

Chapter 10

The e-Parliament Framework 2010 - 2020

The first edition of the World e-Parliament Report found that in 2008 only a few legislatures were able to make highly effective use of technology to support their legislative, representative and oversight responsibilities. The implementation of technology by most parliaments was uneven, with parliaments in developing countries facing considerable challenges, especially in terms of resources, both financial and human, and knowledge. Although there has been some progress in certain areas over the past two years, the results from the 2009 survey confirm that legislatures in most developing countries are still far behind and that even parliaments in developed nations could do more to deploy ICT in parliament at their full potential.

As highlighted in Chapter 8, parliaments in low and lower middle income level countries fall well below the average total score for e-parliament (Figure 8.3). Parliaments from countries in the upper middle income group are also below this average. Furthermore, findings from the 2009 survey analyzed by income levels, illustrated in the next pages of this chapter, indicate that the gap is especially severe in the areas of “Communication between parliaments and citizens”; “Systems and standards for creating legislative documents”; “Library and research services”; and “Parliamentary websites”. Results also show that many parliaments in the high income group are far from harnessing technology fully and need to make additional efforts, particularly in the areas of “Communication between citizens and parliament”, and “Systems and standards for creating legislative documents”.

While parliaments continue to struggle to capitalize on the advantages of ICT in their complex legislative settings, there are no doubts that in the next ten years the transition to a global Information Society will further accelerate, demanding governing institutions to adapt to a different environment profoundly altered in its social, economic and cultural components. Unless parliaments can adapt to the rapid evolution brought about by technological changes, it is unlikely that they will be able to meet the expectations of their constituents for higher standards of accountability, transparency, accessibility and effectiveness as well as for more participatory and democratic governance. And since parliaments could be affected in different ways by their inability to fully exploit ICT, these challenges will not be limited to legislatures in poorer nations; rather, they will require a global and coordinated response by nearly all legislative bodies in the next years.

As highlighted in Chapter 9, efforts at cooperation and collaboration among legislative bodies are of particular importance in the field of information and communication technologies, where there are immense opportunities to take advantage of the possibilities offered by knowledge transfer, implementation of open standards, collaborative software development, and exchange of practices and in-house developed products. It is likely that these efforts will benefit greatly by being rooted in regional and global inter-parliamentary networks as they strive for sustainability and ownership, and at the same time receive the support of peers.

Equally vital is the assistance of the international community of donors and development agencies. Predictable and coherent aid initiatives are essential for parliaments with less advanced technology that seek to reinforce their law-making, representative and scrutiny functions through ICT.

KEY AREAS FOR A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO INSTITUTION BUILDING

The Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament¹ acknowledged the long-term challenge of strengthening parliamentary institutions through ICT at its third high-level meeting in March 2009, where it identified a forward-looking framework centred on strategic goals for technology in parliament. In its final Statement, the Board called “on all parliaments, international organizations and development partners to unite their efforts around these strategic goals as guiding principles to support all parliaments to play a key role in shaping the society of the future and to harness modern technologies to become truly representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective institutions”.² The World e-Parliament Conference 2009, in its final session, discussed the framework and expressed support for the concept of a coordinated strategy that would help pull together resources and coordinate actions. The Framework’s strategic goals can facilitate greater coordination and collaboration among all relevant actors – parliaments, donors, international organizations and civil society organizations – to achieve the common targets over a ten-year span (2010-2020).

These targets are grouped in five key areas that address both policy needs and technology requirements:

1. Establish national and international policies to create an Information Society that is equitable and inclusive;
2. Enhance the connection between legislatures and constituencies;
3. Improve the equality of access to the law and the lawmaking process of the country;
4. Ensure that legislatures around the world can harness ICT tools in the service of the legislative, oversight, and representative functions;
5. Develop a more robust and well coordinated programme of technical assistance.

For each strategic goal under these areas, the Board proposed benchmarks to measure the level of success reached on a global basis for the short (2010-2012)³, medium (2013-2016) and long term (2017-2020) (See Figure 10.11).

Establish national and international policies to create an Information Society that is equitable and inclusive

The diffusion of ICT and technological innovation not only affects parliaments by providing them with the opportunity to perform their legislative, oversight and representational functions more effectively, but also calls on them to play a vital role in fostering national and international policies as countries transition to a global Information Society.

The effectiveness with which parliaments will use technology for listening to citizens, gathering information resources, connecting with other parliaments and linking to the rest of the world will

1 The Global Centre for ICT in Parliament is guided by a high-level Board composed of Speakers and Presidents of Parliaments, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations for Economic and Social Affairs and the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

2 Budapest Statement, third high-level meeting of the Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament.

3 The targets for the near term are based on the current state as indicated by the 2009 survey.

significantly influence their ability to act as representative institutions in an increasingly complex global environment. Their success in positively shaping the society of the future through their policy initiatives will impact the capacity of the governed to enjoy the benefit of new knowledge and innovation.

Most legislators underestimate their pivotal role in the development of an equitable and inclusive Information Society and only a few parliaments are in the forefront of establishing national ICT policies, as well as national consultative mechanisms, which can benefit the legislature's own use of technology and also help narrow the digital divide within their country.

Many parliaments are not actively engaged at the international level, such as through the World Summit on the Information Society process, to represent their citizens' needs and views. Members of parliament do not have adequate forums for sharing and debating legislative and regulatory approaches to trans-border concerns, nor have instruments for exchanging knowledge and legislative practices. Achieving effective global policies in areas such as cybercrime, online privacy, security, broadband development and Internet governance requires a consistent international approach in which all parliaments and legislators are fully engaged.

Strategic goals

- 1.1 Establishment of an annual meeting to enhance dialogue among legislators for addressing Information Society-related issues, including Internet Governance, and the sharing of experiences and legislative practices.

Measures of Success

Regular participation by 50 parliaments by 2012; by 100 parliaments at the level of Chairs of Committee by 2015; by 150 parliaments at the level of Chairs of Committee by 2020.

- 1.2 Fostering parliamentary hearings and discussions at national level on the status of the Information Society.

Measures of Success

Online publication of reports of hearings and discussions held by parliaments regarding the status of the Information Society in their respective countries. Inclusion of these reports in the Digital Library of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament. 25% of all parliaments by 2012; 50% by 2015; 100% by 2020.

- 1.3 Fostering the contribution of parliaments to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society and its follow-up process.

Measures of Success

Acknowledgment of parliaments' efforts in the WSIS Forums and recognition of the role of parliaments in the review of the WSIS in 2015.

- 1.4 Development of a legal repository containing policies, laws, and regulations dealing with issues of the Information Society, organized by topic and approved by the parliaments.

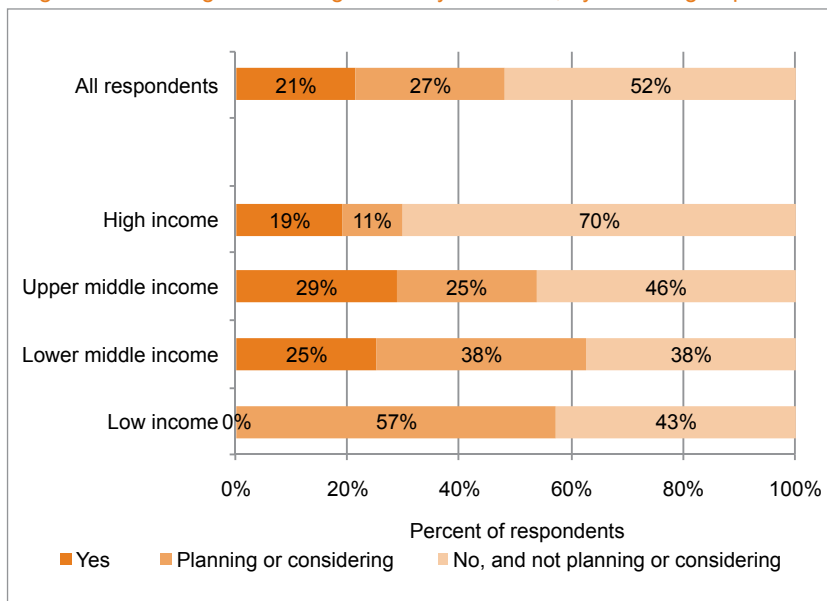
Measures of Success

Coverage of 40% of parliaments by 2012; 75% by 2015; 95% by 2020, based upon regular support from library and research sections of parliaments in updating the legal repository.

Enhance the connection between legislatures and constituencies

Developing sound policies, including those for the Information Society, requires listening to the concerns of citizens and engaging them in debates on critical issues. As seen in Chapter 2, ICT can provide powerful instruments to help parliaments communicate with their constituency. Results from the 2009 survey show that a greater number of legislatures and members are trying to use technologies more effectively to engage with citizens. Many parliaments, however, still lag behind in providing citizens with access to their work and the means for participation in the political dialogue.

Figure 10.1: Automated e-mail management system in use supporting the handling and answering of incoming e-mail by members, by income groups



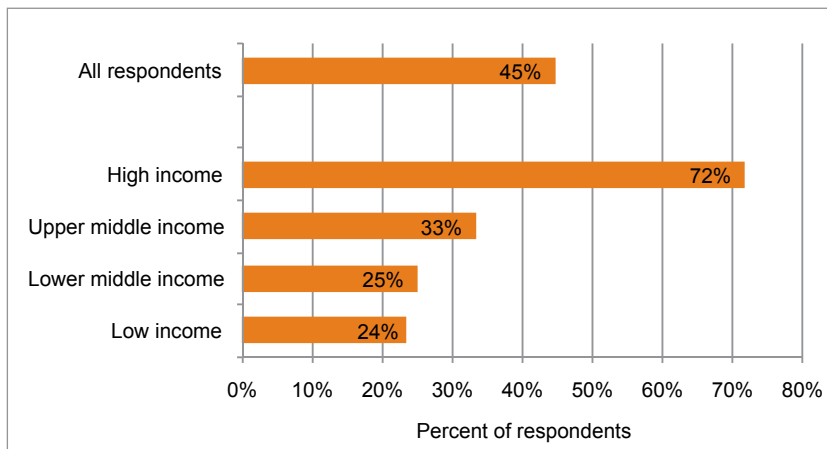
(Source: Survey 2009, Section 6, Question 6)

In 2009, 88% of parliaments reported that *most or some* members who use e-mail respond to messages from citizens (most=43%; some=45%). Despite these positive indications, as shown in Figure 10.1, none of the parliaments in the low income group are using an automated system to support handling and answering incoming e-mail and less than 30% in the other groups use such a system. It is also of great concern that 70% of parliaments in the high income group are neither using nor planning to use one. This significantly affects the ability of members to organize, understand, and manage these communications from citizens to inform their policy making decisions.

The survey also found that only 24% of parliaments in the low income group follow standards to ensure that the website can be used by persons with disabilities (see Figure 10.2). Percentages are not much higher for parliaments in the lower middle income group (25%) and parliaments in the upper middle income group (33%). As underlined in Chapter 3, this is a finding of great concern since ensuring such accessibility standards is one of the important ways to reduce a part of the digital divide within the country and to provide access to all citizens on equal terms.

Even in countries that lack sufficient Internet penetration, it is possible, as has been reported at the World e-Parliament Conferences, to use local entities such as community centres, schools and public libraries to enable more citizens to have access to the parliament and to engage in the policy making process.

Figure 10.2: Implementation of W3C standards or other applicable standards to ensure that the website can be used by persons with disabilities, by income groups



(Source: Survey 2009, Section 5, Question 9b)

Strategic goals

- 2.1 Fostering the employment of all available tools, including new media and mobile technologies, to provide citizens with improved access to the work of parliament and means of participation in the political dialogue.

Measures of Success

Two way e-mail communication between members and citizens with tools to assist parliaments and members in managing and responding to electronic message from constituents. 50% of parliaments by 2012; 75% by 2015; 90% by 2020.

Increased use of interactive technology tools by parliaments to connect to citizens and to offer them the means to express their opinions (e-petitions, forums, etc.). 25% by 2010; 50% by 2015; 75% by 2020.

Adoption of accessibility standards in parliamentary websites to allow access to persons with disabilities. 50% of parliaments by 2012; 75% of parliaments by 2015, 100% of parliaments by 2020.

Access to parliamentary websites in multiple languages. 50% of parliaments with multiple official languages by 2012; 75% by 2015; 100% by 2020.

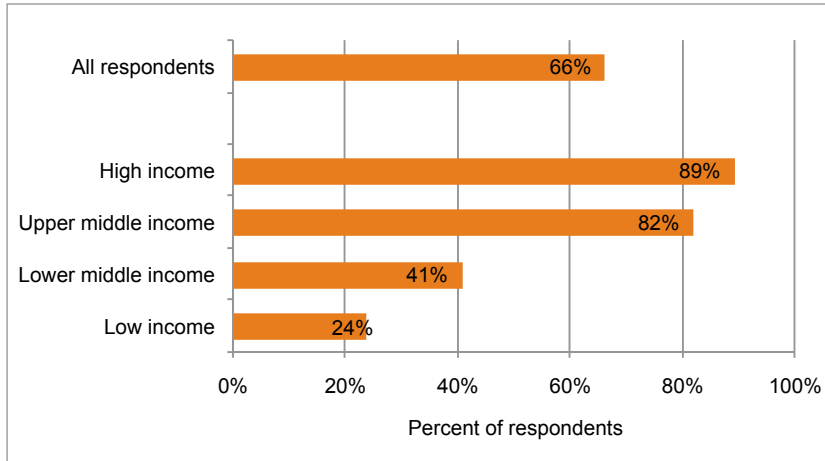
Improve the equality of access to the law and the lawmaking process of the country

The World Summit on the Information Society outcome urged governments to create public systems of information on country laws and regulations using the potential of ICT. Equitable and permanent public access to authentic legal information is considered a necessary requirement for a just and democratic society, an important instrument to support economic development and a prerequisite for the effective enforcement of the rule of law.

In many countries, parliaments do not provide access to the full body of the laws that are in legal force at any given time or to the law-making process. As shown in Figure 10.3, only 24% of parliaments in the low income group, and 41% of parliaments in the lower middle income group,

provide the *text and status of all proposed legislation* on their websites, thereby excluding the population from knowing about and being engaged in this vital democratic process.

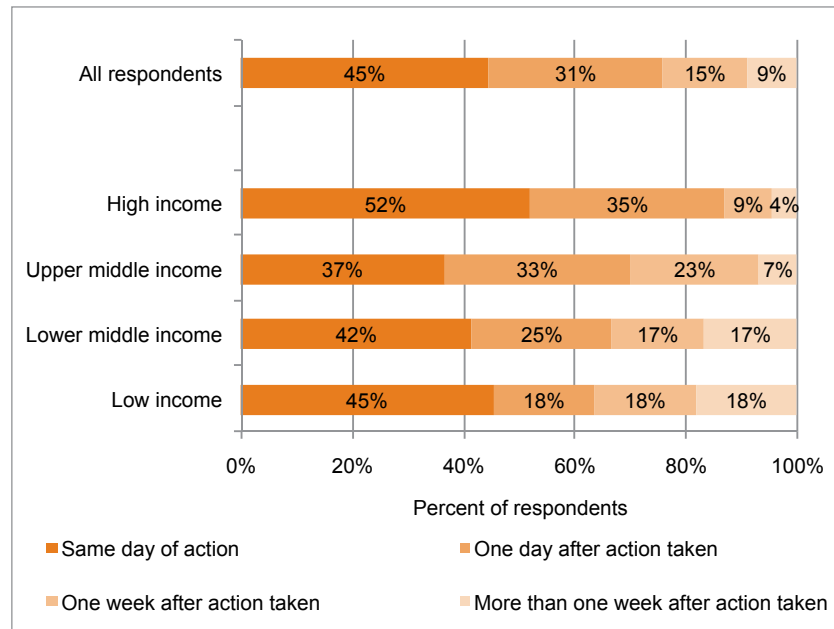
Figure 10.3: Websites that include text and status of all proposed legislation, by income groups



(Source: Survey 2009, Section 5, Question 5b)

It is also of great concern that almost one fifth of parliaments in the low income group (18%) and in the lower middle income group (17%) require a week or more after actions has been taken to make plenary proceedings available on their website (see Figure 10.4). Similarly, it is problematic that even some of those in the upper middle income and high income groups are unable to provide these essential documents on their websites within a week, as this deprives citizens of prompt information on how issues were debated and voted for.

Figure 10.4: Timeliness of plenary proceedings on the website of the parliament, by income groups



(Source: Survey 2009, Section 5, Question 7b)

Strategic goals

- 3.1 Promoting the development of parliamentary websites that convey the work of the parliament in a way that is accurate, timely, and complete.

Measures of Success

Websites with complete legislation information and documentation in 50% of parliaments by 2012; 75% by 2015; 100% by 2020.

Information and documentation available for downloading in open standard formats from 25% of parliaments by 2012; 50% by 2015; 75% by 2020.

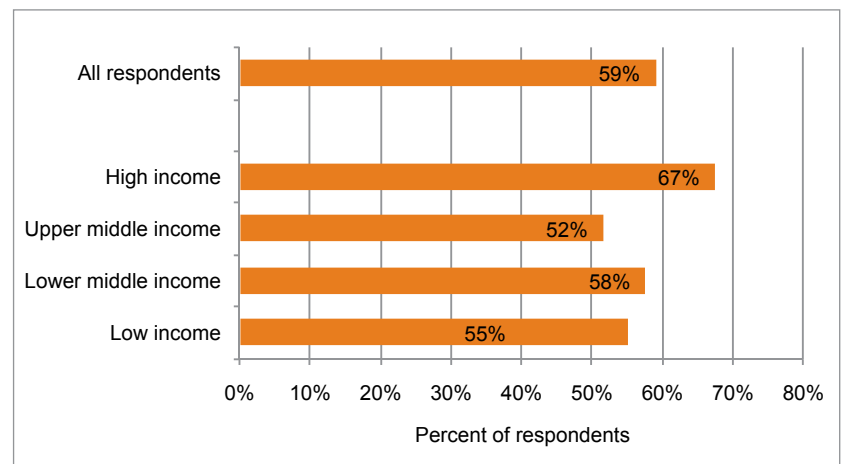
Strategy to create, in conjunction with the executive and judicial branches, national databases with all of a country's laws in force updated on a timely basis and accessible to all citizens. 25% of parliaments by 2012; 50% by 2015; 90% by 2020.

Ensure that all legislatures around the world can harness ICT tools in the service of the legislative, oversight and representative functions

Achieving the goal of placing technology at the service of the constitutional functions of a parliament and of democratic governance requires a consistent and effective investment in ICT tools and resources. As was true in 2007, results from the 2009 survey confirm that a significant gap remains between what is needed in implementing ICT to support the work of the legislative body and what has been actually accomplished by many parliaments. This can be seen in several areas, including strategic planning, infrastructure, training, library and research services, and inter-parliamentary cooperation.

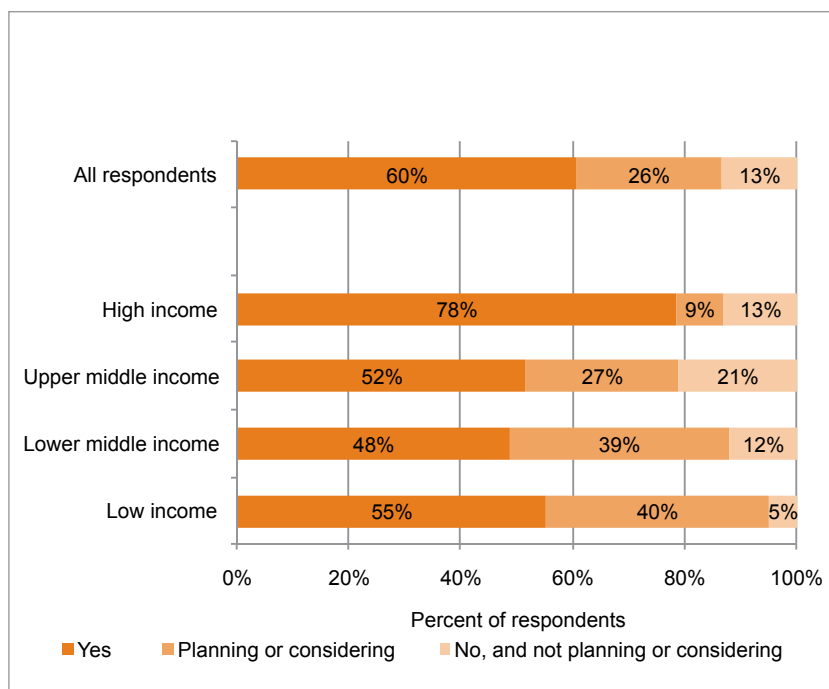
Strategic planning can be well managed by most parliaments regardless of their country's income level. Figure 10.5 highlights that even in the low income group more than 50% of parliaments have a strategic plan with goals, objectives, and timetables for ICT. Strategic planning is one of the less expensive and most beneficial activities in the ICT domain because it enables comparison of costs and benefits and allows for close monitoring of progress. Yet, many legislatures are missing this opportunity. As discussed in Chapter 4, strategic planning needs to be implemented on an urgent basis in many more parliaments.

Figure 10.5: Parliaments that have a strategic plan with goals, objectives, and timetables for ICT, by income groups



(Source: Survey 2009, Section 1, Question 10)

Figure 10.6: Parliaments that provide ICT training or orientation for members, by income groups

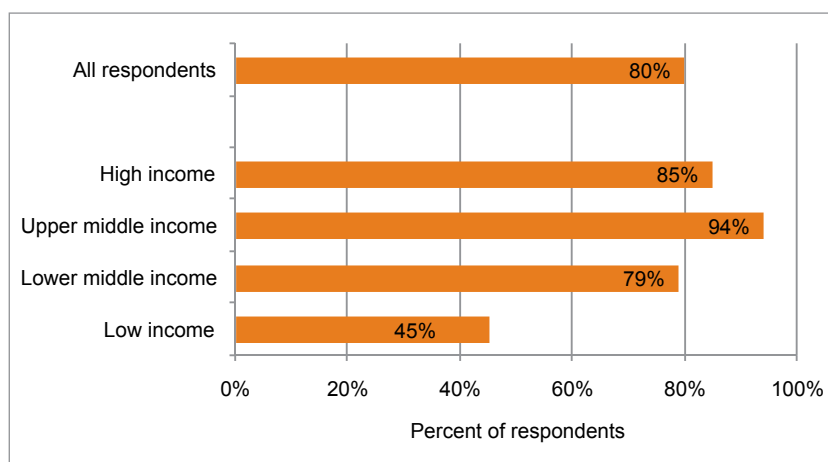


(Source: Survey 2009, Section 2, Question 30)

Results show that there is a relatively good level of engagement by parliaments in training legislators. Figure 10.6 illustrates that despite income differences most parliaments provide training/orientation programmes for members or are planning or considering them. Additional efforts, though, need to be made, even by the upper and lower middle income groups, to ensure that these programmes are actually implemented and that a greater number of legislators have a better understanding of ICT.

A robust technical infrastructure is essential as a foundation for implementing ICT in parliaments. As pointed out in Chapter 7, findings from the 2009 survey suggest that there have been some advances, but also a number of continuing challenges. Parliaments in developing countries, in particular, lack adequate infrastructures and systems to support their legislative, oversight and representational work. Figure 10.7 shows that only 45% of parliaments in the low income group provide each member with a computer for personal use, possibly excluding many of them from acquiring important resources and up to date information.

Figure 10.7: Parliaments that provide a computer (desktop or laptop) to each member for personal use, by income groups

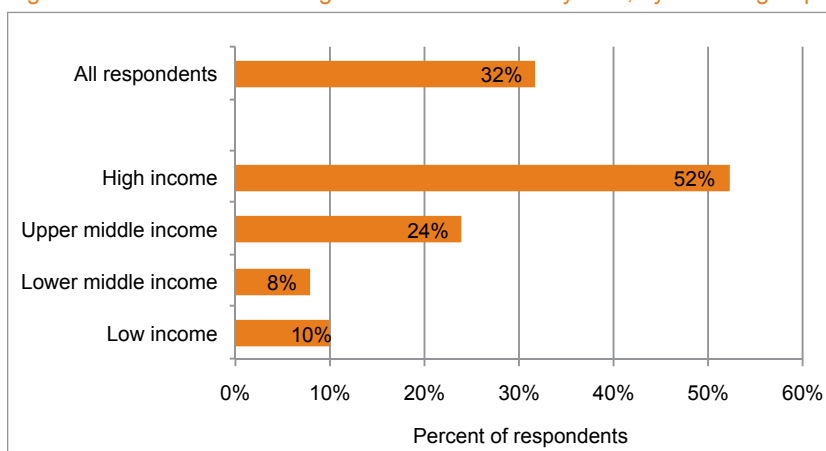


(Source: Survey 2009, Section 2, Question 2)

As shown in Chapter 5 the income level of the country is also significantly associated with whether a parliament has a document management system. Only 5% of parliaments in the low income group and 36% in the lower and upper middle income groups have a document management system for the text of bills as they move through the legislative process (see Figure 5.1). In addition, for countries in the low income group the percentage of parliaments that have a document management system for committee and plenary documents is less than 20% for four of the six types of documents considered in the survey (see Figure 5.8).

Figure 10.8 below shows that only 10% of parliaments in the low income group and 8% in the lower middle income group use XML as the document standard in at least one system.

Figure 10.8: Parliaments using XML in at least one system, by income groups

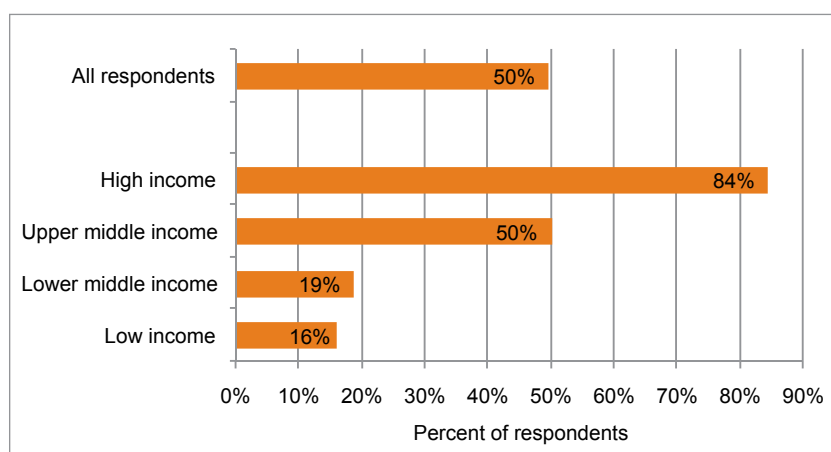


(Source: Survey 2009, Section 3, Questions 4 and 6)

As highlighted in Chapter 6 (Figure 6.1), while 50% or more of parliaments in the low or lower middle income groups have an automated system for managing library resources, the contrast with those in the upper middle income (75%) and high income groups (93%) indicates the size of the gap that exists among parliaments.

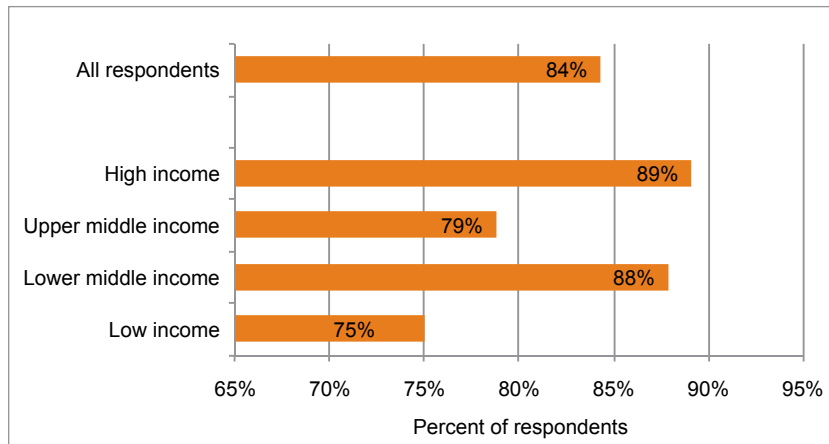
This contrast is also very evident with regard to providing online access to information sources that are organized according to the policy issues that the parliament is addressing. Figure 10.9 shows that only 16% of parliaments in the low income group and 19% in the lower middle income group have libraries that are able to offer this valuable service, compared to 84% in the high income group.

Figure 10.9: Libraries that have a web page that organizes and provides access to the Internet and other resources for members and committees based on issues of concern to the parliament, by income groups



(Source: Survey 2009, Section 4, Question 6)

Figure 10.10: Parliaments that provide training, through either internal or outside services, for in-house ICT staff, by income groups



(Source: Survey 2009, Section 2, Question 27)

Parliamentary staff, particularly in developing nations, need continuing training to upgrade their skills and keep pace with ICT developments. It is a positive finding that 75% of parliaments in the low income group provide training for in-house ICT staff, through either internal or outside services (Figure 10.10). This attests to the recognition by most parliaments in developing nations of the importance of training programmes. These efforts should continue to be encouraged and sustained.

Mechanisms for the exchange of information among parliaments regarding the implementation of technology can be very beneficial. As highlighted in Chapter 9, many parliaments already participate in ICT networks (see Figure 9.1). It is particularly striking that parliaments in the low income group are as likely to participate as those in the high income group. Also of note is that 46% of all parliaments receive or expressed a desire to receive support in ICT from other parliaments; this includes well over half of all parliaments in the upper middle, lower middle and low income groups (Figures 9.2 and 9.4). There is a key challenge that arises here, however, because participation in a network does not necessarily translate into concrete support at the level of individual parliaments. This may be improved by a better match between funding directed to capacity development and the use of the available expertise in networks.

Strategic goals

- 4.1 Fostering the active engagement of the leaders and members of parliament in establishing a vision for e-parliament.

Measures of Success

75% of parliaments by 2012 have a written vision statement; 90% by 2015; 95% by 2020.

Orientation to ICT provided to all current and newly elected members. 75% of all parliaments by 2012; 90% by 2015; 95% by 2018.

- 4.2 Promoting the elaboration of strategic plans, updated regularly, for the use of ICT that directly improve the operational capacity of parliaments to fulfil their legislative, oversight and representational responsibilities.

Measures of Success

75% of parliaments by 2012 have ICT strategic plans; 90% by 2015; 95% by 2020.

- 4.3 Promoting the development and maintenance of adequate infrastructures and systems in all parliaments to support their legislative, oversight, and representational work.

Measures of Success

All members have a personal computer and access to the Internet. 75% by 2012; 95% by 2015.

A document management system capable of preparing and managing all parliamentary documentation is operational in 50% of all parliaments by 2012; 75% by 2015; 95% by 2020.

Mobile access for all members is available in 60% of all parliaments by 2012; 75% by 2015; 95% by 2020.

Information and research services supported by ICT and linked to the legislative and policy issues that confront the parliament is available in 50% of legislatures by 2012; 75% by 2015; 95% by 2020.

- 4.4 Advocating for and promoting annual training programmes for at least 50% of staff engaged in the development, support, or use of ICT.

Measures of Success

50% of all parliaments provide annual training for at least 50% of staff engaged in the development, support, or use of ICT by 2012; 75% by 2015; 95% by 2018.

- 4.5 Fostering the regular exchange of information, experiences and practices among Parliaments at the international level .

Measures of Success

Participation in the World e-Parliament Conference series: 120 delegations by 2012; 150 delegations by 2015; 175 delegations by 2020.

Responses to the global survey on ICT in Parliament: 140 assemblies by 2012; 150 assemblies by 2016; 175 assemblies by 2020.

Develop a more robust and well coordinated programme of technical assistance

Many legislatures in developing countries and emerging democracies increasingly seek financial and technical assistance from different sources to accompany their own efforts to introduce modern technologies in support of the parliamentary process. As indicated in Chapter 9, there are a number of areas needing attention from the international community, such as human resources development in the ICT domain, the development of systems and standards for managing parliamentary documents, strengthening libraries and research services use of ICT, and enhancing communication between parliaments and citizens.

In addition, initiatives devoted to parliamentary strengthening carried out by contributing parliaments, bilateral donors, international organizations, academic centres, and non governmental organizations have frequently failed to pay adequate attention to the full array of parliamentary functions that ICT tools are able to address. A fair amount of the assistance provided, therefore, is likely to be under-utilized and ill spent due to insufficient coordination and planning, and lack of ownership, strategy and sustainability.

There is no doubt that global coordination among all the actors involved - including recipient parliaments - needs to encourage greater coherence of action, avoid the risk of overlapping efforts, and foster better analyses of lessons learned. International organizations and development

partners assisting legislatures should work in close coordination to use resources efficiently and should increasingly rely on the expertise available in parliaments. On the other hand, there is a need for parliaments receiving assistance to better leverage resources by ensuring greater coordination between external and internal funding in a responsible manner.

It is evident that over the past years the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament has achieved great success in creating a global community and important partnerships that accompany its work around common objectives. Also, it has raised the level of understanding among legislators about the Information Society and the role that members can play in shaping it; it has unveiled to many parliaments, regardless of their development level, the immense potential of ICT as a means to modernize parliamentary processes, increase transparency, accountability and participation, and improve inter-parliamentary cooperation; and, it has helped establish standards for all parliaments in several technical areas.

Today, this global community views the Centre as part of a broad international endeavor that is already affecting the way parliaments are dealing with modern technologies, from both the political and technical perspectives. It considers the Centre to be an important player in the current debate on the politics of technology in parliament, and, at the same time, a growing hub of coordination of the assistance provided for the ICT needs of legislatures.

Parliaments in developing nations and in emerging democracies recognize the importance of the Centre as a source of services and of support for a new approach to technical assistance in the ICT domain that mobilizes the expertise of advanced parliaments to respond to the needs of peer institutions, thereby reinforcing inter-parliamentary cooperation and future bilateral partnerships. They see the Centre as well placed to coordinate with agencies and donors the initiatives of the international community in this sector.

Strategic goals

- 5.1 Establishment of a consultative mechanism to coordinate technical assistance in the area of ICT and parliament within the WSIS implementation process.

Measures of Success

Participation of 15 partners by 2012; 25 partners by 2015; 35 partners by 2020.

- 5.2 Establishment of an online facility to map technical assistance on ICT in parliament around the world.

Measures of Success

Mapping of 30% of all parliaments by 2012; 70% by 2015; 100% by 2020.

- 5.3 Increasing the amount of the core budget available to the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament to act as a hub for information, research, documentation and networking, as well as to provide technical assistance on requests of parliaments and generate partnerships with advanced legislatures.

Measures of Success

Core operative budget: 1.5 million USD annually by 2012; 2 million annually by 2015.

Technical assistance budget: 2 million USD by 2010; 5 million USD by 2013; 10 million USD by 2016.

Figure 10.11: e-Parliament Framework 2010 – 2020

Strategic goals	Short Term 2010-2012	Medium Term 2013-2016	Long Term 2017-2020+
1. Establish national and international policies to create an equitable and inclusive Information Society			
1.1 Establishment of an annual meeting to enhance dialogue among legislators for addressing Information Society-related issues, including Internet Governance, and the sharing of experiences and legislative practices			
Measures of Success			
Annual meeting	Participation by 50 parliaments	Participation by 100 parliaments at level of Chairs of Committees	Participation by 150 parliaments at level of Chairs of Committees
1.2 Fostering parliamentary hearings and discussions at national level on the status of the Information Society			
Measures of Success			
Online publication of reports of hearings and discussions held by parliaments regarding the status of the Information Society in their respective countries. Inclusion of the reports in the Digital Library of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament	25% of parliaments	50% of parliaments	100% of parliaments
1.3 Fostering the contribution of parliaments to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society and its follow-up process			
Measures of Success			
Greater recognition of the role of parliaments in the review of the WSIS in 2015	Increasing recognition of parliaments' efforts at WSIS Forums	Acknowledgment of role of parliaments at WSIS 2015	
1.4. Development of a legal repository containing policies, laws, and regulations dealing with issues of the Information Society, organized by topic and approved by the parliaments			
Measures of Success			
Coverage of 40% of parliaments by 2012; 75% by 2015; 95% by 2020, based upon regular support from library and research sections of parliaments in updating the legal repository	40% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	95% of parliaments

2. Enhance the connection between legislatures and constituencies			
2.1. Fostering the employment of all available tools, including new media and mobile technologies, to provide citizens with improved access to the work of parliament and means of participation in the political dialogue			
Measures of Success			
Two way e-mail communication between members and citizens with tools to assist parliaments and members in managing and responding to electronic messages from constituents	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	90% of parliaments
Increased use of interactive technology tools by parliaments to connect to citizens and to offer them the means to express their opinions (e-petitions, forums, etc.)	25% of parliaments	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments
Adoption of usability standards in parliamentary websites to allow access to persons with disabilities	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	100% of parliaments
Access to parliamentary websites in multiple languages	50% of parliaments with multiple official languages	75% of parliaments with multiple official languages	100% of parliaments with multiple official languages
3. Improve the equality of access to the law and the lawmaking process of the country			
3.1 Promoting the development of parliamentary websites that convey the work of the parliament in a way that is accurate, timely, and complete			
Measures of Success			
Websites with complete legislation information and documentation	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	100% of parliaments
Information and documentation available for downloading in open standard formats	25% of parliaments	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments
Strategy to create, in conjunction with the executive and judicial branches, national databases with all of a country's laws in force updated on a timely basis and accessible to all citizens	25% of parliaments	50% of parliaments	90% of parliaments
4. Ensure that all legislatures around the world can harness ICT tools in the service of the legislative, oversight and representative functions			
4.1 Fostering the active engagement of the leaders and members of parliament in establishing a vision for e-parliament			
Measures of Success			
Parliaments having a written vision statement	75% of parliaments	90% of parliaments	95% of parliaments
Orientation to ICT provided to all current and newly elected members	75% of parliaments	90% of parliaments	95% of parliaments
4.2 Promoting the elaboration of strategic plans, updated regularly, for the use of ICT that directly improve the operational capacity of parliaments to fulfil their legislative, oversight and representational responsibilities			
Measures of Success			
Parliaments having regularly updated ICT strategic plans	75% of parliaments	90% of parliaments	95% of parliaments

4.3. Promoting the development and maintenance of adequate infrastructures and systems in all parliaments to support their legislative, oversight, and representational work			
Measures of Success			
All members have a personal computer and access to the Internet.	75% of parliaments	95% of parliaments	
A document management system capable of preparing and managing all parliamentary documentation is operational	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	95% of parliaments
Mobile access for all members is available	60% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	95% of parliaments
Information and research services supported by ICT and linked to the legislative and policy issues that confront the parliament is available	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	95% of parliaments
4.4 Advocating for and promoting annual training programmes for at least 50% of staff engaged in the development, support, or use of ICT			
Measures of Success			
Parliaments provide annual training for at least 50% of staff engaged in the development and support of ICT	50% of parliaments	75% of parliaments	95% of parliaments
4.5 Fostering the regular exchange of information, experiences and practices among Parliaments at the international level			
Measures of Success			
Participation to the World e-Parliament Conference series	120 delegations	150 delegations	175 delegations
Responses to the global survey on ICT in Parliament	140 assemblies	150 assemblies	175 assemblies
5. Develop a more robust and well coordinated programme of technical assistance			
5.1 Establishment of a consultative mechanism to coordinate technical assistance in the area of ICT and parliament within the WSIS implementation process			
Measure of success			
Participation of partners	15 partners	25 partners	35 partners
5.2 Establishment of an online facility to map technical assistance on ICT in Parliament around the world			
Measure of success			
Mapping of parliaments	30% of parliaments	70% of parliaments	100% of parliaments
5.3 Increasing the amount of the core budget available to the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament to act as a hub for information, research, documentation and networking, as well as to provide technical assistance on requests of parliaments and generate partnerships with advanced legislatures			
Measure of success			
Core operative budget	\$1.5 million annually	\$2 million annually	
Technical assistance budget	\$2 million annually	\$5 million annually (2013)	\$10 million annually (2016)

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Endorsing and implementing the e-Parliament Framework 2010 – 2020 and achieving its proposed strategic goals requires two essential ingredients: a) extensive inter-parliamentary collaboration and greater interaction with multilateral and bilateral efforts; and b) stronger integration of ICT in other support efforts.

Collaboration among parliaments and interaction with the donor community

As underscored in Chapter 9, parliaments are unique institutions and therefore the single most helpful resource for enhancing ICT is often other parliaments. While parliaments can learn a great deal from the private sector, what works well there does not always work well in legislatures.

The need for a strong alliance and more structured cooperation among parliaments is critical in the field of ICT because exploiting the immense opportunities offered by technology can benefit greatly from a high degree of collaboration between legislatures. Advanced parliaments possess the best expertise and most useful experiences in the technical dimension. However, too frequently their expertise has not been fully engaged in development projects.

Inter-parliamentary collaboration is a fundamental mechanism for improving technology in parliaments and needs to take place at the bi-lateral, regional, and global level. Through the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, the sharing of knowledge and experience in the use of ICT and in policy development can become more systematic to achieve widespread success in furthering e-parliament processes and in strengthening legislatures. The role of formal parliamentary networks, and their relations to the Centre, are essential to reinforce ties, exchange expertise, and transfer appropriate know-how and technological applications. Parliaments in developed countries and with advanced technological infrastructures have a special opportunity to support parliaments in developing countries by lending staff expertise and by providing material assistance.

The growing partnerships around the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament should be reinforced and sustained by all actors to better interrelate research and operational work, to leverage the wide-ranging capabilities of the whole international system, and to exploit the opportunities for interregional cooperation and exchanges. Within the e-Parliament Framework 2010 – 2020, the Centre shall act as a catalyst and clearing house for information, research, innovation and technology in parliament, as well as a hub for capacity development. It will do this without substituting or overlapping with other bilateral and multilateral activities or organizations, but rather by multiplying their effects, enhancing their visibility, expanding the space for knowledge development, and creating the conditions to support legislatures that intend to use new technologies as instruments for democracy and good governance.

Integrating ICT with other support actions

It is equally vital that ICT-related contributions from parliaments and from the international community of donors be closely integrated with broader programmes to strengthen parliaments. The challenge for the international community is to understand and promote the role that ICT plays in supporting the various capacities they seek to improve and the democratic values they seek to achieve.

The implementation of ICT must be closely coordinated with efforts to enhance those capabilities that are central to the work of the parliament. Projects to strengthen the law-making, oversight and representational responsibilities of parliaments must also incorporate initiatives to enhance the use of ICT in their support.

Furthermore, externally supported programmes that include the enhancement of ICT as part of their objectives need to ensure that these technology initiatives are incorporated within the overall technology plans of the parliament. Having a strategic plan for ICT in parliament is essential for achieving the necessary level of integration between any assistance programmes and efforts already underway or planned. Attention should also be given to special collaborative efforts in ICT by different stakeholders, such as universities, centres of excellence, institutes and foundations to develop common applications, shared solutions and joint activities.

The way forward

Parliaments face many challenges in using technology to help them to meet the growing expectations of their citizens for transparency, accessibility, and effectiveness. These challenges are especially serious for developing countries but they pose problems as well for those in the higher income group. No parliament has all the solutions and all parliaments benefit from sharing experiences and ideas.

The e-Parliament Framework 2010-2020 proposed by the Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament offers an ambitious vision that is nevertheless attainable and provides the benchmarks for assessing the progress of the world of parliaments and the international community. Achieving this vision by 2020 requires farsightedness and a true spirit of collaboration, engagement and policy direction by parliamentary leaders, the dedicated and coordinated commitment of donors and parliaments, and concerted action at the global, regional and national level.

SUMMARY

All parliaments face significant challenges in attempting to adjust to the Information Society. Because these developments are felt throughout the world they require a global and coordinated response by legislative bodies. To meet these challenges, the Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament has articulated an e-Parliament Framework 2010 – 2020, based on a set of strategic goals for technology in parliament. These goals serve as common principles that can guide and lead to greater coordination and collaboration among parliaments and between legislatures, donors, international organizations and civil society organizations.

The e-Parliament Framework 2010 - 2020 is centred on five key areas for action over the next ten years. They include:

- Information Society policy development
- Enhancing the link between parliaments and the citizens they represent
- Ensuring access by all to a country's laws and legislation
- Making it possible for all legislatures to implement ICT to support fundamental parliamentary functions
- Establishing a sustained and coordinated technical assistance programme.

The success of parliaments in enacting strong information society policies will result in part from their acknowledgement of the global nature of these challenges. Yet, many legislators underestimate their role in this process and have not adequately participated in regional and international forums that are addressing issues like cybersecurity, privacy, and broadband development.

Listening to the concerns of citizens and engaging them in the policy making process are critical components of democratic governance. While responses to the 2009 survey show that a greater number of legislatures and members are trying to use technologies more effectively to engage with citizens, much remains to be done before this goal is reached. It is of special concern that developing countries are least likely to have communication tools to reach their citizens.

Providing permanent public access to the laws and proposed legislation of a country is another major requirement for fostering democracy and the rule of law, and for ensuring an informed citizenry. However, many countries still fail to make the laws governing the country easily accessible; nor do many parliaments provide timely information about the lawmaking process. For example, a substantial number of parliaments at all income levels take a week or more to post information about their plenary sessions on their websites.

It is well documented that ICT tools can assist parliaments in performing their legislative, oversight, and representative functions. However, legislatures have been slow in transforming this potential into accomplishments. The 2009 survey results show that strategic planning needs to be implemented in more parliaments, that parliaments in developing countries have insufficient infrastructures for supporting their work, that there are too few fully operational document management systems, that progress in adopting XML has been slow, and that libraries often lack sufficient ICT support to accomplish their role. While the figures for training of ICT staff and members are positive, more needs to be done to improve member understanding and use of ICT and to sustain the training efforts in developing countries.

Because of the critical need of parliaments in developing countries for financial and technical support, the contributions of the international donor community and legislatures in higher income countries are especially important. In order to maximize the benefits of parliamentary assistance initiatives, greater coherence among programmes must be achieved and duplication of effort reduced. It is also vital to recognize that ICT is essential to the success of efforts directed at strengthening the most important functions of parliaments and that technology must be a central part of all such programmes. In addition, promoting more inter-parliamentary collaboration in capacity development can contribute substantially to a more effective and sustainable approach to helping emerging democracies and legislatures in low income countries make progress toward e-parliament.

Within the e-Parliament Framework 2010 – 2020, the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament shall act as a catalyst and clearing house for information, research, innovation and technology, as well as a hub for a new approach to technical assistance in the ICT domain that, in cooperation with the donor community, mobilizes the expertise of advanced parliaments to respond to the needs of peer institutions. The results of the 2009 survey provide indicators of the current status of parliaments in relation to the goals expressed in the Framework. Future surveys will be instrumental in monitoring progress made at the global level.