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E-Government Strategy, ICT and Innovation for Citizen Engagement

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Preface

Since the first computers were introduced in the 1940s, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have transformed the world we live in. Governments have been the pioneers of this transformation from the beginning of the first electronic computer which changed humanity profoundly. In the private sector we have seen how ICTs were used to reach out to build relationships with customers and businesses. Twenty years ago, a pure online business or e-business was an aspiration. The concept of online shopping was still new in the mid-1990s and was considered as a fad or an added feature to the brick-and-mortar business. Today it is a norm or a de facto business model. The private sector has gone through a major transformation within a short time period.

While governments have followed the private sector in adopting technologies, until recently, there was no national strategic planning for ICT. In fact, many governments were slow to adopt technologies and remained largely paper-based. Some governments, like Sweden and Denmark, were more progressive. They adopted ICT earlier and set an example for others. Having a national strategy (or framework) on ICT in government and e-government can significantly reduce government waste, corruption, and inefficiencies while increasing transparency and accountability. Some governments have been opening up to citizens via e-government, and others are learning from successes and failures as they build their own e-government portal or infrastructure. Over the past decades, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) through the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) has provided support to current 193 member states for intergovernmental processes, comparative policy research and analysis, education and training, and advisory services related to e-government and e-governance.

This book discusses current trends and best practices in e-government and e-governance. It explores the three levels of e-government and national strategies that foster the achievement and realization of the tertiary level of e-government.

Those strategies include the development of a citizen-centric and participatory e-government and the leveraging of recent developments in social media technologies that have empowered citizens around the world to demand government reform and greater transparencies.

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In addition, we would like to express our deep gratitude for the value guidance that Dr. Adriana Alberti has given us. Dr. Alberti is a global eminent e-government expert who has made tremendous contributions to e-government development for more than a decade.

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