

Next Generation Organizational Models for e-Government
Global-Local Dialogue GDLN Workshop
Tuesday April 1, 2008; 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Summary by Judith Hellerstein

This workshop discussed the role of a new generation of e-government organizations that have extended the role of e-Government "Centers of Excellence" or "Competency Centers" in keeping with emerging technology and organizational trends. The session explored several promising approaches to the design of such organizations drawing upon successful experiences from the private and public sectors.

The question should no longer be "should we invest in ICT or e-government or even in the next generation of e-Government" but what is the best way to invest. The World Bank has already committed more than \$7 billion to ICT and e-government related investments. The question now is "how do you create the necessary leadership and ownership models that will provide the best solutions for developing countries".

Rapid changes in technologies and business models require a fundamental rethink of the organizational structures and institutional designs for ICT organizations supporting e-government. Panelists discussed the applicability of such next generation e-government organizations to different environments. The discussions that followed centered around the following five questions:

1. What changes in technologies and business models are likely to impact organizational structures supporting e-government? What will be the impact of Web 2.0 technologies? What will be the chief characteristics of successful organizational models for advancing e-government in the future?
2. What are examples of good practice in organizational design (drawn from both the public and private sectors), for addressing the needs and requirements for successful e-government?
3. How should governments go about establishing such new generation organizational structures for supporting e-government? What could be the business model for such a center to ensure sustainability? What could be the role of private sector in such centers?
4. What skills and competencies should such organizations possess? Which services and functions should such centers provide?
5. Are there any innovative approaches to organizational design, catering to e-government deployments in a regional context?

Reinhard Posch, Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Government of Austria, spoke about how his agency reorganized their e-government office into a very focused department with just 25 people. Their strategy for success was to get all stakeholders to agree to respect all the decisions that this e-government group chose and decided. Also prior to any decisions made, the agency/Government worked to ensure that the legal and regulatory frameworks were up to date. The reasoning was that if they were going to have all records available electronically they would also need to create some legal framework so that these new electronic documents could be printed and then accepted as legal documents. The other key messages were that success would only be ensured if the interfaces were well-defined at all levels so that any changes in the future could be easily incorporated. They also placed a big emphasis on getting the back office databases to interoperate with each other.

Randeep Sudan, Lead ICT Policy Specialist, Global ICT Dept., World Bank, spoke about the optimal organizational structure needed to support successful e-Government initiatives. He listed six key questions for next generation organizational models for e-government: Whether it was better to have a centralized body or to decentralize responsibilities for e-Government? Should such organizations be focused on technology or on the business; should the organizations be public or private; should they be large or small organizations; whether they should be hierarchical or flat and; whether they should be doer or influencers. He discussed how federated or hybrid organizational models were emerging that combine a degree of centralization (with regard to standards and shared infrastructure/services for example) with greater decentralization. In today's world, technology has become secondary to business since technology is simply a tool to help businesses achieve their established objectives and goals. E-Government organizations will be required to focus primarily on the business of government with domain experts in the lead, instead of IT specialists. Randeep thought that public agencies should lead the way into the next generational models but rely heavily on private sector input and suggestions. Moreover, public agencies would do well to develop competencies to deal with public private partnerships. As for size of e-government organizations, the trend is likely to be towards lean organizations but linking with networks of external expertise. As new models of outsourcing emerge including trends in cloud computing, and as government becomes more of an enabler and facilitator rather than a doer, e-government organizations will need to have greater competencies in dealing with strategic sourcing. Lastly, such organizations will most likely rely on matrix structures for managing their support functions and veer towards becoming a hyper-connected enterprise tapping into the creativity and innovation of external players.

Jajit Bhattacharya spoke about the potential impact of web 2.0 technology and the emergence of new organizational models potentially leading to eGov 2.0. E-Gov 1.0 was simply a transformation of what we used to do in person or in paper into an electronic format, while e-Gov 2.0 is focused on a more efficient, inclusive, and participative government through adoption of a set of new trends in business, operational, financial, and technological models. E-Gov 2.0 is about direct participation of citizens, increased revenue opportunities from e-public services by leveraging these databases and by integrating mashups and other web 2.0 technologies. It is about convincing villages to trust these electronic government databases and create e-emporiums and other market linkages. It is about community creation and facilitation. Bhattacharya sought to redefine what we mean by PPP (public private partnership), by including citizen participation in all PPPs, thereby creating new operational, financial, and technology models making the old new again.

In the question and answer session, **Yuri Hohlov** from Russia spoke about the need to create a balance between disintermediation and intermediation. Also how do you encourage an uptake in PC usage so that all citizens can take full advantage of these new services, when they do not have access to PCs. He also asked whether governments could use these next generation models that use mashups and web 2.0 technologies on logistics branches or were they only for specific e-government applications?

Participants from the **OECS** countries asked about how to mix mashups and other web 2.0 technologies that are based on public and thus insecure databases with secure government databases? OECS participants were more interested in hearing about e-government projects that focused on an entire region rather than on a country-by-country focus.

Victor Kyalo of Kenya spoke about how Kenya was seeking to concentrate all ICT projects and partnerships into one division structurally for ease of implementation. Their goal was to increase capacity and execution of efficiencies and also to focus on some key large ICT anchor projects. He spoke about the need to place centers of excellence in the many smaller towns and villages and not

just in major urban areas. He also spoke about the challenges in getting citizens to trust/accept government e-services and database systems as opposed to the current predominantly paper based way of doing business. .

Helio Varela from Cape Verde asked why was it necessary to have the legal and regulatory framework updated prior to reorganizing the E-government offices. He felt that all legal and regulatory issues could be dealt with after the e-government organization was completed.