

Chapter III

Implementing the Vision: Management, Planning and Resources

Effective management and organization, adequate planning, and resources allocated on the basis of established priorities are the keys to the successful implementation of the vision. Management encompasses the entire parliament and can be a special challenge because of the political nature of legislative bodies, their complex organizations, and sometimes subtle decision-making processes. Planning builds on the vision statement and establishes projects, timelines, and resources for achieving the goals and objectives of the parliament. It includes the ongoing process of strategic planning and utilizes procedures such as project management and tools such as enterprise architecture to achieve its ends. Financial and human resources can be estimated from the planning process, although the unique nature of parliaments requires the particular skills of technical staff who can work successfully in the legislative environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

Transforming the vision for an e-parliament into reality involves significant management responsibilities. After the goals and values have been established through the vision statement, the political leadership of parliament must continue to exercise an appropriate degree of oversight. Even if much of this responsibility is delegated, as it happens in many instances, there must be a clear indication from the leaders that they retain a level of involvement sufficient to ensure that the critical goals of the legislature are met.

Box 3.1

“The experience in South Africa of undertaking a major transformation of technology in the parliament illustrates the critical need for strong political leadership combined with a strong technical ICT team and strong management by parliamentary officers.”

Geoffrey Q.M. Doidge, House Chairperson: Committees, National Assembly of South Africa
Statement at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007

Members too must remain engaged and provide feedback as new systems and technology are introduced. They must be willing to assess how well these services are meeting their needs as individual legislators and representatives, the needs of the committees on which they serve, and the needs of the plenary sessions in which they debate. The implementation of technology requires continual adjustments based on the evaluation of users, and members are central to this effort.

The Secretary General, the Director of ICT, and their respective staff are also essential to the effective introduction and management of ICT. Together, these two officers embody a thorough knowledge of how the parliament works, and how ICT can best serve its needs.

Because of the responsibility of the Secretary General over the efficient operations of the whole parliament administration, it is vital for this senior officer to play a major role in the management of ICT. As various departments under the supervision of the Secretary General may have diverging objectives, the Secretary General needs to ensure coherence, cooperation and the resolution of competing goals. The Secretary General also bears special responsibility for communication between the departments responsible for the implementation and use of ICT and the leaders and members of parliament.

Box 3.2

“We Secretaries General have a specific commitment to maintain in our respective parliaments that is to make efforts to open the dialogue between our members and officials who work with ICT. At the Riksdag, ever since we started the computerization process, members have shown a considerable interest in getting involved in the issue of ICT development. This has taken place in various forums of expert and reference groups, where it has been possible to convey the members’ views and wishes directly to the relevant officials working with ICT development.”

Anders Forsberg, President of the ASGP and Secretary General of the Parliament of Sweden
Opening address at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007

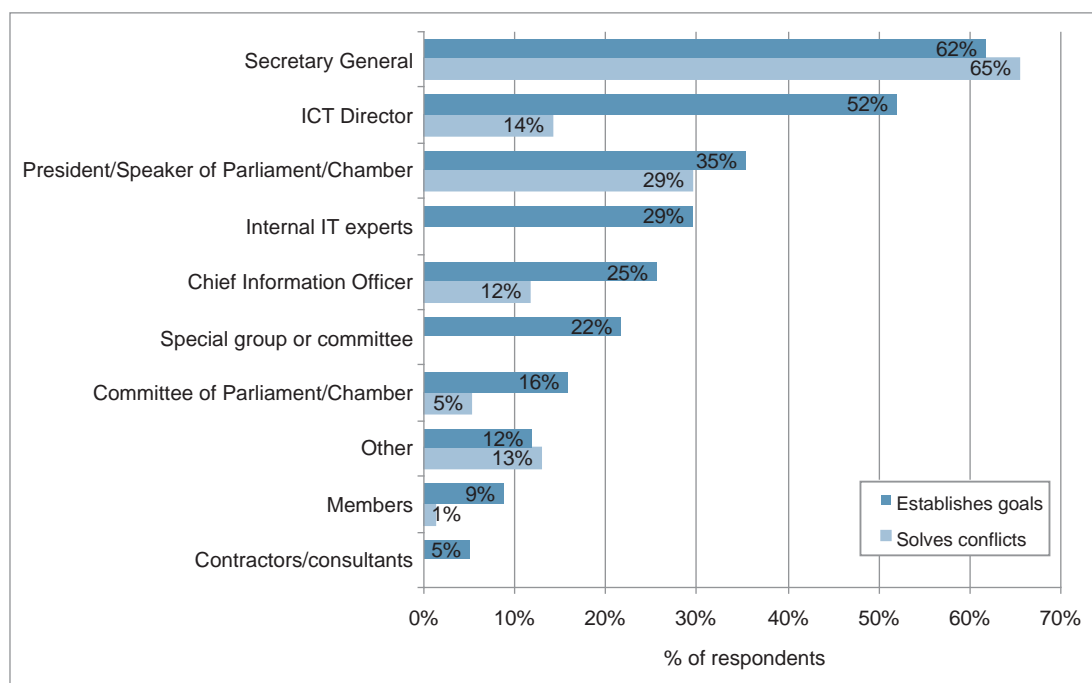
The Director of ICT is essential to ensuring that the technical work that is undertaken is fully responsive to the needs of the parliament, and that it complies with the objectives of the strategic plan. Skilled staff can have an important influence on the way parliamentarians view technology. They must be able to translate their knowledge into proposals that are understandable to members, particularly to those that do not have a technical background, in order to gain their trust and support. ICT staff must focus their attention on what parliament needs most, rather than on the underlying technologies themselves. Two concrete practices exemplify well how legislatures can approach this: the Parliament of South Africa has included ICT staff in its strategic planning forums, while the Parliament of Sweden has started to organize seminars focusing on ICT trends attended by both members and technical staff.

The nature and importance of the relationship between the Secretary General and the Director of ICT is well expressed in the following comments provided by survey respondents.

- The strategy for new technology and communication matters depends on the authority of the Secretary General who ensures the monitoring, coordination and implementation of projects. The Director of ICT, in collaboration with the concerned departments, submits the master plan, feasibility assessments, and project action plans on the basis of the needs of the legislature.
- Goals and objectives are set by the ICT Director based on directives from the Secretary General and the Chief of Informatics.

The roles and responsibilities outlined above are reflected in the findings from the survey. The officials mentioned most often by respondents as being responsible for setting the goals and objectives for ICT in parliaments are in fact the Secretary General and the Director of ICT. As Figure 3-1 illustrates, the Secretary General is also mentioned most often as the person who resolves conflicts among competing goals and objectives.

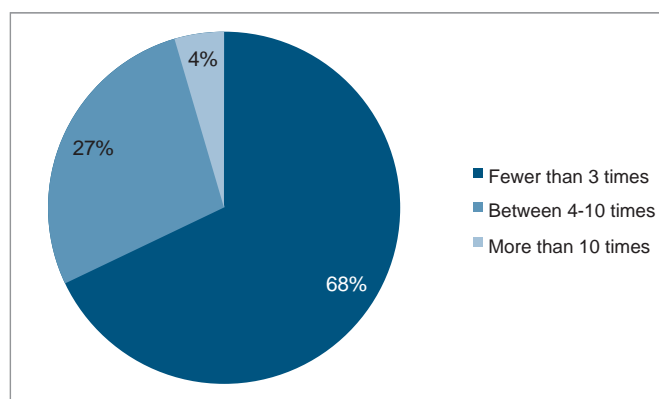
Figure 3-1: Responsibility for establishing goals and objectives and for solving possible conflicts



Results ranked in descending order of percentage of responses on who establishes goals.
(Source: Survey, Section 1, Questions 3 and 4. Multiple responses possible)

In most parliaments, the political leadership is involved in setting goals relatively few times per year. This undoubtedly reflects the many time demands that confront these leaders and the fact that they delegate much of this responsibility to the Secretary General or others. However, the key to their oversight of ICT is not the amount of time they spend but their effectiveness in communicating their goals for technology within the parliament.

Figure 3-2: Yearly involvement of the political leadership in deciding on or reviewing the status of ICT



(Source: Survey, Section 1, Question 5)

(Total may not adapt to 100% because of rounding. This may happen in subsequent figures)

ORGANIZATIONAL OPTIONS IN A PARLIAMENTARY SETTING

A healthy e-parliament is one which fosters the free exchange of information among all stakeholders and in which everyone - from the President or Speaker to the newest member of the technical staff - is engaged in collaborating, sharing ideas, and building the best technical solution for the legislative body.

This requires involving all stakeholders in a way that builds consensus, establishes partnerships, and fosters organizational cooperation. Teams must work together with an understanding of their interdependence and a respect for each other's responsibilities and knowledge. They must all have the interest and commitment to see that the ICT projects most appropriate to the work of the legislature are undertaken and successfully completed. They also need to be aware of the risks of pursuing the latest trends in technology for their own sake while remaining open to new technologies that can enhance, and in some cases even transform, the legislative process for the better.

Box 3.3

“Argentina has undertaken a major Institutional Strengthening Plan to improve parliamentary and administrative management capacity to foster transparency. A key feature of this effort is the combined engagement of the President of the Senate, Members, officers, coordinators, project leaders, and a consolidated ICT staff.”

Roberto Reale, Advisor to the President of the Senate and Coordinator of the Institutional Strengthening Programme of the Senate of Argentina
Presentation delivered at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007

There are a variety of ways to create such an organization, ranging from a very centralized approach to a very decentralized one. As the value of technology has become increasingly apparent, more groups within the parliament have started to lobby for resources. In the private sector, as ICT have emerged as a mission critical tool, control has often moved upward within the organization. In some legislative bodies control has followed a similar path, while in others it has remained decentralized and shared among members, committees, the secretariat, special groups and the office of the Speaker.

The centralized and decentralized approaches are both viable models if they are well managed, if systems are designed to interoperate efficiently, and if there is coordination when there are separate chambers. In a legislative body there is a significant degree of independence among its constituent components. This can sometimes lead to inefficiencies, but it more closely mirrors the true nature of legislatures. What is essential is that there is good communication and accepted methods for resolving conflicts among competing components within the organization.

As highlighted in Box 3.3, the Senate of Argentina offers one example of how the necessary coordination can be accomplished by establishing clear organizational roles and responsibilities from the top down. Figure 3-3 shows in fact that there are two Secretaries managing the process and a planning coordination unit that operates below them to provide direction to the operational teams.

The Chamber of Deputies of Italy has taken a somewhat different approach. It has created an ICT Strategic Group comprised of major stakeholders to establish priorities and ensure that all systems are interoperable and make use of common open standards. The group is responsible for preparing the Annual Strategic ICT Plan for the Chamber of Deputies and also for providing coordination and

guidance to all cross-departmental plans, projects and initiatives related to ICT.

The group consists of the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretaries General, the Head of the ICT Department, the Head of the Website Office, the Head of the Library's Special Office for organizing the comprehensive digital information system, and officials responsible for crucial projects related to ICT. As reported by Mr. Alessandro Palanza, Deputy Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy, one result has been that "...most of our data [has] moved into a single framework, interconnecting different activities and changing our working methods in all departments".¹

Bicameral legislatures face additional organizational challenges because they usually have separate departments and often separate systems for each chamber. The global survey found that out of 37 responding bicameral legislatures only 27% had a single or shared ICT department while 73% had separate departments.²

Some bicameral legislatures are attempting to implement a more unified approach. Recently, for example, the Parliament of the United Kingdom has restructured its ICT operation and created an enterprise-wide organization that serves both the House of Lords and the House of Commons called Parliamentary Information and Communication Technologies (PICT). Among its goals, PICT aims at reducing the complexity, redundancy, and the cost of systems while improving the quality of service. The Parliament of Australia has implemented a variation on this approach by establishing a central facility to provide both chambers with infrastructure, support and parliament-wide systems. However, each chamber is responsible for providing desktop and office-based ICT equipment and department specific systems. Both of these approaches continue to be evaluated.

The survey results show that most parliaments seek inputs from a variety of users and stakeholders when they are establishing goals and projects for ICT. Respondents report that proposals come from a number of groups, and, as Figure 3-4 shows, it is interesting to note that some even receive ideas from the public.

The high percentage of respondents who mentioned ICT staff is understandable and reassuring, given their responsibility for the final results. Of particular note is that members are mentioned by almost half of the chambers surveyed, and that the library and information department staff are mentioned by over 40% of them. Staff of the library are often among the most knowledgeable about ICT in parliaments and can be a source for good ideas regarding the best uses of technology.

Figure 3-3: Organization for ICT in the Senate of Argentina

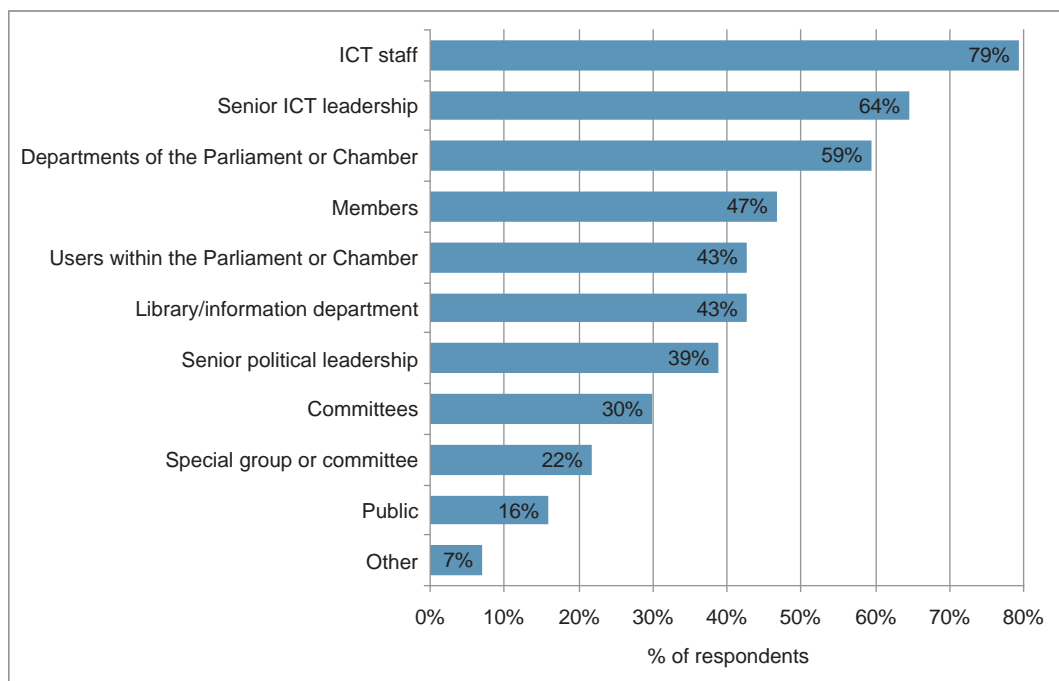


(Source: Presentation of the Senate of Argentina at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007)

1 Presentation at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007.

2 Source: Survey, Section 1, Questions 1 and 2.

Figure 3-4: Source of ideas and proposals for ICT goals and projects



(Source: Survey, Section 1, Question 7)

In addition to the specific stakeholders and staff listed in Figure 3-4, almost two-thirds of respondents (62%) indicated that formal or informal working groups from different departments make recommendations.³

These findings show the diversity of stakeholders and, by implication, the challenges likely to occur in managing so many potentially competing interests.

The following comments further illustrate the variety of organizational approaches used by parliaments for obtaining inputs and establishing goals and objectives for ICT.

- A Vice-President has oversight for all ICT matters. The ICT Director reports to the Deputy Secretary General who is also Director General of the Presidency, who in turn reports to the Secretary General; a Comité Directeur de l'Informatique assembles representatives of all the Directorates General. An IT plan is drawn up on an annual basis in order to reflect the goals and objectives of the user DGs.
- The President of the Board of Directors directs the administrative services, among which is ICT. These, in turn, are administered by the Secretary General.
- The ICT Director proposes goals and objectives to Board of Management for approval.
- ICT staff come up with proposals to assist the Chief Information Officer. The Secretary General of Parliament provides guidance and supervision.
- The Clerk to the House approves projects/initiatives proposed by standing committees or by a Clerk Assistant to the House who is in charge of IT. Example: Installation of a local area network in the Parliamentary Chamber was suggested in the House Business Committee. Other projects such as a parliamentary website, digital recording and transcription of the debates and standing committee meetings, streaming of the said meetings were put forward by the Officer in charge of IT.

³ Source: Survey, Section 1, Question 8.

- The Chief Information Officer is responsible for identifying needs concerning the ICT of deputies and of administration and is responsible for making suggestions to the Secretary General.

All of these organizational modalities require mechanisms for resolving conflicts. Political compromise – the most common approach in a legislative body – may not be the most efficient or cost effective solution when deciding among ICT priorities, but it is often necessary. Because of the diverse organizational interests within typical legislatures, accommodation of the competing needs of different individuals and groups may be required to achieve consensus and political approval. For this reason, informal decision-making and cooperation are frequently the preferred means for resolving conflicts. This can work well in parliaments so long as it does not cause resources to be disbursed so widely that high priority projects cannot be completed satisfactorily.

THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

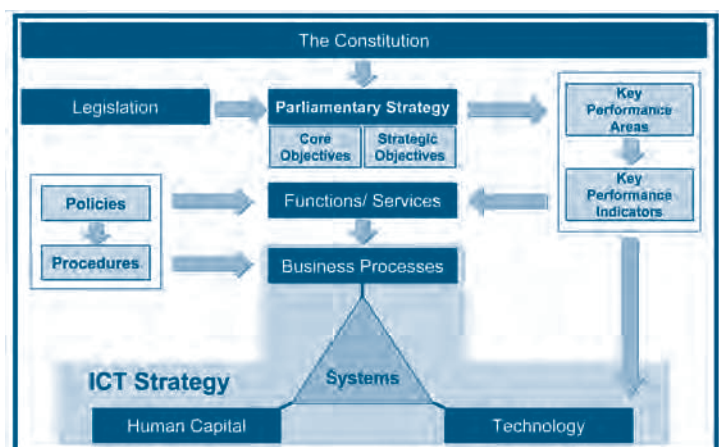
One of the primary tools for managers to move from vision to implementation is the strategic planning process. Once the vision is established and ideas for projects have been gathered, the strategic planning process turns the vision and the approved ideas into specific projects with timelines and resources. Strategic plans for parliaments should be comprehensive and cover all areas of ICT development, which are usually interdependent.

In general, the strategic planning process involves a series of steps beginning with the laying out of specific goals and objectives. This is followed by the development of strategies and action plans for achieving those objectives, the assignment of management responsibility and allocation of resources for their implementation, and the establishment of criteria for the assessment and evaluation of specific projects so that appropriate adjustments can be made as needed. Strategic planning is the key process to identify and decide on the individual steps to be undertaken during the implementation process.

Figure 3-5 refers to the comprehensive nature of strategic planning for ICT in the Parliament of South Africa. It illustrates a high-level approach that views the ICT strategy in the context of the overall strategy of the parliament. The strategy, as the diagram illustrates, is derived from the business processes of the parliament, and encompasses *Technology* (hardware and software), *Systems* and *Human Capital* (people). These in turn are based on the *Functions and Services* of the *Parliamentary Strategy*, which encompass *Core Objectives* and *Strategic Objectives*. The *Parliamentary Strategy* derives from the *Constitution*.

Strategic planning is not a single document or product. It is a holistic process that provides for the review, revision, and updating of plans on a continuing basis as goals, objectives, technologies, projects, and resources change. It is a means for ensuring that ICT initiatives remain focused on the goals of the parliament, and that they occur on an appropriate schedule and with the appropriate resources. It also incorporates a disciplined process for gathering user requirements. This approach helps to ensure that the system will, in fact, meet the needs of the users

Figure 3-5: ICT strategy formulation rationale



(Source: Presentation of the Parliament of South Africa at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007)

and that they will be active participants in the development and testing process.

Strategic planning forces two key issues to the forefront in the management of technology: establishing priorities and evaluating results. Because resources are always constrained in some fashion, one of the most useful purposes of the planning process is to enable the legislature to determine priorities among competing objectives. Equally important, it must continually be able to assess the results of projects and weigh the benefit of resources invested.

Priorities are sometimes based on the logic and requirements of the technology. For example, the development of an application to support the drafting, amending and distribution of proposed bills among members and the secretariat will require resources for software and programmers to build the system. However, in order for the application to be used, resources will also be required for the acquisition, installation, and support of PCs and a network. In this case, the development of the application and the supporting hardware, software, and communications systems are all required and all will need to be funded and staffed to achieve the objectives of the project.

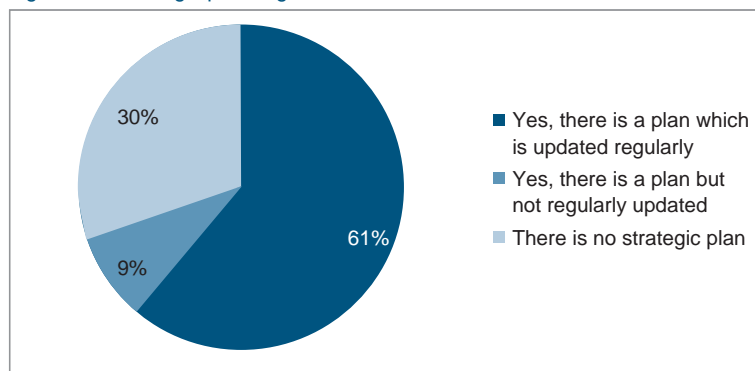
There can be conflicts between legitimate goals that do not involve resources. For example, the office responsible for recording the legislative actions of the parliament may want those actions to be displayed in the most precise and accurate fashion, even if the official language used to describe them is difficult for an average person to comprehend. This may conflict with the goal of making the actions of the parliament transparent and understandable to citizens through the parliament’s website. Both are sound objectives. The conflict between them will surface as a result of the strategic planning process and will need to be resolved.

The most difficult conflicts, however, usually involve projects which contend for the same limited pool of resources. A decision regarding allocations will have to be based on the relative importance of each of the competing priorities. The goal to provide every member with a personal computer, for example, may compete for the resources needed to develop a website for the parliament and a choice, often involving some form of compromise, will need to be made.

Strategic planning brings the issue of resources and demands into sharp focus and provides the parliament with an overall picture that will enable it to understand the scope of the investments it is making and the effort in time and money that will be required. With this knowledge, the parliament can determine the priority of each requirement and the impact of making those choices. Strategic planning, based on an established vision, helps a parliament decide where to allocate its funds and its staff, and the likely impact of those decisions. It does this by requiring a decision not on the technology itself, but on the larger goals and objectives of the parliament. The criteria for an e-parliament, therefore, is not how many PCs or servers or applications a chamber has, but how well it is able

to support its most important goals through the effective use of technology. It does not matter whether those goals entail providing members with ICT tools, preparing and distributing proposed bills as soon as they are available, recording plenary debates in digital format, or some other objective. What matters is the focused application of technology to achieve the goals that have the highest priority for each chamber.

Figure 3-6: Strategic planning



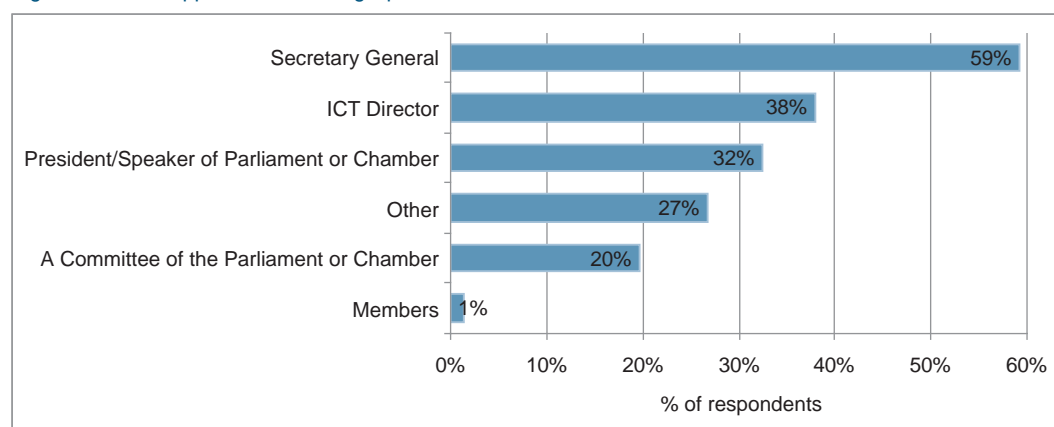
(Source: Survey, Section 1, Questions 12 and 14)

As mentioned before, evaluation of results is also an essential component of the strategic planning process. To successfully manage the transition to e-parliament, a legislature must determine the effectiveness of the ICT projects undertaken to achieve its goals. This requires establishing in advance the measurable outcomes expected from the investment of resources (for example, faster availability of draft bills, savings from printing, access to more information about the budget), and an objective method for quantifying the results. This final step leads back to the beginning of the process where goals and objectives are reviewed and reaffirmed (or modified), resources allocated or reallocated, and responsibilities adjusted as necessary. Without this final assessment phase, the management of ICT is uninformed and decisions are made in the absence of a real understanding of the effect of technology on the work of the parliament.

Findings from the survey show that many parliaments are actively engaged in strategic planning. 70% indicated that they have a strategic plan with goals, objectives, and timetables for ICT. The vast majority also stated that the plan is updated regularly.

When there is a strategic plan, this is approved for 59% of the chambers and parliaments by the Secretary General, for 38% by the ICT Director and for 32% by the President/Speaker. A committee is involved in the approval process for 20% of respondents. Strategic plans often need to be approved at several levels and by several different groups within parliament, and the survey allowed for multiple responses to the question in recognition of this fact. Although the Director of ICT is mentioned second most often, 57% of respondents indicated that the Director reports to the Secretary General, further underscoring the importance of that official in the management of ICT and the strategic planning process.⁴

Figure 3-7: Who approves the strategic plan



(Source: Survey, Section 1, Question 13. Multiple responses possible)

Project management and enterprise architecture

In addition to the strategic planning process, other valuable management tools include formal project management procedures and the development of an enterprise architecture for the governance and management of existing and future technologies. Both of these techniques aid in carrying out approved plans and projects and enable decision makers to track progress, correct problems, and ensure the appropriate allocation or reallocation of resources as needed.

65% of respondents stated that they use project management tools for new initiatives. Of those that do, about two thirds said that projects are managed by the ICT department, 18% by the owner of the project and 14% by "other". About 60% of respondents have developed an enterprise architecture.⁵ The percentages of chambers employing project management and enterprise architecture are indicative of

⁴ Source: Survey, Section 1, Question 6.

⁵ Source: Survey, Section 1, Questions 9 and 15.

the substantial use of modern management approaches and techniques by ICT departments in parliaments. It will be important to see if this trend continues to increase in the future.

Figure 3-8 shows the linkages between the vision and the strategy and the subsequent stages of business case development, project scope definition, requirements development and the system delivery, roll out and evaluation.

RESOURCES

ICT are an investment designed to enhance the work of parliaments. Accomplishing this goal requires substantial resources to build the technical infrastructure and to develop the necessary applications. ICT are also a dynamic world that involves continual costs for maintenance, upgrades and replacements. Even with collaborative development efforts and open source software, the direct costs for hardware, software, and systems will always be high for any parliament. There are startup costs and replacement costs that cannot be avoided and for which there are relatively few economies.

In addition to funding for the components of technology, a critical resource that deserves special attention is the need for well-trained, highly qualified in-house ICT staff. While some tasks and services can be outsourced, there is still a need for skilled managers to oversee this work. This need can be difficult to meet because of salaries and opportunities that are available to ICT staff in other sectors of the economy and even in other countries. On the other hand, the nature of the work of parliament requires a special understanding in order to develop responsive ICT services. This understanding can often take years to acquire, and knowledge gained in the private sector does not always translate effectively into the legislative setting.

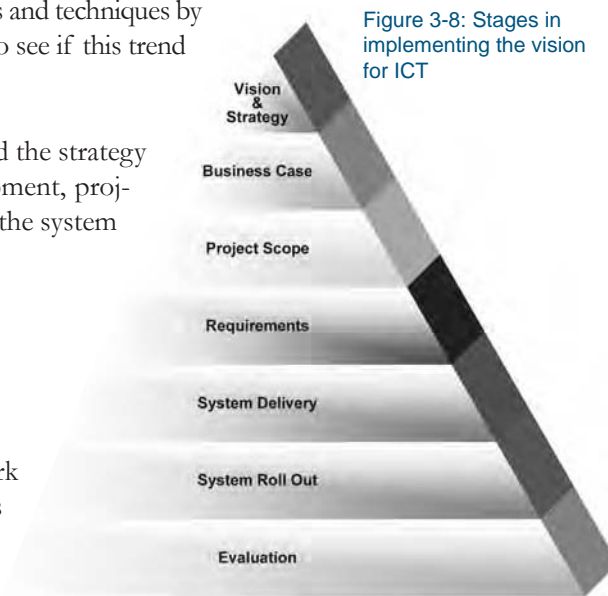


Figure 3-8: Stages in implementing the vision for ICT

(Source: Global Centre for ICT in Parliament)

“If we think about the major challenges to effective use of ICT in parliament in some countries, one of them in fact has only little to do with ICT. It is the human resources available within parliaments - the people with the skills and knowledge that are needed to plan, build, manage and use ICT systems.”

Anders B. Johansson, Secretary General, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Opening address at the World e-Parliament Conference 2007

A parliament may create a clear vision, develop an effective strategic plan and have experienced managers in the offices of the Secretary General and the Director of ICT. But without skilled and dedicated staff knowledgeable about parliaments and the legislative process, they will be hard pressed to achieve their vision, accomplish their strategic goals, complete their projects, and enhance the effectiveness of the institution. Visions, plans, managers and organization are all necessary but insufficient without good in-house technical staff.

KNOWLEDGE OF ICT

Even though information technology is widely available in most societies today, many in parliament – both members and officials in the secretariat – have not yet acquired the adequate knowledge about ICT. This can create barriers to the effective use of technology by members and to the establishment of the policies and plans for its development within the legislature. To a certain extent this problem will resolve itself over time as the current members and leaders of legislative bodies, and their senior staff, are succeeded by those who have grown up in the information society. In the meantime, there are a number of ways to address this problem, including greater sharing of practices among parliaments, the use of experts who have worked extensively with legislatures, and reliance on those members and staff who do have the knowledge and experience to advise on the most appropriate uses of technology.

Helping members themselves become effective users of technology presents special challenges. While staff are often motivated or can be required to attain a level of proficiency with ICT, most members do not have the time or the inclination to attend training classes. They often rely on personal or shared staff to use technology on their behalf. But many still need to be able to use ICT themselves in a number of situations. This means that the technology must be easy to understand and use, be reliable, and provide valuable information and services. Meeting these requirements can be made easier through several methods, such as an extensive and disciplined approach to gathering and understanding user needs, the employment of formal usability testing procedures, a responsive help desk, and an ongoing programme to obtain user feedback and continuously improve systems and support.

COMMENTS ON PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

The section of the survey dealing with management and organization elicited many comments regarding parliamentary practices. It is clear from the contributions received that a number of chambers have thought extensively about how best to manage and organize ICT, solicit ideas and develop plans for projects, and monitor progress. It is also clear that this is a dynamic area in which practices, and consequently lessons learned, continue to evolve. A number of these comments are included below to illustrate some of the approaches that parliaments are finding helpful.

- 1. We have developed formal business planning and programme/project planning techniques which have assisted us in forming a comprehensive three-year programme of work. 2. We have introduced formal management and quality assurance monitoring and performance dashboards in order to understand more objectively if our service levels are improving. 3. We have introduced (but are still in the preliminary stages) business-run ICT planning groups to assist the business side of Parliament to cohesively request and manage their requirements of ICT.
- 1. A steering committee follows up on ICT projects and speeds up implementation. 2. ICT should have highly qualified and certified IT professionals plus the strategy of outsourcing some projects for faster implementation.
- A Committee of Systems was formed which includes not only the chiefs of each area but also professionals whose competencies merit inclusion. This approach has given us good results.
- A)Establish and maintain the management contracts on a clear and formal basis; B) Develop internal competence, both on technical and managerial aspects; C) Adhere to standards, as long as possible, with adaptations as necessary; D) Re-evaluate plans and priorities on a regular basis (annually, for example).

- All departments of Parliament, Committees and especially Committee on ICT can propose what should be done. The department of ICT develops a project or plan including annual plans and sends to Board of Management for approval. Board of Management consists of the Secretary General and Heads of Department. The Parliamentary Commission makes the final decision.
- Periodic meetings are held with all ICT staff to inform them about current and planned activities. Periodic meetings among all ICT managers are held to define, review, and adjust plans. We involve politicians in strategic technical decisions and look for their commitment.
- Specific objectives of ICT steering committee: 1. to create and maintain an enabling environment in order to ensure the best chances for ICT programmes and initiatives development within the Parliament; 2. to monitor and evaluate the implementation of each ICT programme and initiative and their proper execution and coordination; 3. to identify programmes, initiatives or action plans that encounter shortfalls and provide advice as to their reorientation, modification or cancellation; 4. to identify problems associated with the implementation of specific programs, initiatives and corresponding action plans; 5. to collect and analyse relevant plan monitoring and evaluation data and information to document the status of the programmes, initiatives and associated action plans; 6. to prepare and submit to the Parliament regular reports to be forwarded to relevant national ICT authority in due course.
- The Centre for Information Technology and Telecommunications develops and evaluates programs relating to services in parliamentary and administrative units. These are submitted to the Secretary General of Administrative Services who analyzes their usefulness and verifies the availability of resources. These are then passed to the Committee on Administration and then to the Board, which is responsible for final approval/disapproval. The Board instructs the Secretary General, who then passes approved projects to the Center for Information Technology for implementation.
- The ICT Director tables any ICT recommendations to the committee comprised of Heads of Department (Committee overseeing Parliamentary Reforms and Modernization). The committee analyses and evaluates the recommendations before making any decision.
- The informatics plan (master plan) is the guide which is followed for the application of ICT in the Senate. In its conception it takes into account the needs of senators, parliamentary groups and the Secretary General, and the ideas of interested users. Direction and coordination are done by the Secretary General.
- There has been major administrative change in the parliament over the last few years and governance arrangements for ICT across the parliament are not finalized. It may take some time to be able to reflect on what lessons have been learned.

SUMMARY

The successful implementation of ICT in parliament depends on several key elements. The first is an engaged group of stakeholders committed to the process. It includes the President or Speaker, members, the Secretary General and the Director of ICT. The officials of the secretariat play an especially important role in ensuring communication and appropriate involvement at all levels, along with sound technical practices and project management. The Secretary General in particular has a central role in informing and advising the leadership and the membership regarding technology, and in overseeing planning and implementation by the technical managers and staff.

Second, the organizational structure should encourage inputs from all key stakeholders and cooperation and collaboration at all levels. There are various ways to achieve these objectives through both formal and informal means. It is essential that these stakeholders have the motivation to work together, recognize their interdependence and be focused on the needs of parliament as well as their particular department or organization.

Third, implementation requires strategic planning, the use of formal project management procedures, and the development of an enterprise architecture. Strategic planning takes the goals and objectives of the vision statement together with the projects and proposals of stakeholders and users, assesses their feasibility and cost, and develops plans, schedules, and resource requirements. The strategic planning process enables a parliament to establish priorities and to allocate resources based on those priorities. It also ensures that tradeoffs and compromises among priorities are made on an informed basis and knowledge of the probable consequences of those decisions.

Finally, ICT are an investment that requires adequate financial and staff resources. Funding is always less than needed to meet demand; sound management and planning processes enable parliaments to assess the full scope of the financial requirements and to allocate appropriately. Staff resources require particular attention because of the special nature of parliamentary bodies and the need for ICT experts who also understand the way parliaments work.

There are a variety of ways for parliaments to meet the need for good management, organization and planning. However, regardless of the methods adopted, the effectiveness of a parliament's approach must ultimately be judged by the results. The following observation serves as a useful summary of this principle for the successful implementation of ICT in parliament.

Box 3.5

“Focusing on the needs and culture of members, involving politicians with ICT experts, and designing parliamentary websites so that they are seen as the knowledge base of parliamentary activity contributes substantially to a successful implementation of ICT in parliament.”

Respondent to Survey