



DGTTF NIGER 2008-2009:

ELECTRONIC GOVERNANCE AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND:

Reforming public administration is an ongoing process in Niger, and the Government has been trying for a number of years to modernize public service and to introduce electronic governance. Results have however been slow and fragmented and there has been little focus on coordination and harmonization of equipment.

Political events in the country have been a further impediment to reforms. Since the beginning of 2009, Niger has gone through a period of political instability during which parliament was dissolved, the Constitutional Court was suspended and a new Constitution was introduced. Events culminated in a coup in 2010, leaving the country in a state of political uncertainty and adversely affecting its administrative services.

CATALYTIC & INNOVATIVE:

The main objective defined for the project was to contribute to the improvement of administrative services provided through a number of selected public institutions as well as to increase pilot participatory development activities at five local administrations.

With the support of the DGTTF, awareness and training campaigns were successfully conducted and essential technical equipment was installed both at the level of the national administration and in the five local administrations. A system for aid management was also partially computerized and the internet site of the national association of Municipalities was set up.

The project responded to a key governance challenge in improving transparency and access to information. It was also innovative in its contribution to public administration procedures and infrastructure [for example through the e-management of judicial records].

The project proved catalytic at the national level by positioning the High Commission for information technology as central reference in the formulation of the national strategy on electronic governance. At the local level, the use of the ICT equipment allowed the five pilot communes to manage administrative tasks in a more efficient manner.

LESSONS LEARNED:

A high-level Steering Committee was set up to oversee project implementation. While this was important to ensure the backing of national authorities at the highest level, the Committee only managed to meet once as officials found it difficult to free themselves from other duties.

A technical Committee was therefore put in place, as it was better placed to make decisions on operational issues such as the choice of technologies. The question of sustainability remains

relevant, as maintaining the project's results will depend largely on the availability of capacities and functioning electricity and telecommunications networks. Neither are guaranteed.

Investments:

- USD 1.400.000 from DGTTF [Spain]
- USD 200.000 from Country Office

Partners:

- Equipe d'Appui Conseil à la Gouvernance
- Haut Commissariat à l'informatique et aux nouvelles technologies d'information et de communication
- Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances
- Association des Municipalités du Niger

For more information:

- <http://www.undp.org/governance/library.shtml>
- <http://www.undp.org/oslocentre>
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