

There are five dimensions being measured by the OeGi. These include the following:

Area 1: Meshed eGovernment This dimension seeks to reflect a government's ability to place its public functions online, which in itself comprises many aspects of ICT enablement. Its inclusions are ICT-based mechanisms to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness of back-office operations within government. These include the ability of different government agencies to share data and communicate with one another, how data storage is undertaken, the level of automation of government and the ability of government to develop and implement a unified data for using ICTs with the government bureaucracy. This includes the presence of national eGovernance plans, and the extent of eGovernance programs and projects.

Indicators capture the presence of open digital and technological standards as well as government interoperability frameworks. This dimension also reflects the extent to which the government uses ICT tools to enhance in-house operations and its ability to pull together all its agencies under an interoperable framework within which entities can share data in the most efficient manner. At the same time, the presence of cybersecurity frameworks and policies are also included in this dimension.

Area 2: eParticipation Channels: This dimension of the index intends to capture citizen-facing applications or front-office eGovernance mechanisms. In general it examines the new (ICT) channels available to citizens to obtain information from and about government, share/express their views with decision-makers or policymakers, and collaborate in governance. It includes dimensions that are related to interfacing with citizens, providing services, asking for feedback, and listening to feedback. It does not include use of ICTs for internal efficiencies.

In the OeGI, this component is designed to measure *how well* and *how much* a government utilizes ICTs. That is, the measure seeks to reflect the simple presence of citizen-facing applications, the quality of its content, as well as the extent to which its products are utilized in the daily practice of governance. Applications include, broadly, websites, SMS, social networking sites, and blogs. This dimension also measures the use of ICTs by disadvantaged socio-economic sectors including women and persons with disabilities, and measures the participation in ICT procurement and payment systems.

Area 3: Universal Access/Digital Inclusion. This dimension measures the extent to which government ensures that all citizens benefit from the different information and communication technologies that are available. These include the presence of universal access and universal literacy policies, competition policy and the concentration of media ownership, affordability and access of ICTs to the general population, and the multiplicity of information sources.

This dimension also measures the extent of the access of the general population to information and knowledge. This includes the presence of policies relating to freedom of information, access to publicly funded research (open content), availability of government data in a reusable format (open data) and the ability of citizens to access information relevant to their needs.

Area 4: Civil society use of ICTs. Since the OeGI seeks to measure not just e-government but rather e-governance, the index also includes the ICT readiness and utilization by civil society organizations and other non-State organizations such as political parties and people’s organizations. While openness in information gathered and shared by government is imperative for Open E-Governance, the citizenry must have alternative sources of knowledge and opinion and this is a critical part of fostering transparency in governance. Independent organizing and independent creation of knowledge is an indicator of decentralized power. As Gilbert [2010] noted, how technological capacity is related to technological and social capital embedded in particular societies.

In this dimension, we seek to assess the ability of independent social and political actors and their attempts to generate and mobilize support for some person, issue, or cause, all essentially to measure the extent are such groups in a country using ICT tools to achieve their objectives.

Area 5. Fostering an enabling environment for open eGovernance. This includes the extent that the government recognizes and fosters the right to free expression, right over personal communication, cultural freedom, and the use of local languages. It also measures the extent of government to control or limit the use of information and communication technologies among its citizens. Indicators will also be gathered in relation to the extent of telecoms infrastructure, human capital, the concentration of media power, political freedom (including freedom of expression, privacy and censorship), economic indicators and socio-cultural freedoms.

Table 1. Illustration of the conceptual framework of the Open eGovernance Index

