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1964 - 2014

years of innovations in governance and public administration

*African Training and Research Centre in Administration for
Development (CAFRAD)*



African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

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Challenges and prospects of e-governance in Africa in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals

Seminar on the use of ICT to improve governance in Africa

Concept paper

*23 - 25 November 2015
Tangier (Morocco)*

I. Context and justification

The development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has significantly changed the habits and the functioning systems of organizations. Thanks to these tools, various methods have been developed, always more oriented towards the pursuit of efficiency, rapidity and simplicity. This triple requirement, today recognized in the introduction of new communication technologies, is also materialized in what is called governance. That is generally what informed the decision to talk about electronic governance or e-governance.

E-governance has in this capacity, for several years, appeared as one of the appropriate answers to the many grievances so far made to public administrations and traditional governance systems, including the cumbersome nature of their procedures, communications deficit, illegibility of mechanisms, legal and regulatory frameworks, difficult traceability and complexity of monitoring and evaluation systems. Various examples exist internationally and that allow henceforth considering in fact that if the introduction of electronics in the systems of governance currently underway at the international level, it means, however, that the latter does not yet provide a panacea although it enables us, at least, to considerably improve public governance in general.

But despite the recognition of the benefits of e-governance, it still remains difficult to say that these benefits are universally and uniformly distributed. In other words, the development of e-governance varies from one context to another, from one country to another, from one continent to another. This means in reality that what may appear as a success of e-governance in a specific context, may as well be meaningless in another. This means that while in one part of the world, e-governance is an integral part of the culture in a separate section, it is still little known, if not at least in the stammering stage in another section. All this reflects the consequence of what has been commonly called the digital divide, the effects of which has found in e-governance one of its breeding grounds.

Africa is not a stranger in this situation. It is a complex space where different levels of electronic cultures and experiences of electronic administrations gather. Indeed, much as one can initiate at the introductory level a discourse on e-governance, on the same continent, this attempt of cultural resolution remains for many a very distant idea and this is so for various reasons and motives. Yet, most African countries, if not all, have agreed on the need to make this change so as to be in tune with the contemporary world. But this support in principle is not always necessarily followed by facts. So it is in the glaring awareness of these ambiguities, these complexities and in agreement with our partners that CAFRAD took the initiative to organize, a seminar for officials of public administration on the obstacles, challenges and prospects of e-governance in Africa.

II. Objective

The objective of the seminar is to afford the participants the opportunity to collectively analyze and understand the many and varied situations of electronics in Africa in order to sketch an overview of this cultural change in terms of governance, to evaluate its current obstacles and challenges and then propose solutions that will enable African States to fully embrace a new and modern culture of governance.

The interest of this meeting is twofold. It will on the one hand enable the participants to share practical experiences on the various African public administrations, just as it will favor on the other, the establishment of a coordinated and harmonized strategy for resolution to different problems facing African countries, at the continental level.

III. Content of the programme

During this seminar, various themes will be addressed notably:

1. The uneven distribution of the culture of e-governance in Africa;
2. The factors responsible for the low use of ICTs in African countries and the lackluster citizens' involvement in the construction of a culture and practice of e-governance;
3. The strategies and mechanisms for improving the access to ICTs in Africa;
4. E-governance inter-African cooperation and its inherent implications;
5. The role of international and intergovernmental institutions in the definition and support of e-governance broadcasts strategies at the national and continental level.

IV. Target audience/groups

1. High-ranking officials in charge of ICTs from ministerial departments, national agencies in charge of ICTs and relevant stakeholders involved in planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating government public services' delivery;
2. Representatives of civil society involved in ICTs;
3. Trainers of e-governance (professors, researchers);
4. Officials in charge of ICTs training and the application of ICTs social services.

Participants will be given the opportunity to present the experiences of their respective countries, by indicating the great achievements in the field of e-government, innovation and modernization of public services and State institutions. This will enable the cross-breeding of ideas on best practices on the subject matter of the seminar. Each country can be represented by a delegation of two or more people.

V. Resource persons

Persons with vast experience in ICTs and e-governance will be invited to facilitate the seminar. Preference will be given to Experts and officials from National Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), to facilitate and share their expertise and experiences on the issues of the seminar. Resource persons will introduce the topics, facilitate discussions and help in the preparation of individual projects.

VI. Methodology

Taking into account the high level of target audience, the seminar will be conducted in a participatory and active manner. Resource persons will introduce the sub-themes assigned to them, followed by discussions and comments on the presentations. Participants will have the chance to react by providing concrete examples from their respective countries. Interventions of each resource persons will last for about thirty minutes and the discussion for about sixty minutes. Then, plenary as well as group discussions will be conducted. A chairperson will lead each of the sessions of the seminar.

VII. Expected results

It is expected that the seminar will provide the participants with further opportunities for a better acquaintance of the problems and constraints of effective e-Governance and ways of thinking through solutions to the problems resulting from low use of ICTs and a poor service delivery. Participants will work on individual or group projects, (corresponding to their institutional or national realities) for immediate implementation of achievements when they are back to their respective countries.

VIII. Registration fees

A token amount of **250 Euros** (two hundred and fifty Euros) or **US\$ 300** (three hundred dollars) is requested from each participant. This money is meant to cover part of the costs of organizing the seminar. ***Payment will be made at the beginning of the proceedings. Moreover, each participant (country) will sponsor his/her participation, that is to say, air ticket and living expenses in Tangier.***

Date: 23 - 25 November 2015

Venue: Tangier (Morocco)

Duration: Three days

Languages: French and English.

For more information about the seminar or CAFRAD, kindly contact us at the following address:

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