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ICT and Gender Equality: New Opportunities and Challenges for Public Administration to Implement the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

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Presentation Overview

- National eGovernment Agendas, Gender Equality, and the IADGs and MDGs
- Impact of Financial Crisis on National eGovernment Agendas
- Challenges and Opportunities to Public Administrations
- Gender Equality Specific eGovernment Strategies

National eGovernment Agendas, Gender Equality, and the IADGs and MDGs

- For many communities, especially rural and isolated communities, women form the bedrock for economic and social development.
- At both the national and international level, women's input in policy formulation to meet the IADGs and MDGs is important to achieving the desired objectives.
- ICT is an important enabler for social and economic advancement – as a tool of vital information, education, commerce and empowerment.
- eGovernment programmes geared towards ensuring appropriate inclusion of gender equality considerations are more likely to meet the IADGs and MDGs, and produce sustainable results.

Impact of the Financial Crisis on eGovernment

- The OECD's research - an interesting mix of reactions by OECD Governments to eGovernment programmes in the face of the financial crisis –
 - Some took advantage of the opportunity to accelerate eGovernment programmes both as a reaction to the crisis and as a means of solving problems created by the crisis.
 - Others (and in many ways this is probably also indicative of the experience of the vast majority of developing and LDCs) have been forced to re-direct focus from the eGovernment agendas to implement critical and immediate relief programmes, whether to businesses or to the public at large.

Source: The Financial and Economic Crisis: Impact on E-Government in OECD Countries – 5th Ministerial eGovernment Conference, Sweden www.oecd.org

Challenges and Opportunities for Public Administrations

- Challenges:
 - Continued roll-out of ICT services – connectivity and accessibility.
 - Cultural perceptions regarding the relevance of women in governance.
 - Maintaining trust in Government.
 - Sustaining programmes for effective, efficient and inclusive government.

- Opportunities:
 - Increased eDemocracy for disenfranchised and marginalised groups.
 - Vastly enhanced educational capabilities that are both cultural and gender specific.
 - Improving performance in the public sector through effective monitoring of targets to ensure equitable gender representation in governance, policy formulation, service delivery and on-going feedback.

Gender equality specific eGovernment strategies

- Affordability
- 24/7 accessibility
- Gender specific and culturally relevant content
- Encouraging eParticipation

“ In summary, engendering e-government means recognising women’s rights to information and communications needs, interests and capacities, making all services accessible to them, using non-sexist language, and encouraging their full participation and well as monitoring gender impacts.”

E/C.16/2010/4 para. 31.