

# eGovernment Implementation Strategies and Best Practices: Implications for sub Saharan Africa

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# Presentation Outline

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## **Preamble**

- ❑ eGovernment in nascent stage of development with definitions still evolving. UN eGovernment Survey (2008, 2010, 2012) most authoritative source on the subject defines eGovernment as a means of enhancing the capacity of the public sector, together with citizens, to address particular development issues**
- ❑ eGovernment implementation has become the focus of many governments the world over as governments come under pressure to demonstrate social inclusivity; enhance service delivery; and promote democratic and inclusive governance by leveraging the power of ICT**
- ❑ Governments are being called upon by citizens, development partners, and civil society to demonstrate accountability and integrity in their operations to justify their continued stay in power**

## Preamble

- ❑ **Innovation in service delivery and customer focus are some of the prime motivations for eGovernment projects (Farelo and Morris, 2006)**
- ❑ **The gist eGovernment implementation around the world is the reorganization of service processes and citizen services (Lenk, 2002; 2004)**
- ❑ **Well leveraged, eGovernment has the potential to reduce administrative and development problems that have characterised with sub Saharan Africa (Akther, Onishi and Kidokoro, 2007) for many years.**

## Research Problem

- ❑ The annual UN eGovernment surveys have repeatedly shown year in year out that most countries in Western and Eastern Europe, North America and Asia are leaders in eGovernment compared to their counterparts in SSA
- ❑ Despite the existing eGovernment divide between developed and developing world, Huang, D'Ambra and Bhalla (2002) report that most, if not all, eGovernment strategies and implementation plans in developing world including Africa have until now been based on theories and experiences of developed countries. Why should then SSA continually lag behind in eGovernment?

## Research Questions

- What is the status of eGovernment in Africa?
- Why is Africa lagging behind the developed world in eGovernance?
- What eGovernment strategies and best practices are applied in developed world?
- How can Africa overcome eGovernment barriers in order to improve its global ranking?

## **Methodology and Theory**

- ❑ eGovernment as an emerging field or a practice is still in its nascent stage of development and does not have yet a well established theoretical underpinning (Titah and Bark, 2006)**
- ❑ Methodological and theoretical basis of this paper is Content analysis of the UN eGovernment 2008, 2010 and 2012 reports complemented by empirical and theoretical literature on eGovernment in primary and secondary sources**
- ❑ UN eGovernment Surveys (2008, 2010 and 2012) are authoritative source of e-government information and have adopted a consistent framework for carrying out the surveys adequate for addressing the research problems outlined above.**
- ❑ Basic parameters of the UN eGovernment surveys are telecommunication infrastructure, human capital and eParticipation**

## Methodology and Theory

- ❑ Telecommunication infrastructure is assessed using a composite index of five indicators namely: **number of personal computers per 100 persons**, **number of Internet users per 100 persons**, **number of telephone lines per 100 persons**, **number of mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 persons** and **number of fixed broadband subscribers per 100 persons** based on ITU data
- ❑ Human capital on the other hand, is a composite index of two indicators: **adult literacy** rate and the combined **primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrolment** ratio using UNESCO data
- ❑ eParticipation factors include facilitation information to citizens by governments (G2C) (eInformation sharing), interaction with stakeholders (eConsultation) and engagement in decision making processes (eDecision making).



# **Global eGovernment Best Practices and Strategies**

- ❑ Europe, North America and Asia have used pull technology tools such as websites to put a lot of citizen-centric information online (eGovernment Survey, 2010), enhance online interactivity and feedback**
- ❑ eGovernment leaders have prioritised on eService delivery and access has been enhanced through increased use of ICTs. In contrast, SSA has yet to effectively engage its people using electronic means**
- ❑ eGovernment leaders have also invested in projects such as citizens' inclusion in government decision-making process; governments' provision of information and knowledge; and governments' consultation with citizens to obtain feedback and opinions.**

# Global eGovernment Best Practices and Strategies

- ❑ Chen, Chen and Ching (2006) outline three phases of eGovernment prioritised by the most countries in the developed world, namely:

**The Initiation Phase:** focuses on providing citizens with a single point of access to government information and Web enabling government payments with the aim to provide citizens with a minimum level of political involvement such as knowing who represents them and what is happening in the political scene

**The Second Phase :** Also known as the Infusion Phase involves adoption of the principles of eGovernment with online review and payment applications becoming widely installed. At this phase, citizens can make most government payments via the Web and electronic bill presentment becomes the standard norm.

**The Final Phase:** is customization because one-size-fits-all solution cannot suffice. During this phase 1:1 relationship between citizen and government is the goal

# **Global eGovernment Best Practices and Strategies**

- ❑ The US government adopted three strategic principles in the implementation of e-government: (1) citizen-centred, not bureaucracy-centred; (2) results-oriented; and (3) market-based, actively promoting innovation (Chen et al., 2006)**
- ❑ Policy environment in the United States is an important feature in understanding the strategy for eGovernment implementation (Relyea, 2002)**
- ❑ A set of laws such as the Privacy Act, the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act, the Electronic Freedom of Information Amendments, the Computer Security Act, the Critical Infrastructure Protection, the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, and the Electronic Government Act are in place to facilitate eGovernment**

**Tabla 1: Top Ranking Countries in Global eGovernment  
(Source: eGovernment Survey, 2012)**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>eGovernment development index value</b>
1	Republic of Korea	0.9283
2	Netherlands	0.9125
3	United Kingdom	0.8960
4	Denmark	0.8889
5	United States	0.8687

# **Global eGovernment Best Practices and Strategies**

- ❑ The countries reflected in Table 1 are high-income and developed economies with favourable dispositions to citizen engagement and empowerment.**
- ❑ The United States, Republic of Korea, Israel, Australia, Norway, Denmark, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and New Zealand are among the few countries that come close to a pure one-stop shop portal with information, services and participation services integrated on one site.**
- ❑ The low literacy level in sub Saharan Africa hinders eService provision as the majority of people neither can read, write nor have no access to the Internet where this is possible**
- ❑ The data from eGovernment surveys have proven that eGovernment development and implementation in countries differ in three areas: income level, development status, and region (Siau and Long, 2005)**

# Global eGovernment Best Practices and Strategies

- ❑ **Developed countries have invested in network access (availability, reduced cost, and quality of information)**
- ❑ **Developed countries have also streamlined the national and ministry portals and websites to better offer more eServices, online service provision and use of ICT, social networking sites and more active engagement of citizens in dialogues with government electronically (UN eGovernment Survey, 2010)**
- ❑ **Regional collaborative efforts through shared vision, objectives and implementation approach for the short term and long term periods (UN eGovernment Survey, 2010)**
- ❑ **Inclusive planning with citizens prior to the implementation and delivery of services and bottom-up approaches have been critical success factors for developed world(Chen et al. , 2006 ; UN eGovernment Surveys ,2010; 2012)**

# Status of eGovernment in sub Saharan Africa

**Table 2: UN eGovernment Development Indices for Africa  
(Source: eGovernment Survey, 2012)**

Rank	Country	E-government Development Index Value
1	Seychelles	0.5192
2	Mauritius	0.5066
3	South Africa	0.4869
4	Tunisia	0.4833
5	Egypt	0.4611
6	Cape Verde	0.4297

## **Status of eGovernment in sub Saharan Africa**

- ❑ eGovernment development in the sub region is still in its nascent stages with limited public services being processed online (Bannister, 2007; Janssen, Rotthier and Snijkers, 2004)**
- ❑ In SSA necessary data on government portals are often non-existent or completely out-dated such as land registers, residential data or geographic data (Onishi and Kidokoro, 2007)**
- ❑ Sub Saharan Africa has the smallest numbers of countries that have links from the national home pages to those of local governments (UN eGovernment Survey, 2008; 2010)**
- ❑ Some of sub Saharan African countries do not have the financial resources to interconnect local government offices to the country's Internet infrastructure (UN eGovernment Survey, 2010).**
- ❑ Mauritius and South Africa are at the top in Africa since their citizens are able to register a birth or death, apply for a social welfare grant, pay taxes, access government legislation, e-parliaments (Kaisara and Pather , 2009)**



## **Status of eGovernment in sub Saharan Africa**

- ❑ Corruption, human resource development and monitoring and evaluation are core issues of concern for eGovernment implementation in South Africa (Farelo and Morris, 2006).**
- ❑ Lack of access to both ICT and education infrastructure in sub Saharan African countries is a major constraint on eGovernment development**
- ❑ Northern Africa generally leads in sub Saharan region closely followed by the Southern Africa. Western Africa lags far behind the other sub-regions and was the lowest scoring sub-region in the 2010 Survey.**

# Challenges of eGovernment Implementation

- ❑ It was found that sub Saharan Africa has largely adopted eGovernment implementation strategies of developed world but this has not propelled the continent competitively in global ranking compared to counterparts in Europe, North America and Asia.
- ❑ Major challenges facing sub Saharan Africa in its quest for successful eGovernment projects include overall literacy; development of telecommunications infrastructure; commitment of governments to genuine transformation towards more transparent and citizen-centered governance.
- ❑ Limited commitment of governments to genuine transformation towards more transparent and citizen-centered governance (Kitaw, 2006)
- ❑ Lack of common eGovernment goals and objectives, delivery timeframes, ownership and governance across government agencies

## Way Forward

- Developing content that citizens find important and useful
- Improving education levels so that citizens are able to use the information and knowledge provided
- Encouraging citizen participation
- Developing relevant content-taking into account language, culture, accessibility and alternate delivery methods in eServices to all segments of the population (Lam, 2005)
- Improved access for citizens, particularly in rural areas and a supportive telecommunications policy (Farelo and Morris, 2006)
- Adopt custom-made strategies to promote eGovernment to the people

**Thank you for listening**



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