Chapter 16

E-Governance and Natural Hazards in Mozambique: A Challenge for Backcasting Method Used for Flood Risk Management Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Strategic planning is a decisive process toward sustainable development for any organization. Mozambique has developed many tools toward good governance, among which Poverty Alleviation Strategy Paper (PARPA) is an umbrella. PARPA includes different key decisive segments of society, particularly the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as the pool for development. This chapter investigates to what extent e-Governance, particularly the development of strategies based on ICTs, can contribute to minimize the impact of floods at local governments by addressing best practice and decision-making process. The authors address backcasting methodology as an approach to consider in a participatory strategic planning for long-term decision-making processes. They use Chökwe District as a showcase where e-governance has an impact in mitigating and preventing the impact of floods.

1. INTRODUCTION

Electronic Governance (e-Governance) is exhaustively discussed in the last decades, especially when comes to evaluate the provision of services based on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools by the governments. Special emphasis is given to the application of internet more particularly, the World Wide Web, and mobile facilities; e-Governance is defined as: "the public sector’s use of information and commu-
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Communication technologies with the aim of improving information and service delivery, encouraging citizen participation in the decision-making process and making government more accountable, transparent and effective” (Onyancha 2000).

Bakus (2001) classifies e-governance as more than just a government website on the Internet and defines it as ”an application of electronic means a) relationship between citizen and government and business and governments as well as b) internal activities developed by governments to improve and simplify democratic, government and business actions of governance”. The author stresses e-Governance’s strategic objective as the support and simplification of all activities of governance to the citizens, business and government, see Figure 1.

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between main groups in e-governance, namely: government to government at central and local levels, government to citizen and government to other stakeholders such as business, NGOs and civil society.

Different approach of e-Governance is given by the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD) within the framework of the e-Africa Initiative for Good Governance in (Misuraca 2012). Our survey shows that there is no single definition of e-governance, neither a universal one. Misuraca (2012) brings three main postulates of e-governance: 1) e-governance as customer satisfaction; 2) e-governance as processes and interactions and 3) e-governance as tools. This creates our motivation to investigate to what extent local governments, particularly in Mozambique, are able to interact and use ICT facilities for e-governance and decision making and contribute to mitigate and prevent the impact of natural hazards, particularly floods at local governments.

This paper has twofold focuses: on one hand we analyze the relationship between government to citizen and government to government at local level. On another hand we evaluate to what extent the usage of e-governance facilities could support and facilitate the ordinary citizen to prevent and mitigate the impact of floods, provided that the local authorities are responsible in delivering good governance. We develop this research to investigate to what extent the role of ICT is deliverable at local level, provided that Mozambique has clear policies and strategies in the field of ICT and poverty eradication.

Figure 1. Interactions between main groups in e-Governance
Source: (Bakus 2001)
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