal force that exists in all societies. People exert governance in their daily lives to manage human relationships, just as corporations and countries do to manage their interactions and activities. Thus, considering the combination of ICTs with governance, the debate about e-Government evolved in the last few years towards a broader discussion on e-Governance, where the concept and practice of e-Governance further encompasses e-Government. e-Governance is still a growing phenomenon around the world and is emerging as a discipline, despite still in its infancy. Initially it was mainly considered within the field of Public Administration Reform (PAR), but it has now being realized as not only being a “government business”, but a fundamental societal challenge.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the conceptual framework on e-Governance for development developed by the authors and the model underpinning it with particular regard to the relationship between Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and governance in developing and emerging countries, in view of proposing operational guidelines for designing a roadmap towards the implementation of e-Governance and Public Administration Reform (PAR).

In order to do so, the chapter discusses the implications of ICTs on governance and public administration reform, analyzing the strategic and methodological issues related to implementing e-Governance interventions and PAR in developing and emerging countries.

In defining the organizational and institutional dimensions underpinning ICT-enabled governance, in fact, the chapter positions e-Government activities within the broader framework of e-Governance (i.e., the governance with and of

ICT), as a learning type of dynamics characterized by a multidimensional and multi level area of intervention.

Furthermore, the chapter presents an overview of the conceptual and methodological framework developed and applied to selected field cases used as supportive evidence for identifying the key issues to be considered for defining guidelines to implement e-Governance interventions as part of broader PAR programmes.

The chapter concludes highlighting the policy implications for governance and public administration reform and offering practical recommendations for e-Governance implementation in developing and emerging countries.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATIONS

At the state of the art, different definitions of governance have been provided. The World Bank has identified three distinct aspects of governance: 1) the form of political regime; 2) the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development; 3) the capacity of governments to design, formulate and implement policies and discharge functions (World Bank, 1991). For UNDP, governance is viewed as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It is about the process by which government, the private sector, citizens and groups articulate their interests, mediate their differences, and exercise their legal rights and obligations (UNDP, 1997).

The concept of governance defined by OECD denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development (OECD, 1995). This broad definition encompasses the role of public authorities in establishing the environment in which economic operators function and in determining the dis-

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