



# E-governance and Citizen Participation in West Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

The Panos Institute West Africa & The United Nations Development Programme

# **E-governance and Citizen Participation in West Africa: Challenges and Opportunities**

**Case studies:**

**Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana,  
Nigeria, Senegal**

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UNDP is the UN's global development network. It connects and coordinates efforts at global and national levels in order to achieve the objectives laid down under the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). On the ground in 166 countries, UNDP helps people find their own solutions to the global and national development challenges they face. UNDP works specifically in the field of democratic governance, which is its largest sphere of activity, with over \$2 billion invested; in 2008, this represented 40 percent of its programmes. Democratic governance centres on three principles: inclusive participation, responsive institutions and United Nations principles (human rights, anti-corruption, gender etc.).

Administrator of UNDP: Helen Clark

## **The Panos Institute West Africa**

Panos Institute West Africa (PIWA) is an independent, secular international non-governmental organization created in January 2000. From its headquarters in Dakar, PIWA works across West Africa, with representations or delegations in most countries.

After Panos London, Panos Washington and Panos Paris, Panos West Africa is the fourth independent Panos Institute of the Panos Council, which also includes Panos East Africa (in Kampala), Panos Southern Africa (in Lusaka), and Panos South Asia (in Katmandou).

PIWA supports:

- Public debates and political dialogue on key development issues in Africa;
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- Enhancement of the skills of agents of social change in order to make themselves heard.

PIWA unites, facilitates and innovates at the regional level.

Director of PIWA: Diana Senghor

## ABBREVIATIONS

ADEN	Supporting Digital Disenclavement (Appui au Désenclavement Numérique)
ADIE	Government Information Systems Agency (Senegal) (Agence de l'Informatique de l'Etat)
ASCOSEN	Senegalese Consumer Association (Association des Consommateurs du Sénégal)
ARTP	Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (Senegal) (Agence de Régulation des Télécommunications et des Postes)
ATCI	Côte d'Ivoire Telecommunications Agency (Agence des Télécommunications de Côte d'Ivoire)
CDD	Centre for Democratic Development (Ghana)
CEG	Centre for E-governance, Ghana
CEI	Independent Electoral Commission (Commission Electorale Indépendante) (Côte d'Ivoire)
CIC	Community Information Centre (Ghana)
CICG	Government Information and Communications Centre (Centre d'Information et de Communication Gouvernementale) (Côte d'Ivoire)
CNAI	National Information Superhighways Council (Conseil National des Autoroutes de l'Information) (Côte d'Ivoire)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECOWAS	The Economic Community of West African States
EGAP	Electronic Governance Action Plan (Cape Verde)
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
HDI	Human Development Index
HPI	Human Poverty Index
ICT	Information and Communication Technology

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDEG	Institute for Democratic Governance (Ghana)
INSEAD	European Institute of Business Administration (Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires)
ISSP	Information Society Strategic Plan (Cape Verde)
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LAN	Local Area Network
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NCC	Nigerian Communications Commission
NeGST	National eGovernment Strategies
NITC	New Information and Communication Technologies
NITDA	National Information Technology Development Agency (Nigeria)
NMC	National Media Commission (Nigeria)
NOSI	Information Society Operational Unit (Núcleo Operacional para a Sociedade de Informação) (Cape Verde)
NRI	Network Readiness Index
PNGB	National Good Governance Programme (Programme National de Bonne Gouvernance) (Senegal, Burkina Faso)
RAFE	Public Finance Management Reform Group (Reforma da Administração Financeira do Estado) (Cape Verde)
RENICOM	National Information and Communication Network (Réseau National de l'Information et de la Communication) (Burkina-Faso)
PIWA	Panos Institute in West Africa
SIMGOUV	Government Multimedia Information System (Système d'Information Multimédia)
SMS	Short Message Service
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society (Côte d'Ivoire)
UNCs	Senegalese Consumer Union (Union Nationale des Consommateurs du Sénégal)
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VICI	Village Information and Communication Infrastructure (Ghana)
WAN	Wide Area Network
WANGONet	West African NGO Network (Nigeria)

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The analysis and recommendations of this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme, its Executive Board, the United Nations Member States or the Panos Institute West Africa. The report is an independent publication by UNDP and PIWA and reflects the views of its authors.

## PREFACE

There is no doubt that the recent global economic crisis had considerable impact on the economies of sub-Saharan Africa. However, its aftermath has shown that, at a continental level, the impact of the global crisis was not as devastating as initially expected. Although the reasons for this are complex, it does show that the world economy has dramatically changed in recent years. Most developing countries nowadays have diversified their economies and do not exclusively depend on northern markets for trade and employment. Not surprisingly then, the average growth rate for 2009 was three percent, while inflation declined sharply.

At the same time, the region witnessed a spectacular growth in the use of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs). This is especially true for mobile technologies which have spread very fast across all countries in the region. Latest estimates indicate that over 40 percent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa has access to a mobile device, a number which dwarfs that of Internet users (five percent of total population). Forecasts indicate that this growth pattern will continue in the next few years.

The widespread use of ICTs offers both governments and citizens the potential to address traditional development and governance issues in a new, innovative fashion. From the viewpoint of governments, ICTs are a catalytic tool to promote services to the most marginalized populations, thus helping achievement of the MDGs, while enhancing transparency and accountability. From the point of view of citizens and stakeholders, they can benefit by having access to new communication channels and thus having 'louder' voices in decision- and public-policy-making processes.

The Democratic Governance landscape in sub-Saharan Africa is therefore fertile ground to further promote these new developments. This is particularly true in West Africa where countries such as Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal have taken giant steps to consolidate democratic processes and principles that go well beyond holding elections on a regular basis. The emergence of pluralism and the expansion of civil liberties including freedom of expression, access to information and independent media outlets, among others, are now commonplace in the sub region.

In similar fashion, some of the West African countries are also regional leaders in terms of the use of ICTs for development and e-governance. Senegal's leading role in the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) is well known, while Cape Verde, Ghana and Nigeria are implementing ambitious e-governance programmes and projects. Although many challenges remain, local solutions to local problems are being created in the sub region and later shared with other developing countries around the globe.

By taking into account all of the above, this study aims to provide further insights into the role that ICTs can play in promoting the participation of citizens in democratic governance processes. And in doing so, it also casts evidence that e-participation is indeed feasible in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and poor countries, and is not the exclusive realm of industrialized nations. Despite the fact that there are certainly issues of scalability and replicability that need to be tackled, the majority of the countries cited in this study demonstrate a political will for more citizen involvement.

In short, we need to make sure that development agendas and targets are reached in the medium and long term. Participation of citizens and stakeholders in these processes is certainly the best way of achieving this goal.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Democratic Governance is a strategic sphere of activity for the Panos Institute West Africa (PIWA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). PIWA particularly supports the creation of expertise and dialogue on issues linked to governance and, more specifically, citizen participation.

Since the 1990s, UNDP has been promoting the use of ICT as a catalyst for development. Since 2001, UNDP has increased its focus on promoting e-governance and access to information. This strategic approach focuses on increasing participation by all of society's stakeholders in democratic processes and encouraging the establishment of basic services for the poorest and most marginalized members of society, both key elements for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set in 2000.

In this context, UNDP, in partnership with PIWA, has carried out this exploratory study to gain a better understanding of e-governance practices in the region, focusing in particular on citizen participation. The study aims to pave the way for future action and to document problems in this field.

The study focuses on six countries: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. More specifically, it includes an introduction to e-participation challenges in West Africa, case studies of initiatives in this area, and guidelines and recommendations for improving participation in the region through ICT.

The interest in e-governance is based on a reality: ICTs have advanced considerably, including in Africa, and have broken through to social and political life. In view of the numerous advantages offered by these technologies (speed, cost reduction, wider reach), they are now crucial for the work of the public sector, for civil society organizations and for governments, which use them for intra-governmental communication and for providing services and communicating with citizens. We can therefore argue that ICTs enhance citizen participation by enabling citizens to interact better with each other and with their elected officials. In a nutshell, this is e-participation.

E-governance and e-participation are therefore crucial phases in the development of government processes. However, despite the opportunities they offer, they also introduce new challenges, particularly for the countries targeted by this study and, more broadly, West African countries: limited and unequal access to ICTs, lack of infrastructure, electronic fraud, and the absence of or inadequate legal frameworks.

The initiatives studied illustrate that citizen participation through the use of ICTs is developing effectively in Africa. Governments have demonstrated a real willingness to transform relationships between government services and their users, particularly by strengthening the use of ICTs and by offering information services online. Civil society is also committed to implementing a number of initiatives to improve democratic governance using ICT.

However, those factors which would encourage genuine citizen participation in decision-making through the technical tools put in place by governments or even civil society itself are not fully instituted and developed. Citizen participation, although a reality, is still in its infancy and exists on a small scale. The countries of this region face immense challenges and competing priorities: poverty, lack of infrastructure, poor access to health care, etc. It is therefore essential to emphasise the crucial importance of establishing innovative participation channels and citizen-centric policies for the global effort to promote human development.

In short, e-participation can mobilize citizens to engage with others within their society, express their needs and open up new ideas for responding to current challenges. New forms of digital citizenship, particularly mobile technologies, have the potential to improve the commitment of stakeholders in the political process, reversing a trend towards disengagement, enabling better access to information and focusing services on those who need them most.

E-participation initiatives should be integrated into governance policies because they represent a powerful tool for achieving the MDGs. To this end, better promotion of these practices and innovative models, some of which have been identified in this study, is required.

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## 1 Introduction

Whether the result of new approaches to the idea of policy and governing or a new concept altogether, the term 'governance' has become more and more commonplace since the 1990s.<sup>1</sup>

This concept has gradually evolved to come to define not only the management of effective public services and support for an environment conducive to development, but also the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedom. This change towards what is now called 'democratic governance' is closely linked to the process of globalization, supported by the rapid global development of the use of new ICTs.

The so-called ICT revolution, initially centred on deploying communication and connectivity infrastructure, has radically evolved since the end of the 1990s. While developing countries still experience, in varying degrees, major difficulties in accessing new technologies, the potential these new technologies offer has become a key aspect in the work of civil society organizations (CSOs), governments and the private sector. Governments use ICT for intra-governmental communication and for implementing services to inform and communicate with citizens, and also for promoting citizen participation in democratic processes and governance. For example, almost all African governments now have a website.<sup>2</sup>

We are now able to talk about electronic governance, or e-governance.

E-governance is on the agenda in Africa, as in other continents and this is a key aspect for achieving the MDGs, through its contribution to promoting and strengthening democratic governance processes. Generally, going by the questions posed to governments at various global summits, particularly at the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005), it is very much a concern of civil society as well. It is therefore important to approach e-governance by focusing on the main stakeholders, the citizens, and their effective participation in decision-making processes.

Effective citizen participation involving ICTs - e-participation - refers to the use of ICT to improve participation among citizens, by facilitating contact between each person, as well with their elected officials. PIWA and UNDP have undertaken this study in order to better understand the reality of e-participation in West Africa: What is its relevance for democracies in this region of Africa? What are the innovative models? What are the assets and constraints linked to implementing it?

This is an exploratory study. For PIWA and UNDP it clarifies the scale of e-participation in West Africa, from the perspective of initiatives introduced by both the government and civil society.

This helps to pave the way for future action, while documenting the issues at stake for the benefit of all stakeholders concerned.

## Objectives

Specifically, this study presents:

- e-governance challenges for West Africa, particularly for citizen participation (interests, opportunities, obstacles, limits);
- Case studies in Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal;
- Guidelines and recommendations for improving e-participation in the region.

This document is the regional report, and summarizes national reports.

Chapter one, the introductory section, is followed by the chapter clarifying the conceptual framework, which includes the definition of the central theme, e-participation, and other associated concepts, their significance and limitations. Chapter three presents an overview of e-participation around the world, followed in chapter four by a methodological note explaining the framework for researching and analysing the initiatives studied in the target countries. The results of the field surveys carried out are presented in chapter five. The two next sections (chapters six and seven) draw on the preceding sections and offer suggestions for improved e-participation in West Africa. Finally, the annexes present contextual information on democratic governance, e-governance and ICT in the broadest sense, in the countries chosen, and a list of the people interviewed for this study.



## 2 Conceptual Framework

This study specifically aims to present a picture of the relationship between citizen participation and ICT in West Africa. In order to determine the role of the citizen in e-governance, it is also important to identify what we define as citizen participation within this study. The concept of e-governance will also be defined.

### 2.1. Citizen participation

Citizen participation is closely linked to the concepts of sustainable development and democratic

governance. 'The concept of good governance carries in it the essence of democracy through the mechanism of institutionalized citizen participation (Coulibaly, 2004). In practice, citizen participation is generally expressed through information, awareness-raising, consultation, questioning and dialogue. For citizens who do not have the right to vote, participation in local life in their community enables them to stay informed and express their views on the challenges the community faces. Therefore, citizen participation, particularly in the most vulnerable communities, covers different processes that can be represented by the following model:<sup>3</sup>

- *Information* – One-way relationship in which citizens, particularly the most vulnerable groups, receive information from governments, CSOs etc. The impact citizens may have is reduced because they are viewed solely as users.
- *Consultation* – Two-way interaction via forums, opinion surveys, polls, etc. It is important to note that this may include formulating opinions on issues already set out by the government as well as active engagement in defining the content of policy and preparing it.
- *Representation* – Presence within institutions where decision-making takes place. Close partnership with governmental bodies; citizens can set up an agenda and define its content.
- *Volunteering* – When it is recognized and supported, volunteering can yield significant results in helping the most excluded and vulnerable people participate in community life. Volunteering can also reflect the commitment of citizens to developing their own community.
- *Monitoring* – Watchdog role; monitoring public policies; inspection; evaluation of public services.

In West Africa, it is now widely acknowledged that the key challenges facing its people can only be tackled

with substantial citizen participation. Whether reducing extreme poverty, achieving nutritional self-sufficiency, eliminating gender inequality, empowering women or improving health, it is difficult to envisage lasting solutions if the citizens directly affected do not actually take part in the process. Citizen participation is therefore a pressing requirement, enabling countries to determine for and by themselves ways to overcome their biggest challenges.

## **2.2. New technologies for development and e-governance**

Since the early 1990s, and the so-called ICT revolution around the world, a huge range of new technologies for development have been created.

However, developing countries have not gained as quickly as industrialized countries from the potential offered by these. They face huge challenges in access and investment in infrastructure. The majority of new technology programmes for development were therefore initially focused on improving access to ICTs, complemented in many cases by capacity development.

This approach has gradually evolved, with ICTs being adopted globally as cross-cutting tools to tackle the traditional challenges of human and social development, especially the concerns of the most marginalized members of society.<sup>4</sup>

By the end of the last millennium, governments began to add strategies and policies to their development agendas that aimed to boost the use of new technologies within their departments. This led to the emergence of the concept of e-government, and e-governance, as key and specific fields of ICTs for development (ICTD).

The notion of e-government, defined as 'a government that applies ICT to transform its internal and external relationships' (UNDESA, 2003), has the aim of promoting, firstly, more effective administration, more systematic relationships between government services and between government services and businesses, and finally, more transparent access by citizens to decision-making processes.

However, the majority of initiatives are more focused on administrative streamlining than on improving the participation of non-governmental actors. This is how the concept of e-governance emerged, in order to promote the use of ICTs for democratic governance, encouraging a more appropriate exercise of power. E-governance is defined as the use of ICTs to improve the provision of information and services and encourage citizen participation in decision-making processes, to make government more accountable, transparent and effective (Misuraca, 2007). According to a framework developed by UNDP, it includes six components, three core and three cross-cutting.

The three core components, or goals, are as follows:

- E-administration: Public investment in ICT in order to strengthen the transparency and accountability of public bodies, both at a national and local level, in the way they function. This component is often linked to the reform of public administration and to modernization of the state.
- E-service: Public investment in ICT in order to strengthen the effectiveness and transparency of public institutions in the way in which they provide public services in all sectors.
- E-participation: Public investment in ICT in order to strengthen interaction between public bodies and citizens, with the aim of promoting better public policies, services and functioning. This occurs at three levels: provision of information to citizens, citizen consultation and dialogue between governments and citizens.

The three cross-cutting components are as follows:

- Access to ICT and connectivity: Public investment in information and public and private communication systems, connectivity and equipment infrastructure, to enable wider use by the greatest number of people. This is typical of the field of new technologies for development.

- Access to information: Public investment to promote the digitalization and dissemination of public information within the population.
- Regulation and political environment: Public investment to support the creation and implementation of new technology strategies for development and e-governance, legislation and regulation, and for strengthening competencies within public bodies involved in setting, implementing and monitoring policies. In principle, these policies are closely linked to wider development objectives.

In practice, the place granted to citizens by the society determines the role they play in e-governance. Depending on whether societies prioritize law, duty or participation as a component of citizenship, they will attribute the roles of consumer, subject or stakeholder to the citizen accordingly (Michel, 2006). If citizens are primarily viewed as stakeholders, they can participate by encouraging discussion. The notion of participation cannot be dissociated from the concept of governance itself, and thus from e-governance.

### **2.3. e-participation**

As we have seen, e-participation is conceptually interconnected with the notion of e-governance. It refers specifically to “the use of new technologies to broaden and deepen

political participation by enabling citizens to better interact with each other and with their elected officials” (Macintosh, 2006). E-participation therefore includes citizens’ use of ICT to access public information, participate in public decision-making, and monitor how government communities are being run.

The 2008 United Nations e-government survey had a subheading that described the current developments very well: ‘from e-government to connected governance’. This shift can be seen in an integrated approach that aims to improve the value of the services provided to citizens and to businesses. The services are integrated in an intra-organizational manner (within one organization), and also in an inter-organizational manner (between different organizations). Relationships within the various government departments are re-assessed, as are those between the departments, on the fundamental basis of the value of the services offered to users. In this context, e-participation promotes conditions of greater transparency in how governments are managed, specifically by making multiple channels of participation in decision-making processes available to citizens.

The aforesaid report presents an e-participation index which enables us to gauge the extent to which a given country has successfully implemented these conditions. For 2008, this index was calculated for a group of 189

countries on the basis of several components representing various services and facilities offered to citizens. These components are grouped into three categories:

1. e-information: The government website offers information on national bodies, government structure, strategies, policies and programmes.
2. e-consultation: The government provides citizens with the means of setting the agenda for debate, giving their opinion on important matters, and identifying priority questions with the assurance of receiving feedback from the government.
3. e-participation in decision-making: The government takes into account the input of citizens in its decisions and informs them of what decisions have been taken following the consultation process. This assumes that citizens have not only expressed their opinions, but that they have also proven their willingness to monitor change.

Through separation into three categories (information, consultation, participation in decision-making), the e-participation index allows us to assess the need for citizen consultation, and the need to involve citizens in decision-making.

## **2.4. Significance of e-participation**

The justifications most often cited for an ICT usage policy are increased cost effectiveness, improved service delivery and improved performance. The use of ICTs will help accelerate e-participation by allowing information and services to be provided more rapidly and cost effectively, and by reaching a wider audience. The different initiatives examined in the six countries covered by this study identified a varied range of experiences of e-participation in West Africa, which may serve as models or which could be adapted to local contexts, and has also enabled a better understanding of the factors which could prevent successful implementation.

## **2.5. Factors limiting the implementation of e-participation**

It is not surprising to note that the target countries of this study have some of the highest poverty indices, as shown in Table 1 below, and thus face crucial challenges to human and economic development, but also to democracy and governance. We concentrate below on four specific factors limiting the implementation of e-participation: low human capital, deficits in democratic governance, gender inequalities and inadequate infrastructure.

### 2.5.1. Low human capital: poor literacy and schooling rates

Table 1 is an extract from UNDP's

global human development report, and indicates the level of literacy and education in the countries covered by this study.<sup>1</sup> The scores of two other

**Table 1. Extract from the 2009 Global Human Development Report**

Country	2009 HDI Ranking	Human Poverty Index <sup>6</sup> (%)	People living below the poverty line (%)	Adult literacy (% population aged 15 & over)	Combined schooling for primary, secondary & higher education (%)	Education index
Norway	1	-	-	99.0	98.6	0.989
Mauritius	81	9.5	-	87.4	76.9	0.839
Cape Verde	121	14.5	40.2	83.8	68.1	0.786
Ghana	152	28.1	53.6	65	56.5	0.622
Nigeria	158	36.2	83.9	72	53	0.657
Côte d'Ivoire	163	37.4	46.8	48.7	37.5	0.45
Senegal	166	41.6	60.3	41.9	41.2	0.417
Burkina Faso	177	51.8	81.2	28.7	32.8	0.301

countries are added for comparison — Norway, the first country in the ranking, and Mauritius, the first African country in the ranking.

Although their education indices are relatively high, Ghana, Cape Verde and Nigeria suffer as much as other countries from low literacy levels. Some of the e-participation solutions rely on the ability of citizens to read and write, in order to express their opinions and choices, and interact with governments and elected officials.

Furthermore, a significant number of initiatives implemented in this field are drafted in Western languages (French, English, Portuguese), despite the fact

that these languages continue to be used only by a limited group of people, mainly in major urban centres.

If this constitutes a handicap for the implementation of e-participation, the fast development of mobile technologies is encouraging as they allow easy and direct communication. The use of voice servers is also a solution to this limitation, as is the use of interactive radio (and television) broadcasts, even if television coverage is for the moment relatively low. The field of ICT, in constant evolution, allows therefore the creation of new channels of expression easier to access and affordable for all.

### Box 1. Example of voice servers in the CERCO Project

Created in Benin in 1998, the CERCO Group comprises a group of 70 private secondary education establishments and seven universities based in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and France. CERCO has set up a collaborative system for working and communicating with students' parents, a website <http://www.projetcerco.com> and, above all, a voice server that provides them with the information required in local languages and in French. The voice server option was set up to cater to illiterate parents.

A final feature of human capital deficiencies is the lack of competencies required to initiate and implement projects truly anchored in the local socio-cultural environment, and their efficient management.

### **2.5.2. Gender inequalities**

Table 2, taken from the global human development report for 2009, presents the Gender-related Development Index (GDI). The GDI measures human development according to the same dimensions as HDI, adjusted for the inequality of the sexes.<sup>7</sup>

The six countries studied in this report present indexes which reflect critical gender inequalities. These inequalities are particularly reflected at an economic level, with strong disparities between the incomes of men and women. Similarly, women are in many cases not only excluded from equal social and economic opportunities but also from the benefits offered by ICT,<sup>8</sup> from access to new technologies and from a place within the information society. Therefore, their level of involvement in e-participation is greatly restricted.

**Table 2. Extract from the 2009 Global Human Development Report: –  
Gender-Related Indices**

Country	2009 HDI Ranking	Male/Female income ratio (%)	GDI
Norway	1	0.77	2
Mauritius	81	0.42	67
Cape Verde	121	0.49	101
Ghana	152	0.74	126
Nigeria	158	0.42	133
Côte d'Ivoire	163	0.34	137
Senegal	166	0.55	140
Burkina Faso	177	0.66	147

### 2.5.3. Infrastructure limitations

The issue of infrastructure will essentially be addressed using the 'Networked Readiness Index' (NRI). This is a concept combining factors linked to investment in infrastructure and to the use of ICTs. Developed jointly by INSEAD,<sup>9</sup> the World Bank and the World Economic Forum, the NRI index is defined as the readiness of a nation or community to participate in ICT and to benefit from its development.

The NRI is a composite of three equally weighted components:

- Policy environment
- Readiness
- Usage

Constraints linked to access to ICT and more specifically to the difficulties of using it will be evaluated through specific variables of the NRI.

Although the number of Internet users exceeds 50 percent in the majority of developed countries, the figures for countries of the region covered by this study barely reach seven percent. The gaps are just as big for the number of telephone lines, and the number of personal computers. The infrastructure and technical equipment for a smooth implementation of e-participation are surely lacking in the countries of West Africa, despite the opportunities offered by mobile technologies.

**Table 3. Specific variables of the NRI<sup>10</sup>**

Variables 2007	Burkina Faso	Cape Verde <sup>11</sup>	Côte D'Ivoire	Ghana <sup>12</sup>	Nigeria	Senegal
Population (millions)	14.8	0.5	19.3	23.5	148	12.4
GDP per capita (US\$)	1,206	3,041	1,737	1,426	2,028	1,692
Number of cellular telephones (per 100 people)	10.9	-	36.6	32.4	27.3	33.3
Number of personal computers (per 100 people)	0.2	-	1.7	0.6	0.8	2.1
Number of Internet users (per 100 people)	0.6 <sup>13</sup>	-	1.6 <sup>14</sup>	2.8	6.8	6.6
Internet bandwidth (bits/second per 10,000 people)	0.2 <sup>15</sup>	-	0.2 <sup>16</sup>	0.2 <sup>17</sup>	0.0 <sup>18</sup>	1.4
NRI 2008–2009 (rank out of 134)	113	-	111	103	90	80

## 2.5.4. Status of democratic governance

As specified in the section on the conceptual framework, e-participation and democratization are very closely linked. There can be no true e-participation without the existence of genuine democratic practices and processes, demonstrated by the ability of citizens to exercise full freedom of expression. West African democracies in general still face major obstacles to freedom of expression and governments do not regularly accept contributions from civil society, for example. Genuine e-participation can therefore find itself hindered by these limitations, when ICTs would otherwise be accessible to many more people.

E-participation is therefore closely linked to factors like civil liberties and pluralism. However, even in countries where 'democracy' is not sufficiently consolidated, the conditions for implementing e-participation initiatives can still be achieved, thus encouraging development and supporting global advances in democratic governance.

By way of example, we have chosen to present in table 4, the index developed by the magazine The Economist.<sup>19</sup> This index examines 167 countries in order to provide a qualitative evaluation of their level of democratic development on a scale of 0 to 10. The index takes into account electoral processes and

pluralism, civil liberties, government functioning, participation and political culture. Table 4 presents the ranking of the countries studied according to this index, the specific indices described above, and the first and last country in this ranking for information purposes. We can see that Cape Verde has a good ranking, with particularly high indices for categories one and four. This ranking is only used to illustrate our point.

**Table 4. Democracy Index**

Country	Democracy Index/ Rank 2008	I. Electoral Process & Pluralism	II. Functioning of Government	III. Political Participation	IV. Political Culture	V. Civil Liberties
Sweden	1	10.00	10.00	10.00	9.38	10.00
Cape Verde	34	9.17	7.86	6.67	6.25	9.12
Senegal	93	7.00	5.00	3.33	5.63	5.88
Ghana	94	7.42	4.64	4.44	4.38	5.88
Burkina Faso	122	4.00	1.79	2.78	5.00	4.41
Nigeria	124	2.92	3.21	3.33	4.38	3.82
Côte d'Ivoire	134	1.25	2.86	2.78	5.63	3.82
North Korea	167	0.00	2.50	0.56	1.25	0.00



### 3 E-Participation Around the World

The following table is an extract from the e-participation index of the report published by UNDESA in 2008 (see section 5.3). It presents the index for

the countries covered by this study and, for illustration, the highest and lowest scores of the table published. The e-government index for these countries is also presented.<sup>20</sup> Only the initiatives implemented by governments are described here.

**Table 5. e-participation and e-government indices of countries covered by the study**

Country	e-participation Index	e-government Index
	Rank	Rank
United States	1	5
South Korea	2	6
Burkina Faso	60	176
Ghana	60	138
Senegal	60	153
Cape Verde	74	104
Côte d'Ivoire	98	173
Nigeria	116	136
Zambia	170	-
Zimbabwe	170	-
Chad	-	182

Table 5 illustrates that, despite a growing recognition of citizens in governance processes, participation through ICT is still low in West Africa. It is also interesting to note that the comparison of the e-government index and the e-participation index show that these two indices are not symmetrical. Despite these very low e-government rates, the e-participation rankings of the countries studied are encouraging.

Before moving on to discuss the application of e-participation in the countries covered by this study, we present an outline of some innovative e-participation experiences used in other African countries and elsewhere in the world.

### **3.1. Outline of e-participation innovations around the world**

There have been some remarkable initiatives in several regions of the world. Since 2000, the publication by the United Nations of the Global E-Government Readiness reports confirms that the following nations figure at the top for innovative e-participation: the United States, South Korea, and the Scandinavian countries.

The choice of medium and channels that are appropriate for communicating with citizens is of capital importance, but there are no obvious formulae for making this choice. Governments generally tend to use several different channels. The new functionalities of

the Internet (particularly enhanced interfaces offered by web 2.0) allow government to set up a system of interactive communication with their citizens. Table 6 presents some of these initiatives.

**Table 6. Examples of e-participation initiatives around the world**

Country	Initiative undertaken	Description of the initiative
Angola	Ministries' interactive website.	Clear information, new elements, downloadable forms on the Ministry of Finance website.
Kenya	Government services online	In addition to electronic administration, a unique citizens' portal with pages linked to social affairs, health, education etc.  <a href="http://www.kenya.go.ke">http://www.kenya.go.ke</a> .
Egypt	Website of the Ministry of Education	Interactive site through which citizens can receive information by email, download forms and videos.  <a href="http://knowledge.moe.gov.eg/arabic">http://knowledge.moe.gov.eg/arabic</a> .
Morocco	Website of the Ministry of Finance	Citizens can create user accounts, download forms, and generate reports online.  <a href="http://www.finances.gov.ma">http://www.finances.gov.ma</a> .
Lesotho	Website of the Ministry of Finance	In addition to the usual information and statistics, citizens can give feedback and make suggestions.  <a href="http://www.finance.gov.ls">http://www.finance.gov.ls</a> .
Trinidad & Tobago	Web presence of the Ministry of Health	Citizens are invited to participate, to make suggestions or complaints, where applicable.  <a href="http://www.health.gov.tt">http://www.health.gov.tt</a> .
Dominican Republic	Web presence of the Ministry of Health	Citizens are invited to make suggestions or complaints, where applicable.  <a href="http://www.sespas.gov.do">http://www.sespas.gov.do</a> .

Country	Initiative undertaken	Description of the initiative
Mexico	Electronic administration	<p>Unique citizens' portal: citizen rights, education, culture and leisure, federal government, employment, security, transparency, weather, health, family, transport, sports, elections and citizen participation, housing, etc. Beyond the website user satisfaction survey, the citizen has a set of ways of interacting with the political parties and the federal government: electoral calendar 2005-2010, civic, political and youth information, citizen participation, political parties and elections.</p> <p><a href="http://www.gob.mx/wb/egobierno/temas">http://www.gob.mx/wb/egobierno/temas.</a></p>
Brazil	Website of the Chamber of Deputies	<p>The website of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies allows citizens to communicate with their representatives and participate in debates directly via the Internet.</p> <p><a href="http://www2.camara.gov.br/popular">http://www2.camara.gov.br/popular.</a></p>
Korea	Website for interaction with citizens	<p>The 'e-people' website brings together all means of interaction between the government and citizens. The objective is as much about improving the quality of service provided as it is about registering complaints, gathering suggestions and offering a space for discussion.</p> <p><a href="http://www.epeople.go.kr">http://www.epeople.go.kr.</a></p>

As indicated in table 7 below, the number of countries implementing e-participation tools as part of participation in decision-making is still very low.

According to the 2008 e-government survey published by the United Nations, the situation is as follows for the 192 countries covered by the survey.

**Table 7. Extent of e-participation in decision-making**

e-participation as part of participation in decision-making	Number of countries	As percentage of countries surveyed
Formal or informal commitments by government to include the results of electronic participation in decision-making	22	11%
Official recognition that opinions, debates and discussions have been registered	18	9%
Government sends a 'sent receipt' to citizens after receiving input, including a copy of what was received, by whom, time/date received and estimated response time	12	6%
Officials moderate e-deliberations online	6	3%
Government publishes findings/results of citizen opinions, including e-opinions, on website	23	12%

Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) 2008.

### **3.2. Citizen participation in decision-making: White House innovations**

In the field of citizen participation in decision-making, table 7 above addresses the fundamental question of how electronic petitions, online debates and other ways of gathering citizen opinions electronically are really used.

On 26 March 2009, the White House responded to the question on how opinions gathered electronically

from citizens are used. President Barack Obama had promised an open government and the use of technological tools capable of promoting citizen participation in decision-making. He has since lived up to this promise by speaking directly to Internet users. The operation began by selecting questions of interest, voted by the Internet users themselves. The second stage was President Barack Obama's dialogue with them for over an hour. See Box 2 for more details.

#### **Box 2. Citizen participation in decision-making: White House innovations**

On 26 March 2009, for the first time, a US president responded to questions asked by Internet users. The project, entitled 'Open for questions', lasted over an hour, during which Barack Obama responded to questions on the economic situation, the question which received the most votes. The White House has indicated that around 100,000 questions were posted and 3.5 million votes received, and was pleased with the success of this event, which brought "an amazing feeling of something which had never been done before, something which we will try to do more often". It is notable that although journalists were in the room, the US president took no questions from them. The full video and transcription of the presidential chat is online at the White House website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/09/03/26/Wrapping-Up-Open-for-Questions>.

Another interesting initiative is the field campaign launched by the Obama team to support his draft budget. The 13 million or so email addresses gathered during the presidential campaign have been put to use by the Democratic Party, which is officially conducting this mobilization campaign, inviting supporters of the president to call on their Congress representatives to support the Obama administration's draft budget. Democratic activists were called to action as they would be in an electoral campaign, organizing neighbourhood meetings, making door-to-door visits, and making calls to lists of local voters. This was also a first.



## 4 Study Methodology

When preparing this study, PIWA and UNDP chose to cover West Africa through a representative sample of countries. A literature review indicates that multiple initiatives have been implemented around electronic governance in Africa since the late 1990s.<sup>21</sup> These six countries were chosen for various reasons. Senegal and Cape Verde appear to be the two countries which are the most advanced in e-governance in the region, the latter being also an island country with a very large diaspora population

(a factor which may be relevant in the analysis). Ghana appears to be the most voluntarist of the Anglophone countries in the region on this matter. The inclusion of Côte d'Ivoire (a country emerging from conflict which is economically important) and of Nigeria (the largest economically developed country in the region, with innovative social momentum) has the potential to bring about value-added practices. Finally, in Burkina Faso, ICTs are less developed, but the government has in recent years demonstrated a genuine political will for this sector.<sup>22</sup> This example can also illustrate the situation in less advanced countries. The choice

of these different countries for this study was based on the hypothesis that they could form a random sample group.

The study involved several stages as follows:

- A general appraisal of e-governance initiatives;
- Selection of around twenty value-added initiatives in all the countries;
- Analysis of these initiatives by conducting interviews with the people leading them and key contacts;
- Drafting national reports;
- Drafting a sub regional report.

E-governance initiatives were identified by taking a census of the projects from the various national stakeholders (central and local public authorities, associations, key contacts); the initiatives analysed could have been initiated by either the government or by civil society.

The key contacts interviewed had the following profiles: directors of CSOs, social science researchers (sociology and communication), journalists and marketing and communication specialists, local elected officials, government advisers, administrative and technical managers and company directors. Email, telephone and face-to-face interviews were used for the exchanges with the key contacts and the people running the initiatives.



## 5 Key Presentations and Analysis

Having carried out an appraisal of e-government initiatives in each country, we selected a number of initiatives that illustrated e-participation or which had strong potential in this area. Although e-participation appears basic for some of them, this selection illustrates the level achieved in this process by the target countries and by West African countries in general. We have frequently included extracts from interviews with those running initiatives or with key contacts. This review particularly noticed that, as is the case

in many other countries, e-governance initiatives place particular emphasis on the range of services and making information available to citizens, rather than on participation in decision-making.

The experiences analysed are carried out by a large diversity of stakeholders. This choice is based on an e-participation approach which includes not only initiatives set up by the governments, but also those run by others, in particular civil society, as part of participatory political processes. The general context of ICTs, e-governance and democratic governance in the target countries is presented in Annex I to this document.

## 5.1. Burkina Faso

### 5.1.1. The ADEN Project

The ADEN project (“supporting digital disenclavement”) was set up by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help improve access to digital communications in certain African countries. It aims to establish Internet access centres and to create local content on this network in areas with low Internet connection rates. In Burkina Faso, it was established in collaboration with the government. ADEN is rolled out in three parts: equipment and connection, training teams, and support for producing local content and IT applications.

The ADEN centres support disenclavement of communities in the regions targeted, in order to encourage greater integration and participation in public life. In accordance with Burkina Faso’s Internet strategy, they contribute alongside the government to creating a vibrant information society in the country. In Burkina Faso, sixteen ADEN centres have been set up. Although their usefulness in aiding greater social integration is effective on the ground, they face several technological, financial and management challenges which threaten their survival, particularly since French funding is coming to an end.

#### **Issaka Luc Kourouma, Chair Of Jardin D’aden, Association of Aden Centre Managers**

“By setting up the ADEN project, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs aimed to facilitate democratization of the use of ICTs in Africa, particularly in remote areas. The ADEN centres are useful insofar as they are a great help towards implementing government policy promoting ICTs.”



### **5.1.2. The portal of the central directorate for public contracts**

The Burkina Faso Government, through the Ministry of Economics and Finance, has undertaken a reform of the public contracts sector, as part of the harmonization of procedures within the West African Economic and Monetary Union area. These reforms have led to the launch of a portal site for public contracts ([www.dcmp.bf](http://www.dcmp.bf)) which aims to make calls to tender available to the public and boost transparency.

The site contains a contact area and a discussion forum that enables interested stakeholders and Internet users to send in their concerns. It is a platform for dialogue between the business world and the government. However, the forum is moderated and is apparently not always open.

The portal for public contracts is a result of the government's willingness to fight against corruption and to speed up procedures for accessing and processing calls to tender. It has been funded by UNDP.

However, many procedures linked to calls to tender are still carried out using printed material and economic operators continue to pace up and down the corridors of the government departments concerned. There are several factors which explain this situation, including:

- A high number of agents still suspicious of digital documents, who prefer to use printed material, which they consider more authentic;
- The lack of use of ICTs by a large number of economic operators;
- Limitations in the government's computer systems.

## 5.2. Cape Verde

### 5.2.1. The maison du citoyen and associated services

The Maison du Citoyen (Citizens' Centre) is a multidimensional initiative that enables various different electronic administrative services to be offered to citizens and businesses. It was set up as a dedicated physical centre on the island of Sal in February 2008 and in the town of Praia in July 2008. It is a unique portal: all the information services habitually sought by citizens and businesses are grouped under one roof, which prevents them from having to travel to several ministries or directorates before finding the services they need.

### Jean Marie Bonkoungou, Former Director General of Public Contracts

"The public administration did not previously wish to communicate with the private sector. Now, with the portal, economic operators will be able to stay informed about the progress of transactions linked to their contract, follow the progress of transactions from their office and contact the senior management of the organization as soon as they notice any anomaly. All this without having to leave their office."

Citizens and businesses are able to view the government as an integrated unit, and the services offered sit alongside the public administration's current organizational structure. The services are grouped according to information needs. The objectives sought by this initiative are as follows:

- Facilitate maximum government-citizen interaction;
- Make the greatest number of public and private services (public-interest private services) available on this same physical site;
- Directly or indirectly resolve a number of problems at this site;
- Be the main gateway between public services and citizens;
- Form a multifunctional platform to fill the gap between public and private services.

Beyond the physical site, citizens have access to services through different channels: the initiative's website, voice servers, SMS, email and also the option of direct meetings. This service makes the lives of citizens a lot easier, particularly for the Cape Verdean diaspora, who generally have great difficulties accessing government services and obtaining official documents such as birth certificates.

### **Fernanda Silva, Praia, Cape Verde**

"I received my birth certificate from my office straightaway, without queuing. It was really great. I must say though, personally, I expected more: for example, the system doesn't allow me to request the birth certificate of another person, such as a parent. If I can use the traditional system to request these certificates, why can't I do it online on the website?"

The web portal is used to access services via advance registration, and confirmations can be received by SMS and/or email. Where necessary, services are paid for electronically (using a payment card). The services offered through Maison du Citoyen include:

- Certificates online (birth, marriage);
- Starting up a company in one day;
- Electronic payment (various administrative services);
- Information system on public sector workers;
- Access to electoral information.

The people interviewed cited time and cost savings as the main benefits of the services offered. These services appear to work well and be appreciated by the public.

**Mario Monteiro, Praia, Cape Verde**

"We began the process of setting up a company, using the traditional procedure. However, we experienced so many difficulties that we decided to go to the Maison du Citoyen. We did it in one day, and the next day our company was all set up!"

**Celestino Mascarenhas, CEO, HDigital Electrónica, Praia, Cape Verde**

"I did not get my certificate online, simply because I didn't need to. If I had asked for it, I would have got it online from my office, instead of going to queue at the civil registry office."

**5.2.2. SMS and email: tools for rallying demonstrators**

In 2005, the electricity and water company ELECTRA conducted some ill-timed power cuts in several areas of the archipelago. This situation caused general unrest among the population. A number of NGOs joined forces and began organizing demonstrations.

Since the first posters raising awareness and mobilizing citizens did not produce the results hoped for, the organizers had the idea of using SMS to invite people to take part in protest demonstrations. The messages spread rapidly, with recipients being invited to forward the message to all the phone numbers in their address book.

The demonstration took place on the 5th October 2005, with over 3,500 people on the streets of Praia, protesting the lack of electricity in the Cape Verdean capital. According to an observer at the demonstration, "This is a big achievement, particularly in the town of Praia, where people generally don't get involved in this sort of initiative."

## Mario Monteiro, Praia, Cape Verde

"It's a very good idea to send these messages. Normally, when I see banners or posters on the street I don't pay any attention to them. But if I receive an SMS on my mobile, I read it, and if it's interesting, I forward it to my friends."

This initiative to mobilize the public to take part in a demonstration was particularly interesting. It signalled the advent of a new form of social mobilization. During the 2008 municipal elections campaign, this strategy was widely used by the candidates to get

across their messages and to invite the public to participate in campaign activities. If we take into account that 41.5 percent of Cape Verdean citizens have a mobile phone, SMS represents a very good way of bringing a message to the public.

## Box 3. Other e-participation initiatives in Cape Verde

The following paragraphs illustrate a few additional areas in which e-participation is being implemented in Cape Verde.

### Diffusion of official information and dialogue with citizens

The majority of government websites (including those of ministries, parliament, the prime minister, and the president of the republic) allow citizens to interact with the government electronically. The website of the Tarrafal de S. Nicolau municipal authorities even has a system which allows citizens to interact with local authorities through a chat application. Facilities such as surveys are generally available on the government websites. However, the questions addressed are not always relevant. They are mainly questions linked to the sites' functioning. Some government bodies, such as the National Communications Agency and the Ministry of Health, hold online public consultations on certain issues, using ICTs as vehicles for the consultation and for receiving contributions.

## Social Consolidation And Online Communication

The official website of the Ministry of Justice has an online forum. The initial idea, as indicated in the Electronic Government Action Plan (EGAP), Cape Verde's e-governance policy document, is to create a space for democratic participation, where draft laws could be examined by citizens. These forums would help to encourage the active participation of citizens in the legislative process. However, the forum is very static, and the topics addressed do not correspond to those initially expected. Other ministries such as the Ministry for Education and the Ministry for the Environment also have online forums on their websites, but these have the same low level of participation.

At the civil society level, there is a great proliferation of blogs and online communities developed by citizens or associations. These online spaces act as channels for discussing different topics relating to society, politics and economics in the country. The personal blogs are the most active. Some Cape Verdean blogs can be viewed at the following addresses: <http://sobrecaboverde.blogspot.com> and <http://www.netvibes.com/blogcaboverde>.

## Elections: preparing the ballot, electoral campaign, vote, issue of results

ICTs are used intensively in election campaigns in Cape Verde. During the 2008 municipal election, for example, the majority of the main candidates had a website which they used to promote and share their ideas and projects, and to garner voter support. Mobilizing messages were sent regularly by SMS and by email.

During the 2008 municipal elections, voters were registered with the help of ICTs (use of digital cameras, laptops etc.). After voters had been registered for the general election, the database set up was published online and citizens had the opportunity to view it and check for errors. The database could also be consulted via mobile phone (SMS). When the votes were counted, citizens who subscribed to the service could receive the results in real time. This information, broadcast in real time by SMS, was also available online on the website portal of the election directorate.

## **5.3. Côte D'Ivoire**

### **5.3.1. The government's multimedia information system**

The Système d'Information Multimédia du Gouvernement (Government Multimedia Information System, SIMGOUV) is an initiative of the Centre d'Information et de Communication Gouvernementale (Government Information and Communications Centre, CICG) created in 2004. CICG's mission is to supervise the management of information and government communication, thereby improving visibility and readability. This centre is also currently responsible for mobilizing all Côte d'Ivoirians and encouraging them to participate in the process of emerging from the political crisis. The SIMGOUV system includes an official Ivoirian Government information web portal ([www.gouv.ci](http://www.gouv.ci)), which gives access to the majority of ministries and other institutions of the republic, and an interactive call centre (given the name 'Allo Gouvernement, Allo 101') enabling the government to begin a dialogue with citizens. This call centre not only enables the diffusion of government information, but also allows citizens to telephone in with their concerns and reactions to current national events. We note that the government website hosts a 'forum for national dialogue', but contributions to this forum are very infrequent and it is unclear what will happen to it.

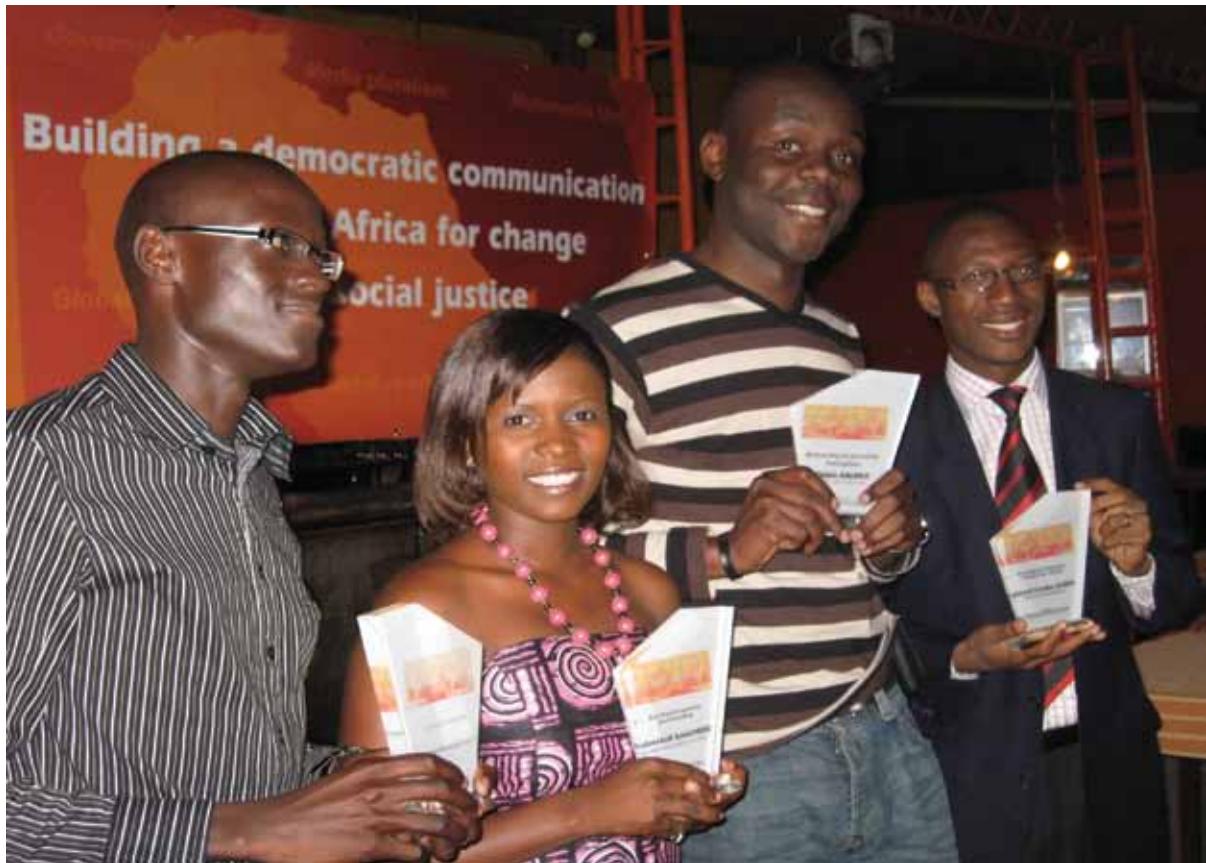
### **5.3.2 Petitions, debates and surveys on the web portal Abidjan.net**

Weblogy is an ICT service company registered in the United States and set up by diaspora Ivoirians. In 1998, the founders of Weblogy launched the website [www.Abidjan.net](http://www.Abidjan.net) to enable the Ivoirian diaspora community to access information on what is happening in Côte d'Ivoire. This site was launched towards the end of 1999, the time of the country's first ever coup. This portal is now the most visited portal in Côte d'Ivoire, with a minimum of 300,000 visits per day. At the tenth Fête de l'Internet (Festival of the Internet), from 27 April to 1 May 2009, Weblogy won an award from the ministry for ICTs as a private enterprise of public interest. The two founders of Weblogy, Jil N'Dia and Daniel Ahouassa, were awarded the status of Officiers dans l'Ordre du Mérite des Postes et Télécommunications (Officers in the Postal and Telecommunications Service Order of Merit).

According to Seydou Koné, head of content at [www.Abidjan.net](http://www.Abidjan.net), the 'Electronic Petition', 'Big Questions', and 'Electronic Survey' pages are initiatives by his team to increase readership. These pages were launched in tandem in 2002 and are described below.

- **Electronic petition:** On the Internet, different applications provide an opportunity to organize a petition and gather signatures online. The legal value of a petition is perhaps non-existent, but the resultant pressure on political decision-makers can be decisive. The 'electronic petition' service was launched on Abidjan.net in order to offer interested Internet users the opportunity to launch petitions and gather signatures from people who support their standpoint. However, this initiative only experienced a relatively low level of participation and as of 2007 is no longer maintained by its developers. Since its launch, the page has generated 174 petitions, mainly on political issues, no doubt due to the crisis the country is going through.
- **Big Questions:** The Big Questions is a weekly column on Abidjan.net which gives a voice to observers of political, economic and social life. It aims to be more incisive in analysing the questions asked. Since its launch, 514 questions have been submitted to Internet users. The topics addressed are generally linked to the most prominent events of the week. At present it is difficult to identify a specific example of decision-making on the basis of the summaries from this column. However, the suggestions made remain accessible and available to all.
- **Electronic survey:** This page is by far the most active in terms of participation. The way it works is undoubtedly one of the reasons for this; the Internet user simply has to click on their choice. Since this initiative was launched in 2002, over 70 surveys have been carried out. The topics of the surveys are currently suggested by the content management team for the Abidjan.net website. The results of the surveys can be accessed online and can be used by everyone. Many survey subjects are linked to current affairs in national politics.

The momentum generated by these initiatives is rather remarkable. It is important to note that they have been in place for a number of years, well before e-participation was even mentioned. There are also experiences provided by the private sector. Although their results and impact on national governance remain unclear, since these initiatives were not set up as part of formal public consultation processes by a recognised democratic governance stakeholder, they may serve as models for organizations working in this field.



### **5.3.3. Ivoire-blog.com, the platform for Ivoirian bloggers**

Blogging is a communication tool that is starting to become popular in Côte d'Ivoire. Many people prefer to simply create a blog, rather than traditional websites, given how easy it is to get one up and running. Ivoire-blog is the first community of bloggers in Côte d'Ivoire. It is a platform created in 2007 that now has around 100 active members.

One of these blogs is the Blog de Yoro which provides an interesting platform for expressing concerns on a variety of social and cultural issues and discussing Ivoirian socio-political current affairs. Statistics show that 30 percent of the 25,000 daily visitors to Ivoire-blog log on from Côte d'Ivoire and 40 percent log on from France. The Ivoirian citizens' level of interest in the blog is certainly a good sign for future e-participation initiatives.

## **Yoro's Blog**

Israël Yoroba Guebo is a multimedia Ivoirian journalist, aged 26, who has been blogging about her country for over a year at Le blog de Yoro, <http://leblogdeyoro.ivoire-blog.com>. Her work has recently received various awards (the Best of Blogs prize, the prestigious international prize for blogs organized each year by Deutsche Welle, and the Prix Waxal for the best blogs, organized by PIWA).

"My blog provides all the information that is important to Ivoirians (both here and abroad), to anyone who is interested in the Côte d'Ivoire and even to people who would like to learn more about this country. Above all, I provide information which the press does not always publish. I also often give my opinions on particular topics and the readers respond," says Ms. Guebo.

## **5.4. Ghana**

### **5.4.1. Use of ICT to promote transparency during the elections**

The mobile telephone is unquestionably currently the most versatile and most commonly used tool for e-participation in Ghana. It is used not only in interaction with citizens in television and radio broadcasts, but also widely during electoral campaigns and processes in general. During campaigns, politicians use them to send messages to citizens or to their supporters to mobilize them and encourage them to vote for them. For example, on 7th December 2008, on the eve of the election, Nana Akufo-Addo, one of the candidates for the presidency, sent the following message to subscribers: "Do you believe in Ghana? Vote for me, NanaAkufo-Addo,

on 7th December for high quality education, jobs, health care and a better future for our children. May God bless Ghana."

Additionally, before and during the elections, the mobile phone represented a preferred tool for monitoring the electoral process, particularly counting the votes won by each candidate in the different constituencies and at national level. It was used to report any events or incidents sent in by the public or the media in real time on the radio. This made it more difficult to commit fraud; meaning, the credibility and integrity of the electoral process were strengthened. Moreover, during the elections, 'bad' behaviour (such as donations for buying votes, and various attempts to influence voters to vote for a particular candidate) was immediately reported on the radio by mobile phone.

#### **Box 4. African Elections Project –**

As part of the same framework as above, we note the initiative to cover elections using ICTs in Ghana, the African Elections Project set up by the CSO Penplusbytes.<sup>23</sup> With the support of the OSIWA Foundation (Open Society Institute West Africa), this organization, which campaigns to build on the media's ICT capacities, has trained journalists in several African countries in the use of new technologies (blogs, SMS, mobile phone, etc.) for covering the elections. The productions carried out have been broadcast online on the portal set up for this purpose. Penplusbytes collaborated with all the key stakeholders in the presidential elections in 2008 in Ghana, including the National Electoral Commission. This contributed directly to promoting greater transparency and to good management of this electoral ballot in Ghana.

#### **5.4.2.The work of the Centre for E-Governance**

The Accra Centre for E-Governance (CEG) is a voluntary body. Its mission is to promote:

- The use of ICTs for greater mobilization of public opinion to support national development objectives, particularly poverty reduction, regional integration and income-generating activities;
- Distance learning;
- Use of ICTs in the services offered to citizens and businesses;
- Efficiency in the public and private sectors, so that they can play a proactive role in socio-economic development at all levels.

The Centre is investing in activities such as:

- Conducting research and studies, particularly on e-governance;
- Contributing to and participating in the formulation of regional and national policies;
- Training.

Thus, CEG is a citizen initiative that undertakes to help achieve the government's e-governance objectives. It can act as an intermediary for relaying citizens' concerns about governance. It is still a young organization.

## **Box 5. Civil Society and Governance in Ghana**

There are several CSOs in Ghana that work in the fields of governance and democratization. Some of the biggest are the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD), the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), the Ark Foundation, and Media Foundation West Africa.

IDEG and CDD are the leading organizations for e-governance initiatives. They have various programmes for consultation and public information, to facilitate political dialogue, mainly using the radio. This is particularly the case for the broadcasts 'IDEG and Joy FM Public Policy Dialogues' concerning governance problems, broadcast live by Joy Radio. Members of parliament, CSOs and the public participate in these debates, often using ICT to do so.

### **5.4.3. The Mfansteman Community Information Centre and other CICs in Ghana**

This is a government-citizen initiative. It is located in Saltpond, central Ghana. It is one of the 230 community information centres (CIC) that the government, through the Ministry for Communication, and in collaboration with UNDP, manage across the country. The implementing agency is the Ghana universal access fund for ICT. The main aim of the CICs is to reduce the digital divide, particularly in inland areas of the country, and specifically between urban and rural areas. The main target group is the rural population. The key stakeholders, in addition to the organizations mentioned above and the rural population, are the Ministry for National Information and Guidance, the Ministry for Local and Environmental

Development, and also the district involved. The Mfansteman Community Information Centre has 15 computers, a scanner, a printer, a television set, a radio and a DVD player.

The services provided by the Centre are as follows: typing and printing documents, scanning, training, and higher education for ICT students and professionals, with a particular emphasis on the use of various software. There is not yet an Internet connection, although this is an important tool needed by the centre. Until it gets Internet access, the centre will continue to train rural communities and build local capacities in the use of software. It should be clarified that other CICs do have an Internet connection. CICs therefore help to disenclave the target zones and communities, by strengthening their capacities as active citizens.

## 5.5 Nigeria

The Nigerian government has launched various initiatives encouraging e-participation through an innovative e-governance project called the National eGovernment Strategies (NeGST). This initiative is described in the annex to this document, in the section dedicated to the context of e-governance in Nigeria. Below are some innovative e-participation projects carried out by different stakeholders.

### 5.5.1. Police diary

'Police Diary' is a radio programme designed to provide the public with a way to interact with the Nigerian police. Its objectives include:

- Reducing the gulf between the police and the public;
- Helping to reform the Nigerian police;
- Changing the public's perception of the police, creating an environment which allows them to perform their role better.

These objectives aim to make the police more accountable and proactive. It is an interactive information broadcast. The police are interviewed on the radio and respond to questions from the public, who can contact the programme by telephone, SMS or email. Anyone

with a concern, comment or complaint can call the programme presenter or send a SMS, and the police officers participating in the broadcast respond to it. The programme was set up as part of a collaboration between the Nigerian police and Nigeria's federal radio. The federal radio provides the technical expertise, while the Nigerian police provide the content.

The possibility of using radio for such an initiative is very significant, since "in countries where oral tradition is important, community radio broadcasts can enable inhabitants to share information, raise questions to vast audiences and hold government representatives to account for their actions. This makes radio broadcasting an ideal tool for strengthening governance and promoting development."<sup>24</sup>

The popularity of this broadcast confirms this statement. According to a police public relations official, his telephone received over 500 calls after each programme was broadcast. The listeners call from all regions of the country, with some reporting their problems have been addressed satisfactorily.

The main challenge faced by this programme is the quality of the telephone network. A number of calls are cut off and others are so faint that neither the presenter nor the police

officers can understand the listener. In neither the presenter nor the police officers can understand the listener. In addition to these technical challenges, the programme also experiences financial problems. The radio station may need financial support in order to cover its costs.

Nonetheless, the programme is seen as a success.<sup>25</sup> The national council recently identified a decrease in the crime rate, which the police attribute in part to this programme. It has become very popular in Nigeria, thanks to the increasingly wide use of the mobile phone in this country, helped by the reforms of the Nigerian Communications Commission.

### **5.5.2. The Federal Ministry of Information SMS request system**

The SMS request system of the Federal Ministry of Information, responsible for government communications, provides the public with a way of interacting with the government about political issues. According to the people behind the initiative, the SMS request system is designed to provide information to people when they have an urgent request, such as passport renewal in an emergency. Requests are made in the form of text messages sent to a special telephone number via GSM network. The GSM network sends these messages to a server and the request is processed within one hour of receipt. Simple and well-formulated requests may receive responses automatically from the database, but more complex requests not in a valid format will be processed by officials. The system guarantees a response to each request within 24 hours.

#### **Kelvin Chidiebere Ugwu, Radio Presenter, Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria**

"There are things which show that the police diary is relevant. There are cases where late payment of allowances and the pensions of deceased police officers have been resolved and the beneficiaries concerned have received what was legally due to them. There are also cases where the Police Diary has restored citizens' rights when these rights have been scorned. Certain specific cases can be viewed online."

<http://www.radionigeriaonline.com/POLICE%20DIARY/Impact.html>



The SMS request system can be used by any educated or semi-educated person, as long as they can use the GSM network SMS service. English and pidgin English are the only languages used for requests, the use of pidgin English having enabled it to reach the target audience. The SMS request system requires minimal investment for installation and use. Unfortunately, this initiative faced internal functioning problems due to misunderstandings about the actual remit of the ministry in the provision of information. It therefore ceased functioning after around six months. However, the infrastructure still exists and would not be very difficult to set up again when appropriate.

### **5.5.3. WANGONet network anti-corruption tools**

The West African NGO network (WANGONet), a CSO working in various development areas, has devised a number of anti-corruption ICT tools. These include:

- The index for calculating corruption levels, based on the Anti-Corruption Internet Database (ACID) for determining the cost of corruption;
- Software for budget monitoring, a system for monitoring local government financial systems (LOGFITS).

These tools are designed to facilitate anti-corruption campaigns in Nigeria, by providing objective pieces of 'evidence'. They provide citizens with ways of comparing government expenditure against results, thus providing the information needed to encourage transparency in government transactions. WANGONet installed this software for local governments in the Niger Delta region as part of its programme dedicated to transparency in the extraction industries.

Developing the Nigerian National Assembly's website was another way to fight fraud in the country. The website provided information on members of the National Assembly and offered tools for interacting with them. It thwarted several international fraud cases, for instance, by preventing criminals from posing as government officials in order to commit fraud against foreign nationals.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of permanent resources, all these projects were stopped.

### **Chioma Atuokwu, Head of Operations, WANGONet**

"WANGONet encountered problems with sustainability and follow through in carrying out the aforementioned projects. Sustainability relies on the permanent availability of resources for continuing the project's activities. For example, a project such as the Nigerian National Assembly website has been shut down due to lack of resources.

"The anti-corruption Internet database has also ceased operating; however, its positive impact during the 2007 general election is unquestionable. Representatives were sent to different regions of the country and, while the elections were taking place and the results were being processed, reports were published. This was how this website came to be a point of reference for citizens and for some government agencies."

### **5.5.4. Touch-screen kiosk HIV/AIDS awareness campaign**

As part of its activities, WANGONet set up an interactive touch-screen information kiosk for raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. It is a project funded by MTN, a telecommunications company providing mobile telephone services in Nigeria. The main tool is an interactive screen that helps to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in the country's three main languages, Yoruba, Hausa and English. It can also be used in pidgin English. This initiative has helped to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS among a large number of Nigerian citizens, particularly those who do not speak English.

The main challenge faced by this project is sustainability, due to the lack of funding beyond the pilot phase. The sponsor of the touch-screen information kiosk wants to associate it with its products. Access to the kiosk is limited to MTN Nigeria subscribers. The interactive touch screen itself is seen as a promotional product by its sponsors, and the screens are therefore located at commercial hubs such as at airports and cinema foyers, rather than in remote areas of the country, where this information is most needed.

### **5.6. Senegal**

#### **5.6.1. Administrative procedures website**

A website for administrative services was set up on 24 May 2006 by the government information agency, Agence de l'Informatique de l'Etat (ADIE), an independent organization attached to the Secrétariat Général de la Présidence de la République (General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic). ADIE's mission, within the framework of good governance policy, is to encourage modernization of government services through the adoption of ICT.

The website presents useful information (forms, cost, reference documents, the department in charge, etc.) for completing a whole host of routine administrative processes (identity card applications, criminal records certificates, driving licences etc.). It directs users to services (home pages of public organizations, online services, information services, listings of resources etc.) that enables users to find out more about their duties, exercise their rights and complete procedures.

The main objectives centre on access to reliable administrative information (legal, standardized and up to date) for all Senegalese. In addition to its ease of use for everyday administrative procedures, the site aims to provide information on procedures for 'individuals' and 'businesses'.

According to the government information agency that runs the initiative: "Once complete, the portal will bring all administrative procedures online, in order to later move towards online submissions. To date, some 400 procedures can already be carried out online. This plays a fundamental role in helping and assisting users to organize their administrative records, and also brings the Senegalese government closer to users."

The most hotly anticipated procedure is the online tax return initiative. This project will allow businesses and citizens to submit their tax and VAT returns online. A trial group of businesses is testing this tool, which may be the first of its kind in public administration. ADIE has also begun a study on the establishment of 'e-gov points', which will offer information points on government services, and assistance in the use of online services. An analysis of answers to the questionnaires addressed to various key contacts (see annex) reveals the following:

- The structure and accessibility of the site are highly appreciated.
- The initiative is seen to have only partially achieved its objectives, due to lack of awareness of the website and the low literacy rate of the target audience. However, according to Olivier Sagna, administrator of the CODESRIA programme, "The objective to make all information available to citizens and organizations to enable them to carry out a number of administrative procedures has been fully met with the procedural forms and all their accompanying resources."
- Impact on the specific target groups is regarded as mixed. In fact, several people believe that the majority of Senegalese are yet to be made aware of the initiative.

During the interviews it transpired that not only do the majority of people not know the site exists but that more importantly, people are not accustomed to searching the Internet for information about documents they need to provide. They prefer to travel to get information. The site does not have an audio version of the procedures in the main national languages widely used in Senegal, and many people do not understand and/or read French.

The following recommendations have been made for improving and consolidating the administrative procedures website:

- Launching awareness and promotional activities, so that all Senegalese public administration users know about the site's existence and know that information on any administrative procedure can be accessed;
- Regularly updating the forms to incorporate amendments or new procedures;
- Creating a glossary explaining all the complex terms in legal and administrative jargon;
- Implementing a number of procedures for which application and delivery could take place electronically;
- Implementing a number of procedures, particularly those regarding payment of taxes and fees, or obligatory tax returns, which could be done in full online;
- Launching a major marketing campaign on television, radio channels and in the press about this site;
- Creating public points of access with approved facilitators;
- Promoting literacy in the country.

### **5.6.2. Internet portal on decentralization and local development in Senegal**

The portal, <http://www.sendeveloppementlocal.com>, was set up in May 2006 by the organization Net Interactif Multimédia in Ouakam Cité Asecna, Dakar. The organization specializes in managing content and studies on ICT, decentralization and local development.

The initiative aims to gradually raise awareness among Senegalese Internet users and citizens about the issues and challenges of decentralization and local development. The objective is to aggregate information on local communities, projects and programmes, and also on NGOs, in order to offer a cross-sector vision of local development.

Local elected officials, citizens, NGOs, various projects and programmes, along with key decision makers, form the specific target groups of this initiative, which covers the whole of Senegal. The initiative aims to become the leading portal for decentralization and local development, in order to encourage good practices in governance. On completion, the developer of the initiative plans to enable all local authorities in Senegal to have a website or presentation page on the portal, to provide local news and to receive feedback on people's needs.

### 5.6.3. The Forum Civil website in Senegal

Forum Civil (<http://www.forumcivil.sn>) is a very active civil society association in Senegal, set up in January 1993 on the basis of a manifesto containing eleven guiding principles inspiring the association's work. It works to:

- Promote global and participatory democracy in all its dimensions — political, social, economic and cultural;
- Bring about a new concept of citizenship, establishing an active and responsible citizenry whose aspirations are taken into account by decision makers, and to demand respect for the principle of accountability;
- Promote transparency, good governance and anti-corruption measures;
- Value national expertise and a better consideration of the objective technical dimension in decision-making.

The Forum Civil website went live in 2001. The site aims to raise awareness among Internet users in general and citizens in particular about promoting good governance and fighting against corruption. The organization believes that citizens must take on the fight against corruption. To help them, it

provides materials on the site to enable comprehensive monitoring by citizens.

Forum Civil carries out this monitoring work at all tiers of government, including local authorities, and public and semi-public enterprises. It covers all regions of Senegal, with decentralized branches, and was accepted in 2000 by the organization Transparency International as its Senegalese division. The Forum Civil site includes web 2.0 tools that enable citizens to ask questions more easily about good governance and combating corruption.

Updating the information is one of the organization's challenges. It also plans to develop a system for internal communication between the organization's different branches in all regions of Senegal, to achieve a better way of exchanging information. An analysis of the questionnaires given to the key contacts has established the following main points:

- The initiative is limited in the achievement of its objectives because of a lack of regular updating of the site's information.
- With regard to impact on the specific target groups, the people interviewed believe that there has been a positive change. Corruption is gaining ground, but Forum Civil's supervisory role is praised.
- Interaction with users of the site remains minimal.

## **Box 6. e-Participation and other ICT initiatives in Senegal**

### **The Assises Nationales website**

ICTs have been widely used as part of the Assises Nationales (national conferences) organized by civil society and political opposition parties in Senegal.<sup>26</sup> The general objective of these national conferences is to find a mutually agreeable, global, effective and lasting solution to the ethical, political, economic, social and cultural problems ravaging the country. This organization has a website which provides regular updates on the progress of work in Senegal and abroad. Calls for contributions are launched via the site, on which discussion forums are open. Given the reluctance of the political authorities in power to recognize these conferences, major events are regularly broadcast by video online.

### **Mobile phone usage strike**

Very recently, consumer groups from two organizations, the Senegalese Association of Consumers (ASCOSEN, Association des Consommateurs du Sénégal) and the National Union of Senegalese Consumers (UNCS, Union nationale des consommateurs du Sénégal) led a campaign against the RUTEL law – the Relevance on the use of or access to public telecommunications networks (relevancy sur l'utilisation ou l'accès aux réseaux de télécommunications publiques). This followed the application of law 2008-46 of 3 September 2008 instituting a tax on the use of or access to public telecommunications networks. This translated into the addition of 2 percent on the price of telecommunications services, exclusive of VAT. To demonstrate their disapproval of this law, which they saw as illegal, the consumer groups lobbied consumers to refrain from using the telephone, and from carrying out any transaction that would require paying a telecommunications bill, subscription, purchase or credit distribution from 8 am to 3 pm on 6 February 2009. SMS was widely used to relay this information, but this day of mobilization was not a great success, given the fairly short preparation period.



## 6

# Summary of Initiatives Analysed

The six countries covered by this study have all placed national and local administration high on the agenda of their e-governance initiatives. Online administration represents a preferred vehicle for preparing citizens for effective participation, by providing them with real-time information. But true citizen participation using new technologies is in its infancy, if we look at the initiatives implemented by the government to guarantee interaction with citizens, or those implemented by civil society stakeholders to ensure that citizens are able to monitor and contribute to better decision-making and better political governance.

## 6.1. Notable advances

### 6.1.1. E-administration and e-services

Firstly, the initiatives studied indicate a willingness to address the problems linked to democratic governance and in particular to transform relationships between the government and users. At the centre of this new approach, ICT plays a crucial role. Thus, we see firstly an improvement in the quality of public service and the development of online administration, by providing information to citizens via the ministries' websites, for example, but also by enabling citizens to carry out administrative procedures online.

These tools exist in all countries, from Burkina Faso (portal of the Central Directorate for Public Contracts, and other ministerial websites) to Côte d'Ivoire (SIMGOUV portal), from the most advanced examples in Senegal (administrative procedures site), to Cape Verde (the unique portal Maison du Citoyen). They have made service delivery more effective (with even an integrated public/private provision in Cape Verde), and brought administrations closer to citizens, therefore developing trust relationships, a prerequisite for true participation. Similarly, by offering information and online services, transparency has been strengthened, as the public contracts portal in Burkina Faso illustrates.

### **6.1.2. Participation**

Some of these initiatives are accompanied by measures that foster a dialogue between citizens and government. This is the case in Côte d'Ivoire, for example, where an interactive call centre and a 'forum for national dialogue' have been established. However, it is more within civil society that tools have been put in place to contribute to better governance through the use of ICTs. In Senegal, the Forum Civil and consumer groups such as ASCOSEN, for example, have websites that represent spaces for expression and dialogue for the members of these organizations, who use them to present a range of

analyses and publications relating to transparency, good governance and anti-corruption measures. Citizens can give their views on the publications and the articles hosted there, but the feedback received remains limited, particularly because some are unable to use the existing tools or are unaware they exist. In Nigeria, the work of WANGONet can be described in the same way. The merits of the Abidjan.net site have been recognized.

Similarly, blogs are developing in the region (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire), unlocking new perspectives for channels of expression and participation. There, too, it is a matter of providing information of general interest to citizens and of opening up spaces for dialogue, encouraging reaction to democratic governance issues.

### **6.1.3. Capacity-building**

This study has also highlighted the need for support through training and raising awareness of these themes, at all levels of society. It is a matter, on the one hand, of combating illiteracy and encouraging the greatest number of people to adopt ICTs, including the underprivileged (e.g., the CICs in rural areas in Ghana); and, on the other hand, of supporting research and training (including for executives and within the administration), to which, for example, the Centre for E-governance in Ghana seeks to contribute.

## 6.1.4. Mobile phones

Finally, in all countries, the initiatives studied are accompanied by components that aim to facilitate access to ICT, thereby reducing the digital divide within populations, such as the ADEN project in Burkina Faso, the Maison du Citoyen in Cape Verde or the CICs in Ghana.

It is important to highlight the increased use of the mobile phone and SMS for government-citizen interaction, and for social and political mobilizations in all of the countries studied. This is in contrast with the cost of infrastructure for access to the Internet, the favoured vehicle used. Moreover, the main beneficiaries targeted by current initiatives have limited access to the Internet.

Consequently, the mobile phone, particularly SMS, plays a fundamental role in the growing e-participation seen in West Africa. In Senegal, Nigeria (socio-political mobilization through the use of SMS and the mobile phone), and Cape Verde (use of the mobile phone to access administrative information from the Maison du Citoyen), its use is on the rise. Use of this technology has meant that initiatives have been able to boast better results in terms of impact on the target populations, thanks to their user friendliness and low cost. In Nigeria, the national council has identified a decrease in the crime rate as partially due to the proactive Police Diary programme.

In short, e-participation via mobile phone is becoming something of a reality. And we may, furthermore, be tempted to develop the use of television and radio in e-participation. Their role remains central and prominent in the promotion of citizen participation in governance today.

This study has described innovative initiatives that pave the way for new forms of citizen participation through new technologies, but these improvements must not hide the fact that citizens do not yet have access to all the information needed and the fact that the level of control they can exercise on governments remains low. Although encouraging, these initiatives currently demonstrate only fledgling e-participation and do not address the major challenges in this field.

## 6.2. Major challenges

### 6.2.1. E-administration and e-services

Although governments, as we have seen, have demonstrated a genuine willingness to bring government closer to citizens, the availability of the means for communicating and sharing they have set up do not automatically lead to their use by citizens. The lack of sufficient interactivity between government and citizens is criticised in the initiatives under the competence of public authorities. As spaces for dialogue, the structure of the web portals does not encourage open

involvement of citizens in the process of drafting policies, especially in decision-making. Furthermore, there are few initiatives that provide a space for forums, and those that do exist have serious coordination and moderation problems.

The question of the impact of the contributions and opinions on political decisions is also raised. The low rate of information feedback reduces the use of these interfaces; the emails sent via the correspondence interfaces are too often left unanswered. This situation is explained in part by the lack of human resources allocated to the day-to-day management of the websites.

Furthermore, despite the level achieved gradually through the integration of public services (in the case of Cape Verde), a focus on the citizen is yet to be properly established, which requires a new institutional culture in the public administration. This means that the citizen's capacity for intervention to influence the public sphere using the tools put in place is very low, even non-existent.

## 6.2.2. Participation

Civil society stakeholders face difficulties in their efforts to promote citizen participation in governance through ICTs, despite the importance of this issue. The few initiatives that do

exist suffer from a lack of interactivity. Furthermore, the initiatives of associations or NGOs are largely reliant on the availability of resources offered by the sponsors approached. Many interesting initiatives experience occasional or frequent interruptions, such as what has happened to the anti-corruption tools introduced in the Nigerian initiatives, due to the lack of financial resources.

## 6.2.3. Capacity-building

Adoption of ICTs and the resources described earlier is still very weak. Literacy rates are still very low, and it is even more difficult to have access to these tools, since content is usually only available in Western languages. One of the limitations of the ADIE project in Senegal is, for instance, the lack of an audio version in local languages.

Similarly, the digital culture is not yet developed. As described in the case of the public contracts portal in Burkina Faso, for example, there is resistance to e-administration, which is still seen as rather unreliable.

These initiatives suffer from a lack of distribution and are often completely unknown to stakeholders. To foster greater use of e-government services available, there is a pressing need to better inform citizens about services and the way in which they can be used.

## 6.2.4. Communications infrastructure

This study has highlighted the crucial infrastructure challenges for the target countries. The cost of e-governance tools continues to put a sharp brake on the development of initiatives encouraging citizen participation via ICTs, although mobile phones are drawing an interesting response.

## 6.3. New ideas to deal with obstacles

To deal with these challenges and limitations, a number of ideas have been put forward. These are being rolled out firstly through major projects at government level. The implementation of an appropriate legal framework regarding the validity of electronic documents, electronic signatures and protection of personal data, planned in the majority of countries and promoted by CEDEAO and UEMOA, will undoubtedly encourage the development of projects and experiences offering possibilities for direct transactions between citizens and the public administration.

The first generation of e-governance applications (those we are seeing now) are mainly limited to the diffusion of information, sometimes with downloading possibilities available. But there is clearly a lack of interactivity and control and influence by the citizen over

the actions and decisions of government officers, a problem that is being now addressed. As Cheikhou Ly, Director of External Relations and Communication at ADIE in Senegal, says regarding the administrative procedures site: "After this initial phase of the administrative procedures project, we are going to offer access to a wider audience, by making CD-ROMs, USB sticks and interactive terminals available to them, so that they can access information on the procedures more easily."

The Senegalese willingness has already been demonstrated by the trial of interactive terminals which, thanks to a touch screen and good use of images, will now make procedures more accessible to a larger audience, including those with disabilities. These will be available online or locally, with the possibility of printing out forms. These terminals will soon be made available to the public. In Cape Verde, Maison du Citoyen will be enhanced with additional new services. More generally, the use of the mobile phone for accessing administrative services should be built on, as Maison du Citoyen has already illustrated.

The strengthening of democracy requires greater citizen involvement and the inclusion of their concerns and suggestions when drafting public policy. The same is true for the strengthening the work of African CSOs working in the field of governance.

## 7

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## 7.1. Conclusion

This study has sought to provide a sober perspective on the status of e-participation in West Africa. The initiatives analysed enable us to draw the initial conclusion that e-governance is progressing well in Africa, where it has proven its relevance and effectiveness. Although this concept initially emerged in the region through the increased use of ICT within government and the static provision of online information, examples of e-participation are gradually emerging. But the factors which should be promoting citizen participation in decision-making through the technical tools put in place by governments (such as government websites) are not fully instituted and developed. From this perspective, e-participation is still in its infancy. Furthermore, if we consider e-participation more broadly, particularly citizen initiatives to improve decision-making and governance through the use of ICTs, few initiatives exist, although they are also fairly undeveloped.

### Key examples by country

Cape Verde has made a good start with e-participation with its Maison du Citoyen concept. Maison du Citoyen

aims to integrate public services in one which could be replicated in other countries.

The Burkinabe and Ghanaian governments have implemented initiatives for improving citizens' access to ICT services. The portal site set up in Burkina Faso aims to make public calls for tender available to all and to enhance transparency.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the implementation of social media as a way of encouraging dialogue between citizens on important questions is remarkable.

In Nigeria, Police Diary is an original interactive tool that responds to one of the citizens' basic concerns: security and the performance of the national police. This radio programme offers the public a way of communicating with the Nigerian police with the aim of reducing the gulf between the police and the general public, helping to reform the Nigerian police and promoting better relationships between the police and citizens, consequently giving the police the opportunity to be more effective, responsible and proactive.

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general public, helping to reform the Nigerian police and promoting better relationships between the police and citizens, consequently giving the police the opportunity to be more effective, responsible and proactive.

With its site on administrative procedures, Senegal has in a remarkable way provided an opportunity for quicker and easier access to administrative services. This site is growing steadily, and now includes online submissions like those of the Maison du Citoyen portal in Cape Verde, and should even better integrate the vehicles of e-participation in the coming months.

The use of ICT in the activities of civil society stakeholders to help strengthen governance is progressing, as seen in the activities surrounding the website of the Senegalese national conferences, citizen contributions on the Abidjan.net websites, a number of bloggers from the Ivoire-Blog blog platform, the anti-corruption tools developed in Nigeria by WANGONet, and the union or protest mobilization through the use of SMS. In addition to these 'new' media, radio has found a new voice in promoting citizen participation in governance.

## **Objectives**

Generally, the main objectives of the e-governance initiatives considered in this report are:

- Access to information;
- Service provision that facilitates greater transparency and effectiveness;
- Local governance and decentralization;
- Dialogue between government and non-governmental stakeholders;
- Sharing knowledge and training.

The use of ICT facilitates and strengthens citizen participation in various fields, as the variety of initiatives described illustrates, despite the huge challenges faced by the target countries. Although it is currently on a small scale, in a few projects, this form of participation is nevertheless a reality in West Africa today.

Similarly, this study has underlined the limited nature of this participation. There are, as we have seen, channels that enable governments, institutions and CSOs to provide information to citizens, but also to consult them on specific issues. However, the low level of citizen participation should be noted, particularly participation in decision-making. According to the model set out in the first part of this study, it appears that although the two first stages (information and consultation) are being implemented, the possibility of genuine dialogue with governments and influence on public policies is yet to be achieved. To achieve this, African societies should give more

consideration to participation as a component of citizenship. The study has not made a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the initiatives presented, notably with regard to the effective use of the tools identified, as experienced by citizens. It has, however, highlighted some of the limitations of these tools, and their added value, and has set out some ideas.

Although a number of countries have demonstrated that, despite the scarcity of financial resources, it is possible to make solid progress in e-governance (initiatives such as Maison du Citoyen in Cape Verde, for example), two essential stages are above all necessary for making real progress in this area. Firstly, a strong political will at the national level is needed to tackle the challenges of poverty and development, and to combat inequalities in all forms, particularly inequality between men and women. Secondly, a multi-partner vision (government, private sector, civil society) of the implementation of basic infrastructure, geared towards poverty alleviation, is required.

The high costs of creating a robust infrastructure capable of acting as the backbone for e-participation helps to explain the limited scale of e-governance. The explosion of more accessible mobile technologies, such as telephony, opens the door for new ideas.

## 7.2. Recommendations

The various initiatives evaluated have highlighted some successes and also some major challenges.

Despite the progress made in citizen participation and e-governance, there is a long way to go in enabling all citizens to participate in decision-making. It is, then, crucial for national governments to develop citizen-centric, citizen-oriented policies that include the most vulnerable and the most marginalized, including women and young people. This approach involves:

- Strengthening the political will to adopt this new vision of democratic administration of the state and to address the ensuing changes;
- Developing inclusive public policies;
- Creating a new institutional culture in public administration and consolidating local governance;
- Developing an integrated approach that improves the value of the services provided to citizens and to businesses.
- Developing services for the most marginalized members of society.
- Integrating government processes and services using ICT.

Of the challenges ahead, those linked to human development are crucial, particularly the improvement of human

resources capacities at all levels. This includes:

- Emphasizing schooling and literacy efforts;
- Reducing the gender gap in education;
- Promoting national and local languages;
- Providing support for training and access to knowledge;
- Combating economic and social inequalities as well as poverty;
- Encouraging the establishment of social protection services designed for the poorest and most marginalized populations.

To tackle these challenges, raising ICT awareness is a key element. In order to achieve this, awareness of the implications and specific challenges of extending the use of ICT needs to be more widespread, particularly at the:

- Political and legislative level: the laws and rules relating to citizens' access to public information, the legal framework governing universal service;
- Economic level: the cost of access, the impact of the increasing influence of telecommunications companies over national development and the impact on the environment,<sup>27</sup>

- Social and technical level: learning technical skills, adopting them and adopting innovations in usage;
- Organizational level: promoting a culture of collaboration and dialogue, improving decision-making processes, searching for collective efficiency and effectiveness;
- Access level: promoting universal access, particularly taking into account solutions and options adapted for the most disadvantaged members of society and rural areas;
- Public information level: raising awareness about the use of ICT to improve the management and coordination of government activities and of all institutions linked to the state;
- Public media level: supporting the commitment of the media and of civil society to the use of ICT in general, and to the channels of participation in particular.

Other specific recommendations are as follows:

- Promoting model initiatives, some of which have been identified in this study, particularly the Maison du Citoyen (Cape Verde) and the SMS request system (Nigeria). For each of these initiatives, there is therefore scope for carrying out in-depth studies to confirm the actual

impact and benefits for democratic governance.

- Promoting the use of the mobile phone in participation: given the current forecast for GSM cellular phone use, particularly SMS, it is clear that any solutions envisaged should favour this means of communication.
- Promoting access to public services in community ICT access points.
- Supporting and promoting research in e-participation, not only in West Africa but also across the whole continent. It is by producing knowledge, methods and good practices that the reality and mechanisms of participation are better understood, opening up to new ideas.
- Giving more information and raising awareness on e-governance and e-participation tools that have been set up. Citizen participation in e-governance must be explained and understood by both citizens and national leaders. The countries of this region face several competing priorities: poverty, lack of infrastructure, access to health care etc. It is therefore of fundamental importance that the benefits of implementing channels for participation are demonstrated, as part of the overall drive to promote human development, enabling as many people as possible to express

their needs and focusing services on the most needy, thereby adopting a collaborative approach to respond to current challenges. Promoting access to ICT and e-governance has thus been recognized as critical to achieving the MDGs.<sup>28</sup>

These recommendations address a wide and diverse audience. For PIWA and UNDP they signal routes for future action in the framework of applying e-governance in West Africa.

## 8 Annexes

### 8.1. Annex 1. The contexts of democratic governance, ICTs and e-governance in the target countries

#### 8.1.1. Burkina faso: a country of realism

In 1991 Burkina Faso (meaning 'men of integrity'), adopted its new constitution by referendum, establishing a multiparty democracy as its political system. Political life is run by several political parties and local, legislative and presidential elections are organized regularly, although being sometimes disputed, as in the majority of newly democratic African countries. Civil society is also very active and is present in the different development sectors, including ICTs. The 'national good governance plan' recognizes the existence of civil society as a component of governance, alongside other national stakeholders.

A plan for developing the national information and communications infrastructure was adopted in 2000. Its operational strategy was adopted in 2004, which had the objective of using ICTs, old and new, to combat poverty. It is called the national cyber-strategy and is structured around six themes:

- Theme 1: The integration of new objectives linked to e-governance in the national good governance

plan and as part of the strategic framework to combat poverty.

- Theme 2: The promotion of partnership between the public and private sectors and civil society, and the strengthening of international cooperation in the field of new ICTs.
- Theme 3: Implementing the legal framework of the information society and a security policy.
- Theme 4: Strengthening national expertise in the field of new technologies and promoting e-employment and a local service industry based on these technologies.
- Theme 5: The implementation of a communications strategy in order to encourage the commitment of members of society to the objectives of the plan for developing the national information and communications infrastructure.
- Theme 6: Setting up a coordinated movement in the use of new ICTs, through the integration of e-governance in policies and sector-specific plans.

#### Status of e-governance

As we have noted, e-governance is on the front line of Burkina Faso's cyber-strategy. The strategy for implementing the plan to develop the information and communications infrastructure

defines electronic governance as "leadership and administration using the Internet and other ICTs, improving effectiveness and monitoring in management, improving the services offered to citizens, businesses and the government, while encouraging the

development of an information society and the process of democratization." Some specific objectives have been outlined for e-governance, following four new themes corresponding to the four themes of the strategic framework to combat poverty.

### **Box A.1. Some e-governance objectives in Burkina Faso**

By way of illustration, the 'Promoting Good Governance' theme of the strategic framework to combat poverty provides the following objectives and specific actions for e-governance:

#### **Objective 1: Political governance**

- Strengthening the capacities of the public media (radio, television, press), particularly through their interconnection with the Réseau National de l'Information et de la Communication (National Information and Communications Network, RENICOM), to improve the distribution of information;
- Producing national language versions of multimedia content, electronic magazines, radio and television broadcasts and information, and raising awareness of legislative and regulatory texts, human rights and civic education;
- Using ICTs to improve the visibility of political parties and citizen participation in political debates; strengthening and boosting the credibility of the electoral system;
- Using ICTs to improve the visibility of government work;
- Using ICTs for building the capacity and improving the visibility of parliament, consultative bodies and mediation;
- Using ICTs to build the capacities and the effectiveness of the judicial system;
- Using ICTs for building the capacity and improving the visibility of Burkina Faso's diplomatic representations abroad;
- Using ICTs for building the capacity and improving the visibility of CSOs.

## **Objective 2: Administrative governance**

- Using ICTs to improve the effectiveness of government personnel;
- Using ICTs to improve access to the services offered by the government, in order to improve the quality of interactions with citizens, and the transparency and integrity of the government, thus also helping to reduce the cost of the transactions;
- Using ICTs to improve the management of government personnel.

## **Objective 3: Economic governance**

- Using ICTs to strengthen the instruments and mechanisms for managing the economy and making reliable information available to bodies that monitor and run the economy, in order to improve the rationality and relevance of decision-making and the effectiveness of public information;
- Using ICTs to improve transparency and monitoring in the management of budgets and accounts, management of international financial aid, and anti-corruption measures;
- Using ICTs to strengthen anti-corruption bodies;
- Strengthening the capacities of the economic operators using e-governance in order to improve their competitiveness and productivity;
- Using ICTs to reduce delays and costs of commercial transactions and provide information on these transactions.

## **Objective 4: Local governance**

- Using ICTs to strengthen the instruments and mechanisms of governance and management of the local economy;
- Using ICTs to improve the visibility of local authorities and development activities, land management and municipal planning, transparency and monitoring of the management of budgets and accounts, management of international financial aid, access to the services offered by the local authorities.

For more information, see <http://www.mpt.bf/cyberstrategie/strategie.pdf>.

In order to implement the objectives and themes identified, the cyber-strategy sets out six priority programmes and six tools for monitoring these programmes: creating a favourable environment (infrastructure, legal framework and national expertise), e-services for the development of rural areas, e-government, e-commerce, e-education, e-health.

E-governance in Burkina Faso has three key aims: e-administration for greater government efficiency, e-services for responding to the needs of citizens and users, e-government for bringing citizens closer to their leaders. All of these are underpinned by an environment that encourages their development (i.e., through infrastructure and legal and regulatory framework).

The result is the creation of ministerial websites which function as tools for supporting government communication, the establishment of numerous education, health programmes, and various other sectors of development which have clear use of ICTs, and the implementation of projects with a national scope for improving connectivity and promoting services.

### **8.1.2. Cape Verde: a model example?**

The Republic of Cape Verde is often cited as an example in the application

of democratic principles. After its single-party system for the 15 years following independence in 1975, Cape Verde has restored a multi-party system, formed a democratic constitution, and has held a series of elections since 1991 (legislative, presidential etc.) with remarkable stability: since 5 July 1975, Independence Day, Cape Verde has had only three presidents.

Since 1998, major efforts have been made in Cape Verde for the effective use of ICTs in public administration. Several information systems have been developed with a philosophy of total integration. There are plans to promote the monitoring of government initiatives and those of local communities, illustrating citizen participation in public governance and interaction between central and local authorities.

The country recently graduated from the group of LDCs to that of moderately developed countries. Before independence, the telecommunications sector in Cape Verde was managed by a Portuguese company, Radio Marconi. After independence, the country felt the need and desire to develop its telecommunications infrastructure. A regulatory agency was set up in 1976 with the role of preparing a national strategy for the telecommunications sector, and defining and distributing frequencies. In 1981, the first national public telecommunications company was set up through specific agreements signed with Portugal.

In Cape Verde, the rate of mobile phone use is far higher (41 percent) than that of the Internet (13.9 percent). The mobile phone therefore appears to be an attractive channel for e-governance initiatives. Since the number of households with a computer is very low, making Internet services available on mobile phones could have high added value. This is the justification for the main mobile phone operator selling Internet access via mobile phones since the second half of 2008. Some Cape Verde institutions have already made their web services accessible to mobile phone users.

### **Status of e-governance**

The history of e-governance in Cape Verde began with the reform of its fiscal services. Until 1991, the tax system in Cape Verde was slow and clumsy, leading to a high rate of non-payment of taxes by both individuals and companies. It was in order to resolve these problems and to set up a more equitable tax system that the government placed a particular focus on fiscal reform. Work began in 1992 to create a suitable institutional and legal environment for the financial management of the state.

In this context, and as part of efforts to resolve the problems encountered in implementing these reforms, the government created the Unidade de Reforma da Administração Financeira do Estado (Public Finance Management Reform Group, [RAFE]) in 1998. This

unit is part of the Ministry of Finance and is responsible for creating modern information systems and technological platforms by relying on the country's human resources, to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration.

Since it began, RAFE has aimed to integrate information systems and has adopted an effective management approach with a team of strongly motivated employees. RAFE has implemented the ICT infrastructure in Cape Verde and has created several local area networks (LAN) that have subsequently been interconnected in a national business-wide area network (WAN). The success of the projects set up by the government body has led to its tacit recognition as an important nucleus for promoting technological development and the use of ICTs in Cape Verdean public administration. RAFE was closed in 2003 and was replaced by a new institution, but its activities were the springboard for a new era in governance and public administration in Cape Verde. In 2002, for example, the infrastructure set up by RAFE enabled the interconnection of 56 public buildings with 53 servers and 2,300 users.

After the elections in 2001, a new government programme was approved for 2001–2005. One of the main focuses of interest of this programme was the drafting and implementation of policies in the telecommunications sector, specifically in the field of ICTs,

including wider use of the Internet. Thus, to reform public finance management, the government has outlined the following stages: widening the government communications network; training human resources in the use of the tools developed and adopted; and integrating databases and applications designed to improve public management, both financial and administrative.

The government is fully aware of the important role played by RAFE in modernizing the country's public administration. It also recognizes the need for a better institutional environment for wider intervention by this organization, in light of the government's programme to promote the development of ICTs. In this context, it set up a committee in 2003, Comité Interministerial para Inovação e Sociedade da Informação (Inter-ministerial Committee for Innovation and the Information Society, [CIISI]), under the prime minister's direct supervision, to serve as the central organization coordinating all government activities related to e-government. The three main roles of this committee are to:

- Propose an integrated strategy for innovation, the information society and e-government;
- Approve the e-government strategy and programme;
- Approve the government remits of ministries and public bodies.

In the decree setting up CIISI in June 2003, the government recognized e-government as a great opportunity to bring about changes in the organizational structure of the State and to modernize public administration, improving the services offered to citizens, reducing expenses and improving productivity. As an inter-ministerial committee, the CIISI set up an information society operational unit, Núcleo Operacional para a Sociedade da Informação (NOSI), which includes RAFE, with the aim of creating institutional conditions for major cross-sector results. In addition, NOSI has been given these specific duties:

- Preparing and presenting procedures for the information society strategic plan;
- Preparing an evaluation report on ICTs in Cape Verde;
- Organizing a national forum on partnerships in the information society.

Setting up a national plan for the information society and an action plan for e-government are the two main remits of the CIISI. As part of these duties, it prepared two documents that outline a plan for the information society and e-government in Cape Verde for 2005-2010: The Information Society Strategic Plan (ISSP) and the Electronic Government Action Plan (EGAP). These documents were drafted and approved by the government in October 2005.

Aside from this, specific projects have been recommended with specific time limits. As an operational branch of the CIISI, NOSI has responsibility for ensuring the drafting of these documents. RAFE and NOSI have achieved an immense task in creating the necessary ICT infrastructure in Cape Verde and have developed major information systems for the various sectors of public administration. The current ICT infrastructure in Cape Verde interconnects 90 public administration units, 4,500 users and 3,900 computers. It is a unique network within the government for all national public administration, including schools, the state university, public bodies, municipal authorities, ministries etc.

Several services are available through the integration of the public administration information system. These services have a citizen-oriented focus, the idea being that the citizen could use just one institution to access all the public administration services they need. This access is made possible through several networks including including the web, mobile telephony and SMS. This institution, Maison du Citoyen, is an initiative of the ministry to reform the state and public administration, in cooperation with NOSI. It has been discussed in detail earlier in this document.

### **8.1.3. Côte d'Ivoire: gradual emergence from political crisis**

From independence in 1960 until the

1990s, Côte d'Ivoire had been a model of integration at the sub regional level. Indigenous and foreign communities coexisted harmoniously. The world's leading cocoa bean producer, it was one of the regional economic powers, and attracted immigrants from across all regions of West Africa. At that time, the country was a true model of stability in a region experiencing various conflicts. But the autocratic government of the Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, [PDCI]) faced increasing challenges when the economic situation deteriorated during the 1980s.

The Ivoirian democratic process, which began in the 1990s with the establishment of a multi-party system, continued unbroken until the military coup of 24th December 1999. With the military's arrival in power, the constitution of 3 November 1960 which formed the country's institutional architecture was suspended and all associated institutions were dissolved.

A constitutional referendum held on the 24th July 2000 led to the adoption of a new constitution which instituted the presidential system. The president is elected by direct universal suffrage for a term of five years, renewable once. Legislative power is held by the national assembly, which is elected for five years by direct universal suffrage. The new constitution provided for a constitutional council which judges the constitutionality of laws and has competence for disputed elections.

There is also provision for an economic and social council, with advisory competencies.

In September 2002, there was a coup d'état in Abidjan that very quickly became a rebellion. On 24 January 2003, the Linas-Marcoussis agreement was signed by the main political parties in Paris, and a prime minister was mutually agreed on and appointed. Inter-Ivoirian dialogue, referred to as 'direct dialogue', which began in 2007 in Ouagadougou, led to the signing of the Ouagadougou agreement on 4 March 2007. The presidential elections scheduled for November 2009 are one of the key elements of this agreement.

Against this backdrop of crisis, the status of ICTs reveals that the field has been making progress. The SAT3 international submarine cable project, effective since July 2002, which runs along the coast of Africa and links Europe to India and Malaysia, has increased the capacity and performance of the whole system. A national infrastructure development plan for information and communication for the 2000-2005 period was developed in 2000 under the guidance of the Agence des Télécommunications de Côte d'Ivoire (Côte d'Ivoire Telecommunications Agency, [ATCI]). The implementation of the Conseil National des Autoroutes de l'Information (National Council for Information Superhighways, [CNAI]) should help to accelerate the development process. The aim is to define an adapted, favourable regulatory framework, specifically inspired by

successful experiences around the world. Furthermore, since the sector has no restrictions, its development on the basis of healthy competition would appear to be assured.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the momentum telecommunications brings to the economy is clear in both formal and informal sectors. The telecommunications market is today shared between the basic telephone services (landlines and cellular phones), independent radio-electrical networks authorized and controlled by the Côte d'Ivoire telecommunications agency (ATCI), the Internet and other value-added services. Mobile telephony has experienced remarkable growth. With 1.5 million subscribers and a turnover of 305 billion F CFA<sup>29</sup> in 2003, the mobile phone today represents around 10 million subscribers and a turnover of around 450 billion F CFA (ATCI). The number of Internet users is around 1 million. The ICT sector represents around 6 percent of total GDP.

Access to ICTs in Côte d'Ivoire is not yet democratized. The majority of infrastructure and services are concentrated in the economic capital, Abidjan. This is a situation of digital inequality between regions. However, the national landline telephony operator (Côte d'Ivoire Télécom) has for the past few years harmonized its pricing (landline rates are 50 F CFA/ min across the whole country). This harmonization is to the benefit of other towns, which will be able to benefit from lower-cost Internet access.

## Status of e-governance

E-governance, when developed more fully, will become even more intertwined in the future in Côte d'Ivoire, whatever the actions carried out. For the moment, the initiatives are in the field of e-administration. The term e-governance features highly in the majority of official discourse, since the political will already exists, with an entire ministerial department dedicated to new ICTs. The role of this ministry is to promote new ICTs and modernize practices and procedures in all sectors. The Ivoirian Government is therefore politically committed to making ICTs a tool for development and performance. However, the concept of e-governance takes time to become a reality.

Few references are made to e-governance in the national information and communication infrastructure (NICI) development plan. However, this document provides for: "the use of new ICTs to improve the public authorities' services to citizens and to companies," and "the use of new ICTs by companies and CSOs to accomplish their tasks." Its strategic objectives are as follows:

- Familiarizing Ivoirian society with new ICTs;
- Implementing promotional measures, incentive programmes for developing new ICTs;
- Building capacities in new ICTs and transforming the education system using new ICTs;

- Widening access to information infrastructure, and to the Internet in particular in towns, rural areas and underprivileged areas;
- Developing a national broadband infrastructure and information and communication applications which rely on Internet technologies and interconnection to global infrastructure;
- Improving public services using new ICTs, overhauling the government's paper-based processes of communicating with citizens;
- Providing national information content;
- Setting the standards, rules and good practices for operating and using new ICTs;
- Setting the legal and regulatory framework adapted to new ICTs and to e-commerce;
- Making the information and communication infrastructure secure;
- Supporting the democratic process through the use of new ICTs.

E-governance is therefore clearly identified in a number of ways, and the initiatives implemented are illustrations of this fact (two examples being the use of ICTs to bring credibility to the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire, and the establishment of the government multimedia information system, the Centre d'Information Audiotex de la Fonction Publique (Audiotext Civil Service Research Centre)).

## **Box A.2. Further examples of e-governance initiatives in Côte d'Ivoire**

### **Use of ICTs to bring credibility to the electoral process**

The electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire is of capital importance today. Stakeholders agree that elections which are fair, transparent and open are fundamental to resolving the political crisis. In order to ensure the credibility of election results, it is necessary to reduce human interference in the use of ICTs as much as possible.

ICTs already play a fundamental role in identifying the voting public, which leads to the issue of national identity cards and voter cards. The ICT system for managing people's identities has the advantage of being accepted by all. This system will enable forgery-proof biometric identity and voter cards to be obtained within very short timeframes. According to the country's Independent Electoral Commission (CEI), electoral rolls that include photographs of voters will be available online. All citizens and all political parties will be able to participate in validating this list. Each person will be able to verify them and flag any errors for the CEI. According to the directors of the CEI, the ICT system that will be rolled out will enable each citizen to vote anywhere in the country, but only once.

### **The Audiotex public service information centre**

As part of the modernization of its communication system, in 2006 the public service ministry set up an information voice server for civil servants and for the general public. Using this server, it is possible to obtain reliable and up-to-date information on any particular public service by dialling the number 90030316, at a cost of 120 F CFA per minute. This initiative enables information to be centralized and standardized; it also enables a digital administrative record to be set up.

### **Customs services online**

Within the Ministry for Finance and the Economy, the different organizations under its supervision are also encouraged to develop information portals to improve accessibility for economic operators and the general public. The tax, treasury and customs departments all have a website. The customs department's website is currently the most sophisticated and the most interactive. The user can get an online quotation in order to find out the customs clearance costs of a given product.

### **8.1.4. Ghana: a leader in the making yet facing several challenges**

Since the multi-party system was established, Ghana has experienced a democratic tradition of political transition and change. The country has consolidated its democratic foundations through the recent victory of John Atta-Mills (an opposition party candidate in the Democratic National Congress) in the second round of the presidential election of December 2008. Ghana stands out as a country where the political culture is open and where democracy finds full expression. Several achievements help to reinforce this democratic profile: a free press, an independent judiciary, and the protection of civic rights.

Ghana's Government recognizes the vital role played by ICT in the process of governance and accelerating human development; it has prepared the e-Ghana project in order to develop e-governance infrastructure with the aim of strengthening governance. The government has also identified new challenges: combating electronic fraud, accelerating access to ICT, regulating the organizations which govern interaction in the emerging digital space.

Ghana opened up to ICTs in the mid-1990s. The government liberalized the telecommunications sector in 1994. It then adopted a five-year plan for an overall restructuring of the sector, entitled Accelerated Development Programme. Ghana is in some ways a first class hub for international telecommunications and investment in the IT industry, jobs and development, and a leader in transforming Africa through active participation in the information society. It has successfully implemented projects such as a public-private partnership, monitoring a cooperation solution between States,<sup>30</sup> and opening one of the largest Internet cafes in Africa, BusyInternet. The government has also created the National Communications Authority, whose key role is to regulate the telecommunications sector and to implement ICT policy in Ghana. Several government bodies and departments, as well as enterprises, now have websites for distributing information.

Despite this progress in the field of telecommunications, Ghana has its own challenges, the largest being the costs of Internet services, rural areas which appear to be out of reach and the high rate of illiteracy, with close to 40 percent of the population aged over six uneducated.

## **Status of e-governance**

Ghana's ICT strategy paper drafted in 2003, 'Ghana ICT for Accelerated Development Policy', identified 14 strategic pillars for promoting ICT for development. The third key pillar of e-governance aims to facilitate administration and offer services through the promotion of electronic governance and e-government.

The government of Ghana has thus identified the following objectives for achieving e-governance and e-government:

- Reforming civic and public services to improve organizational systems, structures, procedures and processes;
- Addressing the issue of bad professional practices and unproductive and inefficient work, which risks hindering the use of ICT to improve efficiency in service provision, productivity and cost reduction in the civil services and private sector;
- Improving efficiency in the civil services and private sector, and ensuring that they play a better role in socio-economic development at all levels;
- Facilitating the implementation of an efficient intra- and inter-departmental, intersectoral, national and regional communication system, to encourage sufficient feedback

- for the creation of policies and to implement, monitor and evaluate programmes;
- Modernizing the functioning of the civil service through the deployment of ICTs to reduce administrative costs, and improve their effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of services to the public;
- Facilitating the preparation and implementation of a relevant e-government and e-governance strategy in Ghana.

With a view to implementing this policy, which aims to facilitate government administration and service provision, the specific measures and policies to be adopted should identify objectives such as the:

- Improvement of basic IT and professional skills in the civil service and private sector through ongoing training and capacity-building programmes;
- Implementation of different types of government-government, government-private sector and government-citizens e-government initiatives;
- Implementation of e-government programmes and relevant projects at the local level, as part of the Village Information and Communications Infrastructure initiative (VICI), relating to the implementation of

- e-government programmes at local and rural levels.

The government also designed an e-government strategy document in 2005 which outlined the different stages for developing the e-government project. The strategy set out objectives to be achieved in six stages:

1. Firstly, the establishment of an institutional framework, an organization to oversee e-government. This organization reviews government strategy, plans and actions, and supervises their implementation. The government is setting up ICT units in each ministry, department and agency.
2. The second stage is the establishment of a business-style architecture at the government level. This is a framework comprising five interconnected reference models, namely: a performance reference model, a business reference model, a service reference model, a technical reference model and a data reference model.
3. The third stage is the implementation of an e-government communications infrastructure that is reliable, solid and interoperable for networks, equipment, content, online applications and services, and security.
4. The fourth stage is the establishment of a legal and regulatory framework
5. The fifth stage is the willingness to promote the use of ICTs in an effective e-government environment, in order to achieve crucial socio-economic development objectives such as improving governance, reducing poverty, providing basic health services, strengthening education, improving agriculture, establishing a favourable climate for small and medium-sized enterprises and the strengthening of legal and judicial procedures.
6. The sixth and final stage requires the government to encourage active and direct involvement by the private sector in the implementation of e-government.

to support the adoption and implementation of e-government. Access to confidential information and website content must be regulated in order to prevent inappropriate content appearing online. The rights of citizens must be protected and the confidentiality of personal data must be guaranteed.

- In order to help achieve the e-governance project's aims, the World Bank has provided Ghana with \$ 40 million in financial support. Yet despite all these efforts, multiple obstacles and challenges have hindered the full implementation of this strategy.

### **8.1.5. Nigeria wakes up**

Nigeria gained independence in 1960 and became a republic three years later. It is a federation made up of 36 states and its federal capital, Lagos. The political history of this country, which has the largest population in Africa,<sup>31</sup> is marked by the prevalence of the military regimes which have taken power there. Since 1999, although elections are still contested, a wind of pluralist democracy has been blowing through the country. Despite these gradual democratic advances and its mining riches, Nigeria faces various challenges, such as a level of corruption considered one of the highest in the world and a precarious social equilibrium marked in particular by frequent inter-community and religious confrontations. But it is also the second biggest economic power in sub-Saharan Africa, after South Africa. There are various CSOs in the country that campaign, alongside efforts by the federal government, for the emergence of better governance and genuine human and socioeconomic progress.

Internet connections remain slow and expensive in Nigeria, but use of the Internet is gradually growing, through Internet cafes. To date, Nigeria does not have an integrated information and communications policy, but a set of three policies:

- An information policy overseen by the media regulatory body National Media Commission (NMC);

- A telecommunications policy, whose implementation is the responsibility of the telecom regulator, National Communications Commission (NCC);
- An ICT for development plan whose implementation is the responsibility of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA).

According to various key contacts, these three policies can be considered the components of an overall ICT policy. The multiple and fragmented nature of these components are said to adversely affect ICT projects in Nigeria. The ICT for development plan (ICT4D Plan) was finalized in 2008 and aims to use ICTs to implement the federal government's seven-point action plan, and the '20:2020 Vision' with the ultimate goal of achieving the MDGs in Nigeria.<sup>32</sup>

### **Status of e-governance**

Following various actions set up by the NITDA, the federal government has established an original mechanism for addressing e-governance in Nigeria. These are the National eGovernment Strategies (NeGST).

NeGST is a public-private partnership between the government and private sector, and offers a platform for coordinating actions linked to e-governance in Nigeria. As a public-private partnership, the federal government holds 10 percent of the shares in NeGST and this investment is

managed on the government's behalf by NITDA. To date, NeGST has instituted and supported several projects, described below, which are at various stages of implementation.

- e-readiness: a project which aims to create programmes for preparing the civil service for changes linked to the emergence of e-governance. e-parliament: aims to provide a portal through which citizens can interact with their representatives in an ongoing manner. The launch, initially set for July 2008, was postponed several times and has not yet taken place. This situation draws attention to the fact that e-government is in its infancy in Nigeria.
  - e-passport: a Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) project which enables passports to be issued electronically, with minimal human intervention. The fees for preparing passports are paid at a specially designated bank and payment is made electronically, activating the delivery process. This approach promotes transparency and responsibility, since no officer from the NIS handles this money and the costs paid to the bank go directly to the government's account.
  - e-NYSC: a National Youth Service Corps project. This programme was launched recently, and members of the Corps were informed about
  - their duties electronically, instead of having to physically travel to the institution in order to check their duties on a long list affixed to a wall.
  - e-TRCN: a programme which aims to register all teachers, thus creating a database of all Nigerian teachers.
- e-LGA: a project of the federal government secretary's office. Its aim is to transform local government administration in Nigeria. It should be noted that, since 2001, telephone density in Nigeria has increased significantly due to the increase in mobile phone use. Mobile telephony has also strengthened communication capacities among citizens, which has in turn boosted their capacities for organizing and negotiating with the government.
- A perfect example of the use of mobile telephony in the process of negotiating with the government is that of the Nigerian Labour Party Congress, which used SMS messages to mobilize thousands of Nigerians in the main towns to participate in protest marches against the increase in the price of petrol in 2004. Political parties are increasingly using these practices in their communications with activists. The use of the Internet by government bodies is gradually becoming a reality in Nigeria.
- It is true to say that Nigeria does not really take advantage of the different benefits of new ICTs in citizen

participation in governance. And there is no doubt that their increased use in government-citizen interaction, through various channels such as websites, radio, television etc., would enhance the level of transparency in public governance.

### **8.1.6. Senegal: at the forefront of progress?**

In Senegal, democratic pluralism became a reality in 1981. The Republic's institutions are the president, parliament (which comprises two assemblies, the national assembly and the senate), the government, the social and economic council, the constitutional council, the supreme court, the court of auditors and the lower courts and tribunals. The constitution of 7th January 2001 guarantees political parties which disagree with government policy the right to oppose it. The law sets out their status and their rights and duties. The president is elected by direct universal suffrage in a two-round ballot and for seven renewable years. In terms of human rights, Senegal's constitution confirms its commitment to fundamental rights as defined in the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights of 1789 and in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Senegal has several human rights protection associations, such as the Ligue Sénégalaise des Droits de L'homme (Senegalese League of Human Rights), the Senegalese division of

Amnesty International, the Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de L'homme (African Meeting for the Protection of Human Rights), the Institut Africaine pour les Droits de L'homme (African Institute for Human Rights) and the Institut des Droits de L'homme et de la Paix (Institute of Human Rights and Peace). The high number of radio stations and newspapers has led to de facto media pluralism in Senegal. In the space of a decade, the media landscape in Senegal has undergone extremely important developments.

Thanks to the support of UNDP and the World Bank, the process of drafting the Programme National de Bonne Gouvernance (National Good Governance Programme, [PNBG]) began in 1999. Initially entitled the 'Integrated Public Sector Reform Programme', the process was eventually given this new, more unifying name.

PNBG aims to consolidate the democratization process in Senegal and to strengthen the rule of law, as well as the country's capacity for managing development. Its aim is to improve the legitimate and legal exercise of political, economic and administrative authority according to the participation requirements of non-governmental stakeholders, and of transparency and responsibility, effectiveness and the primacy of the law. PNBG has identified good governance problems in several areas. With regard to ICTs, these problems are:

- The anarchic computer systems of some government offices, and the lack of referral by the national organization responsible for running and monitoring IT projects within the government;
- Malfunctions created by the provisions of some external partners, who provide solutions and equipment that are unsuitable, and sometimes even costly for the ministerial department;
- Lack of support resources for the development of IT and ICTs in Senegal as tools for improving the productivity of public services.

In the six components identified and included in the programme, the final section concerns the development of new ICTs (NICT). The programme's implementation is taken into account in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), a framework reference for government's economic policy. Theme 4 of this paper, entitled 'Good governance and decentralised and participatory development', states that the "[g]overnment's strategy, outlined in the national good governance programme (PNBG) and the CFAA-CPAR action plan, aims to consolidate the rule of law in a democratic society, along with effectiveness and transparency in the management of the economy and society. The government undertakes to establish in the mind of each citizen the values and virtues of democratic society, the virtues of peace and stability, and an

environment which promotes productivity and transparent management practices in public and private sectors."

The telecommunications infrastructure in Senegal is at the forefront of progress. It was in 1999 that the operator SONATEL installed its IP infrastructure network, leading to the growth in the number of users. The network links all the country's secondary towns. The control panel dated 30 September 2008 of the Agence de régulation des télécommunications et des Postes (Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Agency, [ARTP]) indicates the following figures: the total fleet of landlines is 244,548, with a negative quarterly net growth of -4.12 percent; mobile telephony continues to grow, with 5,009,960 subscribers across all operators, taking the quarterly growth rate to 6.12 percent and the rate of penetration to 47.35 percent; with regard to Internet access, the overall fleet is 45,391 subscribers to the end of September 2008, with a growth rate of 2.83 percent and a rate of penetration of 0.43 percent. The majority of subscribers, 98.30 percent, use ADSL technology. The legal vacuum related to ICTs which existed in Senegal has been filled by five laws adopted by the parliament in 2008. A coherent and incentivizing overall political framework is therefore set up for the implementation of e-governance and the development of e-participation at the national level.

## **Status of e-governance**

The adoption of e-governance in Senegal is the responsibility of ADIE, which in coordination with various government departments, other government bodies and local authorities runs and promotes a range of activities that enable the government to have a coherent tool for processing and distributing information, and which meets international quality, security, performance and availability standards. Initiatives introduced by other government services are also carried out as part of this overall framework.

Vision e-Sénégal, Senegal's national ICT plan, aims to place the citizen and businesses at the centre of the government's concerns, to enable all citizens to have access to information and to respond to the performance needs of the State and leaders' needs for information leading to decision-making.

Another ambitious project, the computerized administration system, aims to set up a model for managing online processes within the Senegalese administration and the creation of a platform to support this model. This project is part of the general framework of the range of online submissions identified as one of the ADIE's current priorities. It is part of ADIE's overall ambition to make the e-Senegal vision a reality.

Newly emerging e-governance ideas in Senegal are rolled out through the major projects in progress at the major projects in

progress at the government level. The establishment of an appropriate legal framework in the validity of electronic documents, electronic signatures and protection of personal data will undoubtedly encourage the development of these projects.

The establishment of interactive terminals will, thanks to a touch screen and good use of images, make procedures more accessible to a larger audience, including those with disabilities. These will be available online or locally, with the possibility of printing the forms.

## **8.2. Annex 2. Key contacts interviewed**

### **8.2.1. Burkina Faso**

- Issaka Luc Kourouma, Chair of Jardin D'Aden, an association of ADEN centre managers. This organization will ensure the project continues after French cooperation comes to an end.
- Toe Izaï, technical assistant on the ADEN project, Ministry for Postal and Telecommunications.
- Ferdinand Ouedraogo, founding director of the Institut Africaine de Bio-Economie Rurale (African rural bio-economy institute, [IABER]), behind the TV KOODO televised broadcasts.
- Patrick Depecker, representative of the French cooperation team at the ADEN project.

## 8.2.2. Cape Verde

- Fernanda Silva
- Mario Monteiro
- Celestino Mascarenhas, CEO of HDigital Electrónica
- NOSI management

## 8.2.3. Côte d'Ivoire

- Kone Seydou, Content Manager, Weblogy, koneseydou@gmail.com
- Israël Yoroba Guebo, journalist and blogger, leblogdeyoro.ivoire-blog.comisyoroba@yahoo.fr

## 8.2.4. Nigeria

- Kelvin Chidiebere UGWU, radio presenter, bbr@radionigeria.net, policediary@radionigeria.net (initiative: Police Diary)
- Chioma ATUOKWU, Head of Operations, West African NGO Network (WANGONet), catuokwu@Wangonet.org

## 8.2.5. Senegal

- Moctar Dia, doctoral candidate in communications
- Olivier Sagna, OSIRIS secretary general, researcher for CODESRIA (development council for research in social sciences in Africa)
- Maimouna Diop, Director of ICT, Senegal
- Papa Ndiaye, Guédiawaye municipal councillor, geography researcher
- Mouhamadou Niang, technical ICT advisor to the prime minister
- Mansour Ba, computer engineer at CIME (IT unit), Ministry for Education
- Alima Sine, administrative assistant
- Mayoro Faye, head of the communication department, Dakar regional council
- Joseph Sarr, senior lecture at UCAD (University of Dakar), municipal councillor and former chair of the NTIC commission of Dakar regional council
- Boubacar Khalil Ndiaye, director of radio station Jokko FM
- Abdoulaye Seye, journalist and philosopher
- Maimouna Ndiaye Faye, head of RTS communications
- Ndiaga Fall, Municipal councillor, Pikine Nord district
- Khalifa Mboup, Secretary General, Mayoral Association of Senegal
- general, researcher for CODESRIA (development council for research in social sciences in Africa)

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## END NOTES

1. Following a government directive, Beninese Government officials for several months signed off letters with the phrase 'committed to good governance'.
2. According to a recent publication by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (Measuring the Information Society, [http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/publications/idi/2009/material/IDI2009\\_w5.pdf](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/publications/idi/2009/material/IDI2009_w5.pdf)), in African countries the ICT penetration rate was just 5 percent in 2007. The ITU study indicators are: access to ICT, use of ICT, competencies in ICT, number of households with a computer, number of Internet users and literacy rate. Of the 154 countries compared and classified, the first African country is Mauritius, ranked 61, Cape Verde 101, Ghana 128, Côte d'Ivoire 128, Nigeria 130, Senegal 131 and finally Burkina Faso 150. Despite these less than encouraging overall results, it is notable that ICTs are generally making progress in Africa and are penetrating social, political and public life more and more every day. Communication is more and more dependent on the use of ICTs and the use of the mobile phone is a good illustration of this fact.
3. Based on Macintosh, 2004. "Characterizing e-Participation in Policy-Making."
4. The definition of the term is illustrative in itself. Information and Communication Technologies is used to refer to the sector which encompasses all the converging technologies and that contribute, in one way or another, to processing information (in a broad sense). Specifically, ICT includes traditional telecommunications, mobile telecommunications, computing, radio broadcasts, television, cable television, the Internet, multimedia and geographic information systems. ICT also refers to a set of tools needed to process information, particularly computers and software, but also other technical tools useful for converting, managing and storing information in technological formats which enable information to be broadcast, shared, searched and found' (Vieira et al., 2007). This therefore includes technologies more easily accessible to the poorest members of society, like the radio and telephone, and now mobile phones.
5. The education indicator measures a country's results for the literacy of adults and the combined gross enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and higher education. First, it calculates one literacy indicator for adults and one for the combined gross enrolment ratio. These two indicators are then combined to create the education indicator, with two-thirds weighting for literacy among adults and one-third weighting for combined gross enrolment (Global Report on Human Development 2007/2008).

6. [Human Poverty Index](http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/) (HPI-1 and HPI-2): Human poverty is, above all, the denial of possibilities of choice and opportunities for living a fulfilling life. Lack of income is therefore a concept that is too narrow to be used as a holistic indicator of poverty. Therefore, a broader measure has been defined in order to measure the numerous – but not exhaustive – dimensions of human poverty. For more information, visit <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/> and [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2009\\_EN\\_Readers.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2009_EN_Readers.pdf).
7. The gender-related development index (GDI) is a composite index that measures human development according to the same dimensions as the HDI, adjusted to the inequality of the sexes. Its coverage is limited to 155 countries and regions for which the HDI rank was recalculated. To measure gender inequality, refer to the difference between the HDI ranking and the GDI ranking. For more information, visit <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices>.
8. UNDP, Gender Responsive E-governance: Exploring the Transformative Potential, 2008.
9. Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires (European Institute of Business Administration), <http://www.insead.edu/home>.
10. This table has been prepared using tables published in the Global Information Technology Report 2008/2009 published by the World Economic Forum, <http://www.insead.edu/v1/gitr/wef/main/fullreport/index.html>.
11. The Global Information Technology Report has not calculated the NRI for Cape Verde. Figures for this country are extracted from the Human Development Report 2009, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009>.
12. [http://devdata.worldbank.org/ict/gha\\_ict.pdf](http://devdata.worldbank.org/ict/gha_ict.pdf).
13. 2006 figure.
14. 2006 figure.
15. 2006 figure.
16. 2006 figure.
17. 2006 figure.

18. 2005 figure.

19. <http://a330.g.akamai.net/7/330/25828/20081021195552/graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy%20Index%202008.pdf>.

20. The Global E-Government Readiness Index presents the status of e-government in the UN member countries. This is a composite index which measures the capacity and willingness of countries to use e-government for ICT-based development. It includes different indices: the web measure index, the telecommunications infrastructure index and the human capital index.

21. Cf., notably E-governance in Africa: From theory to action. A Handbook on ICTs for Local Governance, Gianluca Misuraca, CRDI, 2007, [http://www.crdi.ca/eau/ev-115660-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.crdi.ca/eau/ev-115660-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html).

22. Various major regional high-level meetings have been organized by the Burkinafaso government, in partnership with leading businesses and institutions including Microsoft, the World Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Many parallel actions are being carried out at the national level to promote ICT.

23. <http://www.africanelections.org>.

24. Buckley et al., 2008.

25. <http://www.radionigeriaonline.com/POLICE%20DIARY/Impact.html>.

26. <http://www.assises-senegal.info>.

27. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (UNEP, 2005), between 20 and 50 million tonnes of waste is produced each year from electric and electronic equipment (WEEE).

28. UNDP, Gender responsive e-governance: Exploring the transformative potential, 2008.

29. F CFA, or CFA franc, is the currency of Côte d'Ivoire.

30. ALIX (Application for Local Information eXchange) is a platform for dialogue and reconciliation of customs data. Set up by the customs service of Côte d'Ivoire, ALIX is currently integrated into the computer systems of the customs services of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and is set to be extended to the ECOWAS countries. It has already helped speed up the implementation of a unique computer system for the customs services of the ECOWAS countries.

31. Around 150 million, with a very high density (over 160 inhabitants per sq km).

32. This vision forecasts that in 2020 Nigeria will be among the 20 leading global economies.

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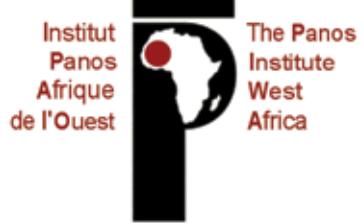
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