CONCEPT PAPER

DESA/Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)
Development Management Branch

Developing capacity for participatory governance through e-participation:
engaging citizens in policy and decision-making processes using ICTs

1. INTRODUCTION

Included in the vision of the United Nations General Assembly Millennium Declaration is the reaffirmation by the member states that they “...resolve to work collectively for more inclusive political processes, allowing genuine participation by all citizens in all (our) countries... and the right of the public to have access to information....” There is resistance, however, among some government leaders and their public administrators to grasp the opportunities for improving governance through e-participation, which may be due to a “generational divide” where the senior leadership is not at a comfort level with or an understanding of the potential of ICTs for engaging citizens\(^1\). As a result, there may not readily be the push for fully exploiting the potential of e-participation for policy making or in public administration improvements and responsiveness. In that regard, governments would benefit from the United Nations advisory work on e-government development and specifically from support in carrying out capacity building activities for e-participation capabilities. A Measurement and Evaluation Tool for E-Participation Readiness (METEP), as elaborated in this paper, would effectively provide for that.

The purpose of this paper is to outline the scope for e-participation in order to inform and promote the construction of a self-assessment guide - the METEP. E-participation readiness reflects the willingness, on the part of a government, to use ICTs to provide high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools for the specific purpose of empowering people for able participation in consultations and decision-making, both in their capacity as consumers of public services and as citizens. The paper is presented in the following sections:

- Background - The importance of public participation to good governance and public administration; Public Participation in the 21\(^{st}\) century: engaging citizens through ICTs;
- Towards developing capacity for e-participation – E-participation framework; DPADM’s role in e-participation development;
- The E-Participation Self-assessment Instrument - Constructing an e-participation self-assessment tool; METEP;
- Conclusions and recommendations.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The importance of public participation to good governance and public administration

Public participation has positive implications for good governance, as a broader and more comprehensive notion of government and its administration than the term “government” has usually implied (Farazmand 2002; 2009). Farazmand describes governance as a participatory process of governing the social, economic and political affairs of a country, state, or local community through structures and values that mirror those of society. This has long been the position of the United Nations, which has sought from its inception to promote the right of the public to participate in their own government as one of the standard rights to be upheld by all peoples and all nations2. Participation involves “enabling people to realize their rights to participate in, and access information relating to, the decision-making processes that affect their lives”, and specifically, to influence details of policy legislation, and to continuously monitor their implementation3. The exercise of this right benefits individuals and groups, governments, and the whole society.

By participating in the processes of government individuals and groups have the opportunity of influencing government’s decisions on aspects of public affairs that interest and concern them. The outcomes of government’s participatory decision-making processes, consequently, are likely to be of greater value to participants as stakeholders, who even when the decision is not preferred, may be satisfied that: serious consideration was given to diverse perspectives; and that final decisions are for the common good, and not deliberately disadvantageous to any. Once multiple backgrounds and perspectives become part of the process, a greater wealth of knowledge, experience and perspectives is brought to bear when tackling a problem or developing a plan4.

There is more to the experience of participating in public affairs, which is related to raising awareness and intellectual development. In order to participate effectively, that is to have one’s views communicated meaningfully; some effort must be made to becoming informed about public matters and issues, about opportunities for consultation, and about the related decision-making processes. Through participation stakeholders become more self-aware in terms of their own perceptions and the need to articulate them. They also learn about the perspectives of others and become aware of the subjectivity of perceptions in general5.

Upholding peoples’ right to participate in public decision-making processes, therefore, necessitates providing public access to government information, facilitating opportunities for public consultation on matters that are important to them and their inclusion in public decision-making from problem definition to choosing criteria for

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2 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 21
5 Participatory dialogue: Towards a Stable Safe and Just Society for all. (2007) United Nations Economic and Social Council
selecting among policy alternatives, implementation and to evaluation of policy instruments and their outcomes.

The benefits of public participation to governments are very relevant today in the context of internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development goals and the Post-2015 development management initiatives. In each United Nations development decade, public participation in government continues to be advocated and pursued. Since 1969 the General Assembly established that popular participation is an integral element of development, stating in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development that all elements of society should participate in the preparation and execution of national plans and programmes of social and economic development. In the Economic and Social Council resolution 1746 (1973) it is further recommended, specifically to governments, on the subject of national experience in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes, that appropriate measures should be taken at all levels to ensure more active participation by the entire population including the labour force, in the production, preparation and execution of economic and social development policies and programmes.

Indeed, the public comprise a primary resource to governments in achieving shared development goals. Building trust among those they represent is vital to the legitimacy and inclusiveness of the decisions made on their behalf, pertaining to the prioritization of development activities and related allocation of resources. For such reasons, in the Post-2015 Development Agenda towards “Realizing the Future we Want for All”, it is clearly stated that achieving inclusive economic, social, sustainable, and peaceful development is dependent on active public participation and on engaging communities and citizens in policy-making. A “society for all” must be equipped with appropriate mechanisms that enable citizens to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives, and ultimately shape their common future. Governments are being encouraged to adopt measures, including structural changes and institutional arrangements, that will facilitate the contribution of people to the development effort, and to organize training programmes to impart to government officials and local leaders knowledge and skills in promoting and sustaining effective participation by the people in national, regional and local development plans and programmes.

The social benefits from public participation are apparent in the quality of government and may be measured by the respective levels of public satisfaction based on quality of life indicators related to cost effectiveness, efficiency, inclusiveness and responsiveness in the delivery of public goods and services, and to economic and social development. In addition to public policies being more relevant and better managed as a result of public participation and oversight, due to active public involvement, governmental processes become more transparent and public officials more accountable. These participatory activities contribute to fostering a greater sense

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6 Participatory dialogue: Towards a Stable Safe and Just Society for all. (2007) United Nations Economic and Social Council
7 1969 (LVIII) Popular participation and its political implications for development- 1948th Plenary Meeting, 6 May 1975
of responsibility and guide, as well as inform, the behaviour of public officials. Transparent and accountable government can influence the deterrence of corruption in public sectors and as a result, societies may derive greater benefit from public revenues collected in their name and which they supply under taxation. Poverty eradication remains high on the international development agenda, in part due to the persistent challenges to reducing corruption in public organizations. Hence the need to, more closely, engage citizens in public affairs.

2.2. Public Participation in the 21st century: engaging citizens through ICTs

The United Nations has stressed the need for governments to strive towards harnessing the power of information and technology\(^8\), to reduce the digital divide, and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially ICTs are available to all\(^9\). The United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) in its annual review of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management continues to recognize and support the important and successful work undertaken by the division in its programmes geared to promote the development of electronic government across the United Nations Member States. This includes the flagship biennial publication, the e-Government Survey (2001- to date), in which data on the progress in national e-government development is researched and analysed, with reference to administrative, political and social impacts. Countries are ranked on their e-government readiness, which is measured in the following components: online service, telecommunication infrastructure, human capital and e-participation.

There is a reciprocal relationship between the evolution of the e-Government Survey and the actual developments taking place in the field of government and public administration, computer science, communications and information systems and sociology. Information and communications technology (ICTs) have the ability to transform the communications process between participants (Sanford and Rose, 2007) from these fields and their communities. This is continuously being confirmed in the research findings of the e-Government Survey. These modern technologies create new channels of contact and communications that reduce the barriers to civic engagement (e-Government Survey, 2008). E-Government developments in the on-line delivery of public services are also providing the communications infrastructure for citizen engagement electronically and increasingly governments are engaging citizens for feedback via their websites (e-Government Survey, 2010). Furthermore, decision-makers are soliciting information and knowledge from the constituents on-line and in real-time, seeking to respond more efficiently to those constituents (e-Government Survey, 2010).

A full understanding of how citizen engagement developments in the 21st century have advanced public participation would highlight the challenges governments face in building their capacities for e-participation. It should be noted that citizen engagement comprises processes promoted and conducted by government authorities,

\(^8\) Public Administration and Development. General Assembly resolution A/RES/57/277, 7th March 2003

\(^9\) Information and Communications Technologies for development. General Assembly resolution A/RES/66/184. 6th February 2012
rather than simply actions taken by citizens to participate in public affairs. The aim is for governments to encourage citizens to deliberate on contemporary issues, assessing and proposing options and informing improvements in public service delivery and for public policy development, implementation and evaluation. Concurrent developments in the private sector to market their goods and services in ways that are appealing to their customers, in order to increase their market share, are being influenced by increasingly well-organized ICT systems. This promotes the expectation that public organizations will similarly incorporate ICTs in their relations with constituents, in as organized a fashion. Therefore, to effectively foster citizen engagement, governments face the challenge of establishing sophisticated ICT infrastructures and organizational capacities that guarantee the well-organized accessibility of public information, and of consultation and decision-making processes. Citizens in many developing countries all over the world now expect to be directly involved in designing government programmes and services and e-participation is proving to be an effective method for facilitating this. Indeed, citizen engagement processes need to embrace all stakeholders and whereas public participation may occur through informal processes, citizen engagement may be better guaranteed through formal citizen engagement processes that comprise formal institutionalized structures that are based on strategies and polices determined by governments and on normative principles, rules and standardized procedures. These are complex, but welcomed challenges for governments that want to be informed, relevant and legitimate.

With the citizen in mind existing approaches to assessing e-Government developments is patterned according to improvements in access to: services, information and participation, from centralized, decentralized and connected perspectives (Curtin 2010). Centralization is evident in governments’ development of a national web portal. Portals serve as filters for the flow of information and represent ‘one-stop’ approaches to the dissemination of information. The current whole-of-government approach evident from the most recent e-Government Survey research points to the effectiveness of more collaborative and integrated approaches to public service delivery and further solidifies the usefulness of a centralized model. Decentralization, on the other hand, has represented the establishment of individual ‘stand-alone’ websites for specific departments of government and related programmes (education, finance, health, labour, social welfare). Furthermore, models emerging based on public demand and expectations for connectivity focus on the integration of electronic services including lineages between and among different departments of government rendering agencies and programmes seamless (Curtin, 20120), with regard to the access to services, information, and participation. Furthermore, as a result of continuous developments in the social media operating in more informal interpersonal and interactive domains, governments that value public participation and engagement are incorporating social media in their informational and consultative public programmes.

3. DEVELOPING CAPACITY FOR E-PARTICIPATION

3.1 E-participation framework
In the context of participatory governance, e-participation is of growing importance, given the continuous and crosscutting evolution of information and communications technologies (ICT) as an enabling force that is transforming the ability of public
organizations to be more connected with citizens and more efficiently responsive. The e-participation framework reflects and matches the framework for citizen engagement that conceptually formalizes the methodological structures for public participation in the twenty-first century, which are similarly justifiable as are the original principles of public participation. The framework comprises e-information, e-consultation, and e-decision-making, as follows:

- E-information: The government websites offer information on policies and programmes, budgets, laws and regulations, and other briefs of key public interest. Tools for dissemination of information exist for timely access and use of public information, including web forums, e-mail lists, newsgroups and chat rooms.
- E-consultation: The government website explains e-consultation mechanisms and tools. It offers a choice of public policy topics on line for discussion with real time and archived access to audios and videos of public meetings. The government encourages citizens to participate in discussions.
- E-decision making: The government indicates that it will take citizen input into account in decision making and provides actual feedback on the outcome of specific issues.

Within this framework, e-participation is defined to be a “participatory, inclusive, deliberative process of decision-making.” This can be achieved via:

a) Using ICT to increase the supply of information useful in the process of consultation and for decision making;

b) Using ICT to enhance consultation; and

c) Using ICT to support decision making by facilitating people’s participation within the framework of government-to-citizen and citizen-to-government interactions.

The benefits driveable from e-participation are outlined next, and based on many documented cases of effective e-participation; are considered to justify undertaking measures to address the challenges to pursuing the e-participation model as an integral part of national e-government development. The first clear benefits of e-participation from participation are differentiated from traditional public participation and are related to the utilization of ICTs. The Diplomacy Institute\(^\text{11}\) include the following in their assessment of these benefits: broadening of the range of participants, enabling synchronous decisions, capacity building among participants through information sharing and community-building through the exchange of views among participants and processes of negotiation and synthesis in reaching consensuses. Among the spin-offs from the above set of benefits are: the facility in strengthening political and social relationships towards building trust in government; quality in deliberative processes due to the synchronous and anonymous quality of ICTs (European Commission, 2009); enhanced information-processing and sharing capacity which ICT facilitates; and the short-term benefits at the organizational and programme levels, as well as the long-term social benefits of social and political developments.

3.2 Towards developing capacity for e-participation

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\(^{10}\) E-Government Survey 2003
\(^{11}\) www.diplomacy.edu
The Department for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs has launched several initiatives to support participatory governance, principally, the establishment of the Development Management Branch (DMB) within DPADM with responsibility for promoting citizen engagement in development management across the United Nations Member States. Citizen engagement subsumes traditional values for public participation as one-way citizen-to-government communications, towards greater citizen involvement in active two-way dialogue that informs and legitimizes governments, at the same time empowering citizens.

E-participation is an integral aspect of DPADM’s E-government Development programme. The existing e-participation index has been part of the Division’s online service index (OSI) since its inception in 2003. It is unique because there are no other international benchmarks in this area. As a result, the e-participation index has garnered strong interest and is, or has been, included in other benchmarks of the information society, such as those from the World Economic Forum and the Economic Intelligence Unit (Andreasson, 2013). Like the biennial E-government Survey, the E-participation index is under constant review and improvement so as to be continuously relevant and responsive to international development endeavours.

In the last decade, DPADM has monitored, guided and documented progress in e-participation achievements across the United Nations Member States through its Compendium of Innovative E-government Practices. Within the four volumes published at least 65 noteworthy innovations in e-participation have been assessed and disseminated as part of the division’s knowledge sharing agenda. Measuring progress in e-participation initiatives is an important tool for raising awareness among United Nations Member States and other stakeholders. The cases come from 30 of the Member States, primarily from the regions of Asia and Europe, with some representation from Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The initiatives provide good practices of how some of the challenges of e-participation development may be effectively addressed. Indeed, gains are not spread evenly, both across and within countries, with the majority still offering low levels of e-participation possibilities.

Further support is being given through ongoing workshops and expert group meetings at the regional and international levels, which provide the opportunity to review e-participation experiences, determine the strengths and weaknesses of the initiatives, and search for options and methodologies that may support a more good practices for local, national, regional and international stakeholders who are striving to harness the potential of e-participation to favourably impact development. Towards this outcome, governments must address the specific needs and preparedness of the society by providing users accessible and easy-to-understand language and interfaces. With regard to e-participation capacity building, governments would benefit from support the support that the METEP self-assessment guide would effectively provide for this.

The international community, in its current discussions on the Post-2015 development agenda, has identified the lack of citizens’ voice and ownership in national development plans. The potential transformative power of ICTs to enhance citizen
participation has not been fully harnessed for national development efforts. Nor have governments systematically applied ICTs to better identify and respond to citizens’ demands for new and improved public policies and services. The employment of this diagnostic tool in the near future should assist public officials in developing and planning the stages of capacity development for e-participation to promote citizen engagement, by empowering citizens through the improved channels and mechanisms through which to interact with their government appointed, as well as elected officials. It is expected that it will contribute to address this gap between potential and practice of e-participation.

The Working Group on e-participation at the recent Expert Group Meeting on “2014 E-government Survey: E-government as an enabler of collaborative governance” (4–5 December 2012), list three specific areas for concern in developing capacity for e-participation, as follows:

a) open government data and transparency
b) social media
c) Mobility

The Working Group defined each as representative trends in e-participation across the United Nations Member States and area in terms of the opportunities, challenges and recommendations for Member States under each trend:

a) Open data brings opportunities for more informed decision-making, greater service innovation, and enhanced transparency. It also brings up challenges of the accuracy of data, data protection and privacy concerns, and differing social attitudes to open data that are linked to a diversity of cultural contexts. They recommended that governments need to develop an open data strategy that rests on the principle that data is open by default, taking into consideration cultural norms and practices regarding sharing public data. Also, since no one strategy can fit all contexts, they need to consider regulatory frameworks and institutional capacities for introducing or improving existing measures for opening up data.

b) Social media bring opportunities for cost-effective ways for governments to engage with citizens, especially since many citizens are already on popular sites. They provide platforms that enable citizens to become content creators for public policies and services that governments can tap, providing a wealth of information. Some challenges stem from such sites not necessarily being an accurate measure of public opinion and can at times even misrepresent public views. Digital divide may exclude certain individuals and groups by demographics and educational levels. Also, if governments do not respond to citizen feedback, such e-participation can lead to democratic disillusionment. They recommended that governments should use social media in an interactive way, to avoid being sidelined in online citizen-to-citizen dialogues and discussions. In order to avoid misrepresentation of views, governments can use data analytics to mine opinions. And they need to develop a strategy for utilizing citizen generated content for policy-making and service enhancement processes.

12 A/RES/66/184. 66/184. Information and communications technologies for development. 6 February 2012.
c) Mobility and wireless technology are trends that provide opportunities for overcoming the digital divide in terms of geography and uneven infrastructure. They enable governments to target to and customize information for citizens and also potentially to garner very specific data from individuals. Challenges coming with these trends stem from traditional e-government frameworks not covering the potential for convergence with existing channels and multi-channels. Also, current web formats are not mobile technology readable, limiting access to e-services. The potential for invasion of privacy and social control by governments is higher with these technologies. They recommended that governments should think “mobile” by presenting web-content in mobile readable formats and also drafting the content in more succinct ways that are compatible with the technology. They can encourage mobile and wireless strategies, making sure there are commensurate data and privacy protection in place, to leapfrog for development results. They need to think beyond an “e-government” paradigm to “e-society.”

4. THE E-PARTICIPATION SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

4.1 Constructing an e-participation self-assessment tool

The advancement of a contemporary e-participation self-assessment instrument for e-Government development, with respect to advancements in ICTs, directly concerns the Development Management Branch of DPADM pertaining to its citizen engagement work and responsibilities for supporting governments in developing institutional capacities for e-participation. This instrument should correspondingly focus on governments’ online services provided to open up channels for online participation in public affairs. In accordance with the three building blocks of citizen engagement (information, consultation, decision-making), a country’s strength in e-participation is specifically measurable against the following three criteria: publishing of information on items under consideration in governments public policy-making agenda – e-Information; the provision of opportunities and channels for the public to engage in consultations with policy makers government officials and one another – e-Consultation; and whether citizens can directly influence decisions – e-decision-making, for example by petitioning or voting online or through the use of a computer or mobile telephone.

Furthermore, in an e-participation self-assessment instrument aimed to inform and promote capacity development, indicators to be considered should be in line with the citizen engagement research and analysis, and knowledge building agenda of the Development Management Branch, as follows 1) Legal Frameworks; 2) Organizational Frameworks; 2) Channels and Modalities; and 4) Outreach. These four components are all important to the three building blocks of citizen engagement through processes of e-participation (e-information, e-consultation, e-decision-making) are discussed above: first, with due attention to the related challenges facing governments in capacitating their organizations for e-participation.
Legal framework as a criterion for capacity assessment acknowledges the need for governments to, first, legislate and promulgate the necessary legal frameworks; second, strategise organizational mandates and institutionalize related procedures, channels and modalities; and third, establish inclusive outreach programmes capitalizing on the scope of ICT to reach populations in remote areas.

Legal frameworks for e-participation outline responsibilities to be undertaken by governments and delineate the roles of related public organizations. In more detail these determine expected outcomes and authorize the allocation of specified resources. The existence or non-existence of legal frameworks, therefore, determines whether public organizations will have the authority and support, in terms of resource allocation and development, to pursue e-participation. Legal frameworks also reflect governments’ position on public matters and in this case will demonstrate governments’ prioritization of e-participation development and capacity building. It should also be noted that the formulation of such frameworks through citizen engagement can compound the potential and scope for their effectiveness, through motivational effects on stakeholders who derive a sense of ownership and satisfaction from participation that may lead to greater engagement and commitment in community and society (European Commission, 2009). (In discussing e-participation, it is important to recognise the true meaning of 'stakeholder’ and this is further discussed further on in the context of the outreach aspects of e-participation.)

Attention to organizational frameworks as other important criteria in building capacity for e-participation acknowledges that organizations are the means through which service activities are divided and coordinated and relations between such arrangements can be determined. Organizational arrangements are among the most important determinants of a public entity’s capacity because they affect the utilization of resources, which is critical to efficiency, productivity, and responsiveness. These arrangements will vary across public sectors; however, the principles of efficiency, productivity and responsiveness apply in each case. Organizational development for e-participation may, therefore, be guided by general principles that emphasize efficiency, productivity and responsiveness.

A third criteria critical to addressing challenges of capacity development relates to the utilization of specific channels and modalities for e-participation. This selection has cultural and financial implications, although patterns in ICT development show enormous returns on investment that may be derived in public organizations from the many ways in which efficiency impacts cost effectiveness. The initial outlay, however, will necessitate deliberate and calculated resource allocation, making the ability to prioritize e-participation investments essential. The consideration of cultural factors can be informative in investigating appropriateness with the aim of fostering inclusion.

The final criteria that must be addressed specifically, is outreach. The far reaching power of ICTs implies that inclusiveness will be an obvious outcome, however, many governments face the challenge of ‘bridging the digital divide’ to provide universal access. Outreach strategies is one part of the equation, another is to ensure that related
ICT competences prevail across all stakeholders, defined as those who have an interest in a particular public issue and the related public decision-making processes, either as individuals or as representatives of a group. Stakeholders include both those who can influence a decision, as well as those who are affected by it. Effective outreach initiatives for e-participation can only capitalize on the ICT in reaching being inclusive and by reaching previously excluded populations, when the related competencies exist. Such populations may include the disabled, displaced, migrant, aging, as well as minority groups. Governments are challenged in this regard to include align their e-participation, as far as possible with complementary education and ICT skills development.

In the section below, steps in developing capacity for e-participation are discussed in relation to a proposal for an e-participation capacity diagnostic tool, in the form of a self-assessment questionnaire designed for use by government policy-makers and senior officials, for the benefit of all stakeholders, including citizens and their communities. The international community, in its current discussions on the Post-2015 development agenda, has identified the lack of citizens’ voice and ownership in national development plans. The potential transformative power of ICTs to enhance citizen participation has not been fully harnessed for national development efforts. Nor have governments systematically applied ICTs to better identify and respond to citizens’ demands for new and improved public policies and services. The employment of this diagnostic tool in the near future should assist public officials in developing and planning the stages of capacity development for e-participation to promote citizen engagement, by empowering citizens through the improved channels and mechanisms through which to interact with their government appointed, as well as elected officials. It is expected that it will contribute to address this gap between potential and practice of e-participation.

4.2 METEP - the measurement and evaluation tool for e-participation readiness
This instrument is intended to enhance the United Nations e-participation index as a component within the United Nations Biennial E-Government Survey that is designed specifically for the longitudinal analysis of e-government development in its achievement of public participation. Examining the scope of e-participation will clarify the potential of this medium and the opportunities for its meaningful application. This information will be useful in the formulation of METEP, in guiding capacity building, and for justifying related public expenditures. The paper is presented in three sections, as follows: first, recapitulating the importance of public participation and its re-conceptualization as citizen engagement. The second section is focussed on describing the progress made to date in structuring a model for informing e-participation capacity building with a description of the indicators to be incorporated into METEP, which for ratification purposes, will be pilot tested at a forthcoming interregional seminar on e-participation for government policy-makers and senior officials from 12 developing countries.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Conclusions

13 A/RES/66/184. 66/184. Information and communications technologies for development. 6 February 2012.
This paper reminds readers of the fundamental rationale for public participation and its importance to good governance. Developing capacities to access the benefits of public participation by governments and their citizens is even more relevant today in the context of internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development goals and the Post-2015 development management initiatives. That relevance is pronounced by the enabling qualities now present within the environments of governance and public administration that are being facilitated by ICTs. Indeed, the application of ICTs has transformed public participation in many countries and, as the United Nations continues to foster further utilization of these technologies, through its advisory and capacity development programmes, more countries will benefit. The METEP in particular, at this time, will enable governments to monitor e-participation capacity building in conformance with established strategies for increasing public participation through citizen engagement supported by modern information and communications technologies.

The recommendations below provide guidelines for the construction of the METEP in the form of questionnaire. Due attention should be paid to: first, the formulation of legal frameworks; secondly, the institutionalization of organizational mandates and procedures; third, determination of appropriate channels and modalities; and finally, inclusive outreach programmes. These are fundamentally important, although not exhaustive, since additional challenges come from funding issues, the dynamics of technology change and lack of technology expertise due to inconsistencies in public demand across sectors and programmes, and public concerns over security and privacy, although these may be addressed through appropriate laws.

5.1 Recommendations for METEP questionnaire

A

1) To what extent are there legal or regulatory frameworks that support e-information, e-consultation, and e-decision-making as integral processes for governance and public administration?

2)

3) To what extent are there specific provisions in the legislation/regulation mandating public organizations to coordinate and implement opportunities for e-information, e-consultation, and e-decision-making?

B

4) To what extent are organizational systems in place to respond to the mandates by providing public access to e-information, e-consultation, and e-decision-making?

What technologies are used and how?
Are there rule of engagement? If so, what are they?
Are there budgetary allocations for the maintenance and sustainability of the e-participation systems?

C
5) To what extent does your organization have in place an outreach programme to the public about opportunities for e-information, e-consultation, and e-decision-making?

Which outreach media are included in the outreach: none, postage, ICTs, or distribution of flyers?
To what extent does response to outreach activities reflect the demographics of the population?

6) What are the factors considered relatively critical to the success of the outreach activities?

7) To what extent is analysis made of citizens’ e-participation?

8) Can you report on a percentage rate of feedback to e-participants?

9) From your experiences, to which aspects of e-participation do the public mostly subscribe: e-information, e-consultation, or e-decision-making?

10) From your experiences, which aspects of e-participation are most challenging and how: e-information, e-consultation, or e-decision-making?