



## Global E-Government Forum

**“Smart Governance for Sustainable  
Development: New Opportunities for  
Partnerships in the Networked Society”**



Organized by  
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)  
Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)

In partnership with  
Agency for Communications and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan

## Overall Aide-Memoire

6 to 8 October 2014  
Astana, Kazakhstan

## **1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

The 2014 Global eGovernment Forum (GeGF) will take place in Astana, Kazakhstan from 6 to 8 October 2014. This year's theme focuses on 'Smart Governance for Sustainable Development: New Opportunities for Partnerships in a Networked Society'. The Forum is organized by the E-Government Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in partnership with the Agency for Communication and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

### **1.1. Background**

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), through its Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), assists Member States in promoting efficient, effective, transparent, accountable, collaborative and citizen-centered public governance, administration and services through innovation and technology to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. UNDESA promotes knowledge sharing of innovative approaches and practices in public management, as well as capacity development in the area of innovation and e-government. The General Assembly itself has highlighted the importance of knowledge-sharing activities in resolution 57/277, noting that particular emphasis should be given to the exchange of experience related to the role of public administration in the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. In resolution 50/225, it also underscored that international cooperation should be strengthened in the field of public administration, including South-South and Inter-Regional cooperation.

DPADM has actively assisted Member States to enhance their public governance capacities through capacity development workshops, expert group meetings, publications and the online knowledge repository of the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN). Since 2003, DPADM has collected, shared and disseminated innovative practices in public governance through <sup>1</sup>the United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) and Forum, as well as through the Compendia for Innovative e-Government Practices.

With the emergence of e-Government as a powerful tool in strengthening good governance, DPADM has increasingly focused its work on this important topic and has developed extensive experience in supporting the capacity development efforts of countries in initiating and/or improving their e-government strategies, policies and plans. The E-Government Branch (EGB) of DPADM supports Member States in developing and least developed countries, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to build capacity in the area of innovation, e/m-governance and transformational government to promote economic, social and environmental development, in line with the overall mandate of UNDESA and DPADM's mission. EGB implements its activities by undertaking policy analysis and research, providing support to intergovernmental processes and promoting capacity building activities.

A flagship publication of DESA, DPADM publishes the United Nations E-Government Survey every two years to share knowledge about global e-government trends, issues, and innovative practices, as well as challenges and opportunities of e-government development. The Survey is the only report in the world that assesses the e-government development status of the 193 United Nations Member States. It serves as a tool for decision-makers to identify their areas of strength

and challenges in e-government and to guide e-government policies and strategies. It assesses the e-government readiness and extent of e-participation of the United Nations Member States according to a quantitative composite index of e-readiness based on website assessment, telecommunication infrastructure, and human resource endowment. The Survey is intended for government officials, academics, intergovernmental institutions, civil society organizations, the private sector and citizens at large.

EGB has published the UN e-Government Survey since 2003 and from its edition it has become a useful reference to guide e-Government development efforts at international, regional and local levels. The UN E-Government Survey has enabled DESA to acquire in-depth knowledge of e-government trends, strategies, policies, content development, social networking tools and citizen engagement, and to transfer this knowledge to developed, emerging and developing countries.

The theme of the 2014 edition of the United Nations E-Government Survey – E-Government for the Future We Want - is particularly relevant to addressing the multi-faceted and complex challenges that our societies face today. The publication addresses critical aspects of e-government for sustainable development articulated along eight chapters.

During this Global e-Government Forum in Astana, UNDESA will recognize Member States that have set high standards for e-government development during the 2014 United Nations E-Government Survey Special Awards Ceremony. This year's winners embody the vision and commitment necessary to transform public administration to ensure effective and inclusive delivery of public services for sustainable development.

Through the Forum, DESA will provide an opportunity for countries to discuss their individual challenges and successes in the area of e-government policies and to showcase those practices that have been particularly effective. This Forum falls within the mandate of DPADM to strengthen the various capacities of governance and public administration systems and institutions, as defined in the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as well as recommendations from Global Conferences. Supporting countries with their e-Government policies is a key priority of DPADM's capacity development programme, as defined in DPADM's Capacity Development Strategy.

DPADM has already co-organized the last two Global e-Government Forum (GeGF) in collaboration with the UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) and the Government of the Republic of Korea. Both events were attended by more than 1,000 government officials and experts from over 50 countries, including 20 participants at the ministerial level. The forum thanks to the participation of world renowned experts has considerably helped strengthen the global development agenda on e-government, and is in line with the Seoul Communiqué of 2012, which stressed that countries should continue to cooperate in e-Government projects.

To continue its global initiative to promote e-Government development, UNDESA will hold the 2014 GeGF from 6 to 8 October in Astana, Kazakhstan. The 2014 GeGF will deal with emerging issues, such as Smart Governance, Networked Society, Open Government, Open Data, Social Media, and will help raise the awareness of participants of new e-Government trends and issues, including cutting-edge technologies and innovative policies to address complex governance challenges.

## 1.2. Context

The United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution entitled “The Future We Want” has reaffirmed the strong need to achieve sustainable development by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems. It stressed that all levels of government and legislative bodies play an important role in promoting sustainable development. Overall, “the goal of sustainable development is to ensure the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for the planet and for present and future generations. Sustainable development emphasizes a holistic, equitable and far-sighted approach in decision-making at all levels. It rests on integration and a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental goals and objectives in both public and private decision-making. It emphasizes intragenerational and intergenerational equity” (E/2013/69, para. 6).

As we approach the 2015 deadline for the current DGPs and start to prepare the ground for the next steps in global sustainable development, it is clear that all governments are faced with a set of complex, multi-faceted and inter-dependent challenges, which require a holistic government vision and transformation agenda through enhanced policy coordination, decision-making processes and public service integration.

As governments are facing a more vocal citizenry that is demanding increased transparency, accountability, and efficiency, in addition to facing complex problems than in the past, governments are changing their position as a “do all” institution to more of a “facilitator”. Citizens now ask their governments to provide (a) more citizen-centric services keenly customised for satisfying their expectations, (b) to show greater degree of transparency and accountability on a variety of governmental works, and (c) to allow for greater citizen participation in public decision process.

Global as well as national challenges such as poverty, inequality, global warming, peace and security, are interlinked and typically highly complex, such that no single actor, let alone single government or single ministry, can effectively deal with them on their own. Effective collaboration among agencies across all levels of government is essential, as it is with non-governmental actors, to ensure good governance and good development outcomes. Collaborative governance, underpinned by a well-functioning public administration, is the cornerstone of present and future sustainable development and it is crucial to improving people’s lives. The public sector must deliver equitably and efficiently essential services that meet citizen needs, provide opportunities for economic growth, as well as facilitate citizen engagement and participation in public policymaking and service delivery, so as to promote the empowerment and well-being of all people.

Member States have long recognised the importance of information and communications technology (ICT) to achieve sustainable development and reaffirmed the importance of the power of communication technologies, innovative applications, to promote knowledge exchange, technical cooperation and capacity building for sustainable development (A/RES/66/288).

This year’s GeGF theme is very timely as it focuses on “Smart Governance for Sustainable Development: New Opportunities for Partnership in the Networked Society”, and is in line with the Rio +15 Global Summit. The Forum will allow for a interactive discussion of how leveraging potentials of ICTs can transform traditional forms of government and societies into

smart ones.

The concept of Smart Governance leads to a paradigm shift in the relationship between governments, the private sector and citizens since greater transparency, openness, access to information, which is enhanced by the use of ICTs, provide citizens with more power and thus a greater voice in the development of e-services, e-content, e-participation and open government.

In order to achieve the "smart government concept", Member States need to be more in touch with the needs of their citizenry and ensure that both top-down and bottom-up approaches are taken into consideration when designing and implementing e-government strategies.

### **1.3. The Hosting Country: Kazakhstan**

Over recent years, the Republic of Kazakhstan has made great efforts to modernize its public sector, including through an ICT enabled reform of administrative governance systems. According to the UN E-Government Survey 2014, the Republic of Kazakhstan is the leading country among the countries of the Central Asia region and has the highest e-government ranking among the Land-locked Developing Countries.

The Republic of Kazakhstan has improved significantly during the past several years in terms of providing online services, which allow citizens to access government services in a seamless manner. One of the interesting aspects of Kazakhstan's online service is the government's blog site. Citizens can communicate with the heads of government agencies by giving comments and asking questions, which enhances transparency in public administration and improves the interaction between citizens and public officials. The site also contains statistical information on the questions and comments received by agency executives as well as on the number of their answers to ensure that the proper follow-up has been completed.

The Republic of Kazakhstan according to the 2014 UN e-Government Survey has characteristics of all four stages of e-government development: emerging, enhanced, transactional and connected. This has also been recognized by the international community as evidenced by the continuous improvement of the Republic of Kazakhstan in international and regional ratings, such as the WSIS.

## **2. OBJECTIVE**

According to the 2014 UN E-Government Survey, countries around the world have made an overall progress in e-government. For the first time since the initial E-Government Survey in 2001, all 193 United Nations Member States have an online presence. However, disparities in e-government development among regions and countries still remain and greater investments in leadership capacity-building, human capital, and telecommunication infrastructure, among others, are needed to ensure continuous development. Countries trailing behind have the opportunity to learn from good practices and leapfrog stages of development while countries at the forefront of e-government development can benefit from knowledge sharing.

The ultimate goal of this forum is therefore to enhance government capacity, particularly in developing countries, through presentations, discussions, and peer-to-peer learning. The main objectives include:

- To discuss policies, strategies and best practices for smart government and smart society

- To present recent trends of e-Government development and introduce new approaches as applied in the 2014 UN e-Government Survey
- To introduce various country cases of Smart Governance from around the globe and assist Member States to promote cooperation in this area
- To strengthen North-South and South-South cooperation for the development of Smart Government

### **3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

The Forum is expected to achieve the following expected outputs:

- Increased knowledge of emerging issues and trends in e-government development, as well as identification of innovative policies and practices for smart governance
- Obtain greater knowledge of Central Asian's e-government activities and progress made
- Draw recommendations and suggestions from the Forum discussions in order to provide guidance to Member States on how to promote smart government
- Renewed commitment among policy makers to adapt their acquired knowledge and expertise in developing innovative e-Government strategies fit for their countries.
- Build networks and pave the way for partnerships with government officials, experts, and practitioners from around the world during and beyond the event.

### **4. THEMES FOR DISCUSSION**

Within the framework of the overall theme of the Forum 'Smart Governance for Sustainable Development: New Opportunities for Partnership in the Networked Society', there will be four parallel tracks as follows:

1. Capacity development workshop on 'Smart Governance for Sustainable Development: New Opportunities for Partnership in the Networked Society' organized by EGB/DPADM
2. Capacity-building workshop organized by the Government of Kazakhstan on Smart Governance for Sustainable Development: New Possibilities of Partnership in a Networked Society
3. International Scientific-Practical Conference "Smart Government: Science and Technology" *organized by Scientific Academia*
4. National Capacity Building Workshop on E-Participation

### **5. FORUM STRUCTURE**

- First day (Mon, 6 October 2014)
  - Showcase of Kazakhstan's e-government Programme
- Second day (Tue, 7 October 2014)
  - Plenary Session
  - Selected Presentations from the Winners of the 2014 UN E-Government Survey
  - 2014 UN E-Government Survey Awards Ceremony
  - Ministerial Round-Table
- Third day (Wed, 8 October 2014)
  - Parallel workshops

## **6. PARTICIPANTS**

Approximately 1,000 participants are expected to attend this global forum, including government officials, scholars, experts from international organisations, private sector and civil society organisations, as well as about 20 ministerial level participants.

## **7. DATE AND VENUE**

- Date: 6-8 October 2014
- Venue: Astana, Kazakhstan

## **8. LANGUAGE**

The forum will be conducted in English. Translation will be available in Russian and Kazakh.

## **9. CONTACT INFORMATION**

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