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Opinions expressed in Innova are not those of the CPSI (unless indicated) but reflect the views of individual writers

First Red Tape Challenge launched

The CPSI, in partnership with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), and the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) has initiated the first red tape reform challenge. The challenge follows the publication of the 2nd Future Watch report entitled 'From Red Tape to Smart Tape'.

The report and challenge were launched on 18 March 2004 at a lunch attended by a range of dignitaries including several Director-Generals. The challenge aims to tap into the considerable experiences and ideas of public servants at the frontline of service delivery.

The challenge is a call to all public servants at local, provincial and national government to forward quick win red tape reduction ideas to the CPSI. All ideas will be evaluated and implementation support will be provided to a handful of the most workable ideas. In addition to implementation support, public servants stand will be provided with a cash reward and a chance to be part of the Innovation Management Executive Programme being developed by the CPSI.

Combined with the challenge to public servants, the CPSI and its partners have initiated a process of getting the views and ideas of South Africans on the receiving end of red tape. Red tape problem areas, comments, and ideas for improvement can be e-mailed to redtapetosmarttape@sita.co.za. All inputs received will be consolidated and presented to the Minister for Public Service and Administration.

The challenge to public servants and the public comment line will close on 31 May 2004. Further information on both initiatives are available from the CPSI.

In her keynote address, the Minister for Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi noted that "the past decade has been on devising an optimal policy and regulatory framework, only limited attention was devoted to the efficiencies of business processes or the impact of administrative burdens. We have, however, many sterling examples of efforts to reduce red tape". Three such experiences are featured as case studies in the Future Watch report.

However, she further noted that 'these cases are not nearly adequate enough if we are to meet the challenge set by the President. Over the next decade we need to accelerate red tape reduction and this will only happen through a co-ordinated and deliberate national strategy combined with a greater understanding and appreciation of red tape'. The challenge and public comment line is only the start of the process.

GET YOUR COPY NOW

To get your copy of the 2nd Future Watch report 'From Red Tape to Smart Tape' or further information on the Red Tape Challenge, send an e-mail to Fakazile.Myeza@sita.co.za or call the CPSI offices.

Alternatively, visit the new-look CPSI website (www.cpsi.co.za).



Innovative Service Delivery in the Context of change

[Ninth Winelands Conference, September 2003]

In September last year the CPSI jointly hosted the 9th Winelands Conference together with the University of Stellenbosch.

Established as a key event on the international public management conference circuit, the conference attracted a range of academics and practitioners, from across South Africa and abroad. The CPSI convened one thematic area, on Building Institutional Capacity to Innovate.

The presenters covered a diverse range of topics, including the City of Johannesburg's transformation strategy, the provision of integrated family law services through innovative means, the use of scenario planning as a technique to enable public sector departments to plan better for the future, the management of innovation in the public sector and building managerial capacity to innovate.

The conference as a whole also considered the role of innovation in addressing the issues of poverty, the use of information technology in improving service delivery and the improved planning techniques.

On the whole, the conference was deemed to be successful, having introduced some new lines of debate into a traditionally academic forum. Key papers from the conference are being compiled into a booklet and will be available from the University of Stellenbosch.

Enhancing the Expanded Public Works Programme

[Joint CPSI and Department of Public Works Learning Session, Development Bank of South Africa, 24-26 February 2004]

Gundo Lashu, or 'Our Victory Invented', a public works programme initiated by the Limpopo provincial that utilises labour intensive methods to construct low-volume rural roads was one of the winners of the inaugural CPSI innovation awards programme.

The success of Gundo Lashu, together with other successful labour-intensive delivery projects, played a significant role in shaping the current Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), a key government job creation programme over the next 5-10 years.

As a winner of a CPSI innovation award, the management of Gundo Lashu agreed to use the available funding for a case study to support the broader EPWP programme by providing an opportunity for Gundo Lashu to strengthen the emerging EPWP strategies.

This was achieved by a successful joint workshop hosted by the CPSI in partnership with the National Department of Public Works. Held at the DBSA between 24-26 February, the workshop attracted more than a 100 local, provincial, and national officials involved in the EPWP.

The workshop confirmed the need to continue sharing innovations in EPWP programmes as well as using innovative means to sharing information and knowledge. On this basis,

the CPSI and DPW will be embarking on a longer-term partnership on creating an effective learning and knowledge network.

First general services counter launched in Mogalakwena

[Mapela MPCC, October 2003]

The community of Mapela in the Mogalakwena Municipality in the Limpopo Province can now access government information and services in their area with the launch of a Multi-Purpose Community Centre in October 2003.

However, the Mapela MPCC also represents a new breed of MPCC. It is the first of ten pilot sites where a General Services Counter (GSC) is being implemented. The General Services Counter will enhance service delivery at MPCC's by providing citizens with a point where they would be able to access information and services from a range of government departments.

The implementation of the GSC is part of a broader programme of the CPSI aimed at developing a range of appropriate distribution channels where the maximum number of South Africans can benefit from the development of the e-government Gateway. The GSC provides citizens with access to the benefits of Gateway through an intermediary. Enhancing access is a major project area for CPSI over the next 3 years.

The GSC will have a significant impact on the future design and operation of MPCC's. In addition to rapidly extending the range of information and services available at the MPCC, the GSC also has a potential to improve the work of specialist government departments operating within the MPCC.

An initial evaluation of the Mapela GSC has already demonstrated its value as the first point of contact for service delivery. However, more robust evaluation processes will be put into place over the next few months. These should enable CPSI to evaluate the value-add of the GSC by tracking whether there is an increase in the number of queries handled by the GSC as well as the percentage of total queries that are successfully handled by the GSC as opposed to other service providers at the MPCC.



Imraan Patel (CPSI) briefing the Premier of Limpopo, Adv. Ramatlhodi, Nebo Legoabe (GCIS), and Gregory Mokoko (Limpopo) on functioning of the GSC at the Mapela MPCC

STUDY VISITS

The development of sustainable and effective models for improved access to government and developmental information and services has been identified as one of the six key performance areas for CPSI over the next three years. Several initiatives have started in this regard (see separate coverage on improving service delivery at Multi-Purpose Community Centres on page 2 and efforts to use mobile technologies for enhancing service delivery on page 8).

As such, the CPSI has established a research programme aimed at developing a better understanding of integrated service delivery. As part of this effort, the CPSI has identified a range of international best practice models that can enhance the access work of the CPSI.

One of the countries that have enjoyed significant success in the area of integrated service delivery is Brazil. In August 2003, the CPSI facilitated a study tour to Brazil. Glenda White, the Executive Director of CPSI was part of the study visit and reflects on what Brazil can offer us.

Brazil – showing the way to integrated service delivery

 **Glenda White, August 2003**

A delegation consisting of representatives from the DPSA, SITa, the Public Service Commission and the CPSI spent an exciting week visiting Brazil, focusing on the state of Bahia and the federal capital, Brasilia.

The visit proved to be extremely valuable highlighting to the delegation there is much to be learned from the experiences of developing countries, particularly with regards to home-grown solutions to critical development challenges.

The trip to Brazil reflected most importantly that once your goals are clear, the best way to progress and learn is to make the brave decision to implement, and to deal with the challenges as they arise.



The key focus of the visit to Bahia state and its capital, Salvador, was the integrated one-stop centres that provide most government services, from federal, state and local government, to citizens in a single location.

Known as the Citizen Advice Centers (SAC), the largest provides services from 29 government agencies.

A citizen of Salvador, for example, can go to the nearest SAC and apply for a driver's license, including getting an eye test done on the spot, apply for a labour card which is a prerequisite in Brazil for employment, register to vote, apply for and receive a welfare grant and even make use of free Internet connectivity.

The SACs have been so successful that they have been replicated across most of the 29 states of Brazil and have been cited as best practice one-stop centers for government services by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

So much so that the UN has assisted in financing the establishment of the International Centre for Exchange in Innovation and Public Administration (CIIAP), to enable the state of Bahia to share the lessons that it has learnt in the establishment of the centers.

The CPSI is in the process of finalizing an MOU with CIIAP to ensure that there can be ongoing sharing of lessons in public sector innovation between South Africa and Brazil.

Two features of the SAC are perhaps of greatest interest. Firstly, the agencies that provide services at the SACs (of which there are now 22 across Salvador and Bahia) sign a

central agreement with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) equivalent at state level. This ensures that there is one central department responsible for ensuring that service levels are maintained across all centers.

Secondly, the SACs were established as early as 1993, long before the hype of e-government. The success of the centers is based on shared use of infrastructure, personnel and financing arrangements. The use of technology and provision of e-services is only now being factored into the SACs.

The Brazilian model disproves the preconception that we need full back office systems integration, common standards and full-IT enabled business processes before integrated service delivery can take place.

The highlight of the delegation's visit to Brasilia, besides being able to enjoy the unique beauty of the city and its modern architecture and sculptures, was the delegation's engagement with the Secretary for Information at the Superior Electoral Court on the topic of e-voting.

It is compulsory for all Brazilians citizens to vote – no such thing as voting apathy tolerated here!

This amounts to a staggering number of 115,000,000 voters, across 335,000 voting sections. Over 20,000 of these have no electricity. Despite the massive target audience, and technological and geographical constraints, the Brazilians have implemented one of the most successful e-voting systems in the world.

Every single voter, regardless of location (and this includes deep in the Amazon jungle!) or literacy levels vote electronically, on a system developed almost entirely by the Superior Electoral Court. The Court designed the voting machines, with a three-year guarantee. They then hired companies to service the machines, which takes place three times per year. The maintenance costs amount to a negligible 70c per month per machine, which is about \$8-\$9 per year, plus replacements.

There are currently 406,000 machines in operation. There is certainly much that the Independent Electoral Commission can learn from this experience.

Web Resources

More about CIIAP - www.flem.org.br/ciiap/

The web portal for the Bahia state - www.ba.gov.br

Having spent 6 months at the CPSI, Majuta Mamogale, an intern appointed as part of a pilot project reflects on e-government and the challenges that would define a South African e-government strategy. He also looks at how CPSI should engage with the e-government agenda.

E-government – potential, challenges and the role of CPSI

 **Majuta Mamogale, January 2004**



Though global e-government is still in its infancy, the South African government have embraced the digital revolution and are continuously placing a wider range of information and services on the web. This confirms the governments commitment to take full advantage of the interactive features of the Internet. Government's e-government initiative is generally referred to as the Gateway. One of the

key deliverables of the Gateway is a creation of a web portal that will offer citizens access to a wide and full range of government information and services via the Internet. However, given the backlogs in education created by the defunct apartheid regime, only a minority of South African people would be in a position to access the portal directly. Thus a key innovative option that the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) is trying to test is the introduction of General Services Counter at Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs).

Electronic government refers to the delivery of government information and services online through the Internet and other digital means. E-government is implemented in anticipation that it will enhance the citizen's access to government information and services and provide new ways to increase citizen participation in the democratic process. As the Internet has become a major way to communicate with the general public, government departments now are utilizing electronic forms of mass communications to deal with general public. Digital democracy offers the potential of more efficient public sector service delivery that enhances citizen accountability and government responsiveness. E-government offers the potential to bring citizens closer to their governments. As more and more services are put online, e-government will revolutionize the relationship between government and its citizens.

DEMOCRATIC OUTREACH

One of the most promising aspects of e-government is its ability to bring citizens closer to their governments. A democratic outreach facilitates communication between citizens and government. The technology (i.e. Internet) to facilitate this connection is readily available. Email is an interactive feature that allows ordinary citizens to pose questions of government officials or request information or services. While email feature is certainly the easiest method of contact, there are other methods that government websites can employ to facilitate democratic conversation. These include areas to post comments (other than through email), the use of message boards, surveys, and chat rooms. Websites using these features allow citizens and units members alike to read and respond to others' comments regarding various issues of their concern.

As with any social innovation in information technology, the success of e-government depends largely on the acceptance of users. Government website must be designed for three groups of intended users: citizens in general, public servants, and business partners for governments. However, knowledge about the citizen's perception, use and participation in government websites becomes increasingly important as e-government proliferates.

It is surprising and encouraging to see how rapidly the e-government landscape is changing the lives of people and the way they used to work and how much an individual state can improve in a relatively short-time span. Studies show that state like Michigan is among the forerunners in e-government as a result of a multi-million dollar initiative in 2001. Nevertheless, we have successful examples of innovation ideas of enhancing customer service delivery in South Africa as demonstrated by the case of Witzenberg Municipality.

Witzenberg Municipality has reinforced its reputation as an innovative, forward thinking sphere of government by becoming the first council to implement an electronic document and records management system. The commercial, off-the-shelf system (TRIM) was introduced in line with the requirements of the Electronic Communications Transmissions Act and government's efforts to use technology to deliver more efficient, effective service to taxpayers. TRIM replaced the traditional system of filing and recording information hence traditional system was not only slow and cumbersome but made files difficult to tract through the municipality's five units. TRIM has allowed the municipality to progress from a comparatively inefficient paper-based process of handling municipal documentation to a sophisticated electronic records management system that enables the storage and immediate retrieval of vast volume of paperwork. For example, with this new innovative system, documents can now be distributed and tracked electronically, which considerably speed up service delivery.

Even though it is expensive for governments to place services online, a determined effort must be made to get more services online. Studies show that a growing concern of e-government is that without adequate funding and support from the state itself, the idea is doomed to fail or as an alternative government would be forced to increase the use of commercial advertisements and begin charging citizens for the right to access public information in order to generate the necessary revenue. But this will create potential conflicts of interest and exacerbates the digital divide between rich and poor. The issue of how to pay for portals and other e-government costs remains a pressing challenge in the public sector.

"ONE STOP" SHOPS

The CPSI feels that one important new development is the creation of online services portals in all government's MPCCs in the nine provinces, i.e., single websites that integrate e-government services offerings across different agencies. These portals are a tremendous advantage for ordinary citi-

zens because they reduce the need to log on to different agency websites to order services or find information. Instead, citizens can engage in “one stop” shopping and find what they need through a single site that integrates a variety of government websites. One-stop portals make it much easier for citizens to access online information and services.

Therefore, it is important that all governments create government portals, which serve as a gateway to a particular department’s websites and that offer a “one stop” web address for online services. Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCC) can be used as the most important portals where the general public can have access to government information and services through e-government.

In South Africa, the Gateway project is driving government towards that direction of providing communities with access to integrated government services and information. Despite this innovative endeavor, innovative marketing campaigns for these portal sites are also crucial hence the need to publicize the existence of these service portals to the average citizens. For example, governments can put portal address on public document, on vehicle license places, on billboards and or using televised public service announcements.

Recognizing the legal risks of online information and services delivery, a number of government sites would have to post liability disclaimers, in which the site should notes that in an era of linked sites, it is not responsible for information contained on other sites. Furthermore, issues of security and privacy are important and deserve adequate consideration. For instance, the virtually unregulated atmosphere of the Internet has prompted many to question the privacy and security of government websites. Thus having visible statements outlining what the site is doing are a valuable asset for reassuring a fearful citizens. Importantly, more safeguards need to be undertaken in this route in order to protect government websites against hackers and other security threats.

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Fully executable services means that the entire transaction can be conducted online. Fully executable, online service delivery benefits both government and its constituents. In the long term, such services offer the potential for lower cost of service delivery and it makes services more widely accessible to the general public, who no longer have to visit, write or call an agency in order to execute a specific service. For example, in some states, government websites allow for credit card payment thus showing that online financial transactions are becoming more acceptable or even expected by the general public. Variation in the services available on online is crucial too.

ACCESSIBILITY

Disability access is also vitally important to citizens who are hearing impaired, visually impaired, or suffer from some other type of handicap. If a site is ill equipped to provide access to individuals with disabilities, the site fails in its attempt to reach out to as many people as possible. To be recorded as accessible to the disabled, the site has to have any one of four separate features. First, it should display a TTY (Text Telephone) or TDD (Telephonic Device for the Deaf) phone number, which allows hearing impaired individuals to contact the agency by phone. Second, the site could be “Bobby Approved” meaning that the site has been deemed disability-accessible by a non-profit group that rates internet web sites for such accessibility.

Third, the site can have web accessibility features consistent with standards mandated by groups such as the World

Wide Web Consortium (W3C) or legislative acts, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Fourth, the website can have a text version of the site or text labels for graphics, which are helpful for visually impaired individuals. However, the most common and widespread way government websites provides handicap accessibility is through TTY/TDD phone lines.

LANGUAGE

Language is also very important issue here. Many government sites have foreign language features on their websites that allow access to non-English speaking individuals. By foreign language feature, I mean any accommodation to the non-English speaker, from a text translation into a different language to translating software available for free on the site to translate pages into a language other than English. For example, studies show Texas as leading the list of nations with 38% of its sites having foreign language adaptability-providing non-English accessibility feature. In South Africa, this is however a challenge as we had 11 official languages. It means that government websites must accommodate all these languages.

Another challenge is that of computer literacy training. The great majority of South Africans do not have skills in using computer facility. Who is going to provide training to these computer illiterate people who would in future use the Internet to search for government information and services? And how and who finance that training remains a challenge. Schools can help to bridge this gap by providing young learners with access to computer training at the early age so that the country does not experience the same problem of huge number of computer illiterate people. There are efforts to provide both primary and secondary schools with computer facilities from government in South Africa and other service providers countrywide.

Adult Based Education institutions also have to ensure access to computer training to their adult learners. This would help people to be able to search for government information and services themselves rather than relying on someone to search that on their behalf. A high proportion of students at tertiary academic institutions already have access to computer facilities. Even merging together of institutions of higher learning presents an opportunity for the previously disadvantaged institutions of higher learning to share more resources such as more computer facilities with the ones used to be better off in terms of resources. Thus searching for information through Internet is longer a big issue.

My view is that e-government is a valuable part of the public service and needs to be supported. In the long term, a flourishing e-government programme offers the potential of improved service delivery with enhanced democratic accountability.

Web Resources

Some of the articles used in compiling this opinion piece

E-government Hit Team Best Practice Paper - www.digitaldeviet.com/makale/earizona.pdf

Case Study - One Stop Service Delivery in Northern Cape - www.ncwebpage.ncape.gov.za.onestop/index.htm

E-governance in developing countries - www.ftpicd.org/files/research/briefs/brief1.pdf

OPEN SOURCE CORNER

In previous issues of Innova, we look at the move towards OSS in government (Issue 1, June 2002) and the importance of OSS in government (Issue 4, February 2003). These articles were published at a time when the importance of OSS was still under debate and government did not have a clear position in this regard.

Since that time, the importance of OSS has been endorsed by the Government Information Technology Officers Council and a OSS policy paper on the role of OSS in government was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet. We are now in a period of practical action in two major areas:- migration to existing OSS solution and the development of OSS products for government. In the case of the latter, the OSS development model holds considerable promise for government.

Future issues of Innova will therefore feature practical and innovation use of OSS. We start with an application that potentially addresses a significant business requirement faced by many departments, i.e. that of building a digital library facility. UNESCO is actively promoting the adoption of this application.

CPSI identified as a core partner at Meraka launch

 **Michael Gxaleka, October 2003**



The CPSI was identified as a core and vital partner to Meraka, the Open Source Resource Centre established by the CSIR. Speaking at the launch event, the head of Meraka, Mr. Nhlanhla Mabaso noted that the role of Meraka was to facilitate the speedier adoption of Open Source Software in partnership with a range of public and private organisations.

A number of organisations were represented amongst more than 200 delegates at the launch. The number and diversity of the delegates bears testimony to the growing importance of OSS in debates and discussion on ICT use and development in South Africa.

For the CPSI, the launch was used to finalise a medium-term partnership between the CPSI, the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) and Meraka on software that will be developed using the OSS approach and which will be made available to government to address service delivery challenges.

Speaking at the launch, Nhlanhla Mabaso noted that OSS provides real opportunities for South Africa. He outlined some of the key projects that Meraka would embark upon and the key roles that it will play both in the private and public sectors.

In the former the focus would be to stimulate the development of open source software and forging of partnerships that can enhance the growth of the SA ICT industry.

In the public sector context it will advise on the strategic and policy issues pertaining to the use of the OSS tools and assist in the development of OSS applications that are required within an e-government programme, including applications in the education sector.

Also speaking at the launch, the DG of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Dr Rob Adam acknowledged the strides made in taking OSS forward. He reaffirmed the support of his department to ongoing initiatives.

He noted that "Open Source Software is an opportunity to create a world class ICT industry in South Africa. Simply using proprietary software has the danger of relegating us to second class citizens in the ICT world.

Visit Meraka at www.meraka.org.za

Building Digital Libraries with Open Source Software

 **Building Digital Libraries with Open Source Software**

Greenstone is a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections. It provides a new way of organizing information and publishing it on the Internet or on CD-ROM.

Greenstone is produced by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, and developed and distributed in cooperation with UNESCO and the Human Info NGO. It is open-source, multilingual software, issued under the terms of the GNU General Public License.

The aim of the software is to empower users, particularly in universities, libraries, and other public service institutions, to build their own digital libraries. Digital libraries are radically reforming how information is disseminated and acquired in UNESCO's partner communities and institutions in the fields of education, science and culture around the world, and particularly in developing countries.

UNESCO is actively promoting the use of Greenstone in developing countries through its Free Software portal and through training programmes. The first of these training programmes was held in Mai, in India's high-tech centre Bangalore in 2003.

The Bangalore course is the first of a series of training workshops planned to cover all regions, with others being planned in Africa, Central Asia and the Pacific

Web Resources

Download Greenstone at www.greenstone.org

UNESCO free software portal - www.unesco.org/webworld/portal_freesoft/Software/

The 5th Global Forum for Re-inventing Government, held in Mexico City in November 2003 saw the launch the second World Public Sector Report. The report, produced by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN (UNDESA), focused on the topical issue of e-government. Provocatively entitled 'E-government at the Crossroads', the reports draws on the result of a 2003 UN Global E-Government Survey, one of the most extensive surveys conducted in the area of e-government and looked at a central concern for public administration, i.e. "what makes e-government applications meaningful". Majuta Mamogale, a CPSI intern reviews the report for Innova.

Human development must guide e-government

Research report review by Majuta Mamogale, CPSI

The World Public Sector Report notes that e-government in particular, and adoption of ICT in general, has become part of the political agenda of many countries in both the developing and developed world. In most countries, only about one in five of those with Internet access engage in government online. Security and privacy issues remain factors that discourage its use.

The study presents, for the first time, rankings on a national and regional basis in two major categories: e-readiness and e-participation.

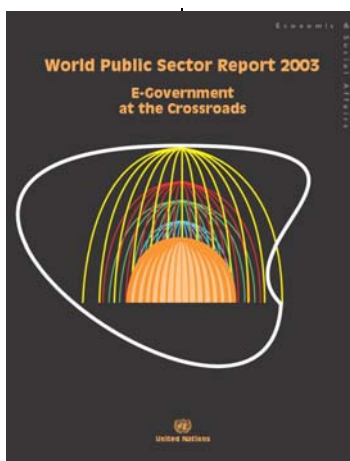
The report argues that for e-government to be meaningful for the majority of the people of the world, e-government priorities must be informed by the UN Millennium Declaration and the global campaign aimed at reducing poverty and meeting basic human needs.

In order to facilitate and speed up delivery of services to communities, global governments are applying ICT to transform their internal and external relationships. According to the Report, ICT deployment in society can become part of 'world making' provided that such ICT deployment supports the societal context that people really want as opposed to adjusting it in ways that people don't want.

World making is not an exclusive occupation but engages everyone including their institutions and organizations, government and private business. The Millennium Development Goals are part of this process of world-making. World making hinges on partnerships and broad co-operation. ICT opens new development opportunities for people, governments and institutions.

The Report suggests that e-government development in the world must be put within the context of a vision of the kind of society with which people want to identify and make part of their life experience. Therefore, government constitutes a most vital framework for human development, regardless of the level of economic and human development, and the social and cultural context that prevails in the nations/country concerned. If public administration does cross the 'digital divide' it does open endless opportunities that are practically inaccessible by any other means.

ICT allows a government's internal and external communication system to gain speed, precision, simplicity, outreach and network capacity. This can be converted into cost reductions, whilst leading to increased effectiveness, transparency and accountability. Public administrations create knowledge and also manage such information. Additionally, ICT can equip people for genuine participation in an inclusive political process that can produce well-informed public



consent. From this point of view, ICT in the hands of government can be an effective tool for adding public value.

Global governments need to reassess their e-government programmes to check whether they are aligned with the human development goal of the UN Millennium Declaration. ICT applications in public administration, issues connected with mass education and skill development and the development of ICT infrastructure must all find their way into development thinking, planning and action.

The report highlights a number of key conclusions including the need for government to clarify its role in protecting the right to privacy. Furthermore, administrative efficiency and effectiveness must retain their place on the e-government political agenda.

The report calls on a range of other groupings to play a value-adding role. The global academic community carries must identify research that cut across many disciplines to help answer questions raised about the growing use of ICT in public administrations. Equally, journalists have a very important role to play in bringing emerging trends and discussion closer to the public.

The private sector both at local and global level must also join in this strategic reassessment of the evolving environment for e-government growth and development. It is important to discover the many areas in which business interest is identical to the public interest.

Last but not least, international organizations, as well as the broad donor community face a unique challenge and opportunity that deserves serious consideration. For instance, they need to restructure some of their work and funding programmes. These organizations have a catalytic role to play, as they are capable of advocacy, awareness raising and providing high quality expertise. In addition, they are capable of funding replicable, low-cost ICT solutions, including open source solutions.

"E-government should never be developed because it can be done but it should be developed because it is meaningful to do so" (UN World Public Sector Report, 2003).

Web Resources

The full World Public Sector Report 2003 entitled 'E-government at the Crossroads' can be accessed at http://www.unpan.org/dpepa_worldpareport.asp

PROJECT UPDATE

CPSI pilots internship programme

[Michael Gxaleka, March 2004]

As a champion for innovation in the public service, the CPSI is committed to introducing new ways of dealing with its own operational challenges.

As such, it established an internship partnership with the Joint University Public Management Education Trust (JUPMET), a consortium of six major public management schools in South Africa.

To kick off the programme, the CPSI initiated a pilot project in September 2003 with the appointment of its first batch of interns - Majuta Mamogale and Michael Gxaleka. The interns will spend a year at CPSI.

Michael and Majuta are both students at the Graduate School of Public and Development Management at Wits University. During their stay at CPSI, the interns will be full involved in the work of the CPSI and will work closely with full-time staff.

Over the last six months, they have been involved in several projects including the improvement of service delivery arrangements at MPCC's through e-government, assisting with the research programme of the CPSI, and organising a learning session on the Expanded Public Works Programme.

In addition, they have been involved in an internal project aimed at creating a mini-resource centre and also contributed to this issue of Innova.

As a pilot, the experiences of Majuta and Michael will shape a larger and longer-term programme including a better sense of the support system that will be required. The interns are also assisting in the development of an electronic internship management and information system.

The internship programme has mutual benefits for both parties. The pressure on full-time staff of CPSI is reduced whilst providing the interns with valuable experience in working in a knowledge organisation. It also assist in enhancing the limited pool of skilled resources currently existing in South Africa. A major benefit for the interns is the development of their networks within government.

Majuta, as a participant of other internship programmes, commented that the CPSI internship is 'providing me with

skills, knowledge and experience sought by the public sector to meet challenges of modern-day government. Since I have been at CPSI, I feel that my capacities and potential are being developed. By the time the internship ends, I would be more prepared to take up any new challenge with great confidence'.

Michael noted that 'the kind of the exposure I enjoy is being hands-on and being able to enhance my networks and knowledge. CPSI has in place the necessary facilities to facilitate a useful learning process. I am confident that this experience will help me reach my career and personal goals.'

Call for Mobile Technology proposals well received

The Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI), in partnership with the Research and Development division of the State Information Technology Agency (SITA), Mareka Open Source Centre and with the generous support of the Open Society Foundation for South Africa (OSF-SA), issued a call for mobile technology proposals in December 2003.

The call was aimed at identifying a series of short term projects aimed at demonstrating the value that mobile technologies may have in improving access to government services and facilitating e-democracy. The call for proposals followed the publication of research report by the CPSI that clearly highlighted the potential of mobile technologies.

The call was aimed at identifying projects that could:

- Provide a clear description of how mobile technologies will assist in creating access to critical services
- Demonstrate tangible improvements in access to the services, within the time period of the pilot
- Demonstrate the affordability and sustainability of the solutions presented in the pilots

A total of 24 proposals were received and are currently being evaluated by the project partners. Selection of the final projects to be supported has been finalised and await the approval of the CPSI.

Watch this space for the exciting list of projects to be implemented.

2004 Innovation and Sustainability Awards

The Centre for Public Service Innovation, in partnership with the Age of Innovation and Sustainability Award call for Innovation projects nominations in six categories:-



- Innovative partnerships in service delivery.
- Innovative use of information technology for effective service delivery
- Innovative service delivery institutions (e.g. schools, hospitals, clinics)
- Innovative enhancements on internal systems within government
- Innovative service delivery projects where SA partners with other SADC governments.
- Public Sector Innovator of the Year

Nomination forms and submission guidelines now available on the CPSI website.

CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATIONS AND ENTRIES – 30 JUNE 2004

