

## Chapter 10

# Advancing Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation

### INTRODUCTION

While parliaments make efforts to capitalize on the advantages of information and communication technologies, there is no doubt that the next years will continue to be characterized by the growing penetration and pervasiveness of technology in all societies. Governing institutions such as legislatures will need to adapt to an evolving environment where social, economic and cultural components can be altered by the introduction of new devices, as is happening with the diffusion of tablets and smart phones; by the innovative use of technology, such as cloud computing and open data initiatives; or, by the integration of these developments by individuals and groups to generate political and social transformations.

Yet, the search for individual solutions by parliaments to respond to the global phenomenon of rapid change in technology may not be sufficient to keep ahead, or even abreast, of developments. A collective approach by legislatures could be the most effective and most efficient approach.

As discussed in the *World e-Parliament Report 2008* and the *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, parliaments have relied on a long tradition of bilateral and multilateral cooperation at many levels on a wide array of mutual interests and needs. For many years cooperation and exchanges have taken place among members and among parliamentary administrations to learn from the experiences of others. With the establishment of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union have provided legislatures with a needed and innovative instrument through which common technology issues could be identified, analyzed and discussed at a global level among peers, both from the policy and technical perspectives.

Today, after the extensive exchanges of the past years, the use of technology as a means for fostering transparency, openness, accountability and efficiency is high on the agenda of the parliamentary community. Parliaments' interest in this subject has been growing constantly as witnessed by the increased participation of legislatures in the World e-Parliament Conferences<sup>1</sup>, which have gradually become internationally recognized forums for addressing issues of concern. The Global Surveys of ICT in Parliaments<sup>2</sup> and the subsequent analyses and Reports have provided important input to these conferences. Chapters 5, 6 and 8 in this Report have already described how many parliaments have been receptive in participating in new forums for cooperation built around thematic issues, such as information management and open document standards, technology in parliamentary libraries and ICT strategic planning. These Chapters also

1 World e-Parliament Conferences were held in Geneva in 2007; Brussels in 2008; Washington D.C. in 2009; Midrand in 2010. The World e-Parliament Conference 2012 will take place in Rome.

2 105 parliaments responded to the survey in 2007, 134 in 2009 and 156 in 2012.

highlighted some of the initiatives related to technology that have been undertaken by presiding officers and political leaders.

There are, however, many untapped opportunities to promote a much higher level of cooperation and a culture of collaboration among legislative bodies. While the transfer of knowledge and exchange of good practices have value in themselves, they may not be as valuable as activities that can result in concrete collaboration for devising common tools and applications or for the provision of shared services. Rather than continuing to work in isolation, many parliaments will gain more if they can learn how to collectively mobilize their human and financial resources to achieve greater ICT benefits. And placing systems and tools, generated by this type of collaboration, at the disposal of the parliamentary community should not be an exceptional occurrence but rather the normal practice.

Collaboration does not have boundaries and the potential advantages apply equally to parliaments regardless of their country's or region's income level. Achieving these benefits, however, requires a coordinated approach. It is likely that these efforts at collaboration will prosper if they are rooted in existing regional and global inter-parliamentary networks as they strive for sustainability with the support of peers. In this regard, the assistance of the international community of donors and development agencies could play a vital role in supporting long-term efforts through predictable and coherent aid programmes directed at ensuring that parliaments with less advanced technology options have the opportunity and the means to work with others to find affordable and effective solutions to common needs.

This Chapter provides an overview of the areas and possibilities where well-structured and organized initiatives of inter-parliamentary cooperation could lead to substantive benefits.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM 2007/2009 SURVEYS

The *World e-Parliament Report 2008* and *2010* explored the nature and extent of inter-parliamentary cooperation and collaboration at the general level and at a more detailed level focused on technology. The 2010 Report noted that since 2008 there had been significant advances in parliamentary networking by groups such as the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments and the Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network (APKN), as well as by legislatures in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, there had not been the same progress in the participation of parliaments in mechanisms of cooperation specifically dealing with ICT issues. While almost 60 per cent of parliaments reported that they were members of at least one parliamentary network, 22 per cent stated that they were not *planning or considering* such participation. Interestingly, legislatures in high and low income economies had the largest percentages of participation (76 per cent and 70 per cent respectively), while the participation of those in the upper and lower middle income levels was at about 40 per cent<sup>3</sup>. Given the demonstrated value of cooperation, the Report suggested that more needed to be done to encourage active involvement by parliaments from all income groups.

<sup>3</sup> See *World e-Parliament Report 2010* for all these figures.

At the international level, consensus had also emerged by 2010 on the need for the international community - including the community of technologically advanced legislatures - to strongly support parliaments in developing nations through collaboration on capacity development. The 2009 survey asked a series of questions that provided some indication of the primary areas and levels of collaboration. Just over one fourth (28 per cent) of parliaments *provided support* to other legislatures for developing their use of ICT. On the other hand, 46 per cent reported that they were *receiving assistance* in the area of ICT from other parliaments and from outside organizations. This finding underlined the significant role that other development actors also play, in addition to parliaments, in helping legislatures to strengthen their capacities in ICT<sup>4</sup>.

The 2009 survey results suggested ongoing and possibly increasing south-south inter-parliamentary cooperation or even south to north exchanges. Another interesting finding was the indication of a greater willingness to provide ICT support than expected across income groups, even from countries with lower income levels. Results underscored the opportunity for engaging more parliaments from high income countries - only 35 per cent of the legislatures from those countries were providing such support. The number of legislatures receiving support was predictably largest in low income countries (80 per cent), providing a clear indication that the combined efforts of the donor and parliament community were directed to those most in need<sup>5</sup>.

A further analysis of data showed that more than 50 per cent of parliaments that expressed a desire for support needed help in all of the ICT areas listed in the survey. The largest gaps between the ICT areas in which parliaments provided or were willing to provide assistance and the areas in which parliaments received or would have liked to receive assistance were in open document standards (-36 per cent), library and research services (-29 per cent), document management systems (-26 per cent) and communication with citizens (-26 per cent). The ICT areas that presented the easiest opportunities for concrete collaboration among parliaments were those where the gap between the offer and demand for support was smallest: ICT services for members and for plenary meetings, websites, hardware and software, ICT planning and ICT management<sup>6</sup>.

## RECENT PROGRESS

183

Since the release of the *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, the expansion of mechanisms for cooperation among legislatures has been progressing at the regional and international level. These cooperative efforts have taken various forms, including the reinforcement of existing, or the establishment of new, formal networks; the creation of international working groups on different matters related to ICT in parliament; and the organization of regional and global meetings.

### Formal parliamentary networks

#### Exchange Network of Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean (ENPLAC)<sup>7</sup>

In April 2011, the National Assembly of Panama and the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament organized and facilitated the international workshop “Leveraging ICT to establish a collaborative network among Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean” in Panama City. At this meeting,

4 See *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 153.

5 See *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, pp.154-155.

6 *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 156. Figure 9.5 shows a combined view of the areas in which support was currently provided or received or for which there was the willingness to do so.

7 See [www.ripalc.org](http://www.ripalc.org).

Secretaries General of sixteen parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean exchanged views and held consultations on the establishment of a formal mechanism for inter-parliamentary cooperation. By the end of the workshop, the Statutes, governance and implementation modalities of the *Exchange Network of Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean* were approved. The network was established as a collaborative mechanism for the sharing of knowledge, documentation and experiences on the broad range of parliamentary activities and services<sup>8</sup>. The secretariat of the network was assigned by consensus to the Chamber of Deputies of Brazil, which, since then, has developed and maintained its website<sup>9</sup>. It is worth mentioning that this portal has been designed taking into consideration the experiences and practices of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) and the African Parliamentary Knowledge Network (APKN).

Since 2011 ENPLAC has made steady progress by reaching out to all parliaments in the region and by coordinating the first initiatives under its framework, including the training course on XML mentioned in Chapter 5. While it is too early to assess the impact of this network, the expectations regarding the benefits to its members are considerable, both from within and outside the Latin American and Caribbean region.

#### **Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network (APKN)<sup>10</sup>**

Established in June 2008 at an International Conference attended by representatives from 37 national and regional assemblies from Africa, APKN has become instrumental in promoting common information services and high quality, continent-wide, capacity building programs for parliaments. With the agreement of a renewed council that took full ownership of the network, the secretariat of APKN was assigned to the Parliament of South Africa in 2010. Since then, meetings of the Council of Secretaries General have taken place regularly and activities of inter-parliamentary cooperation have increased steadily.

#### **European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD)**

The European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation was established in 1977 and throughout the years has been a useful means for inter-parliamentary cooperation and information exchange for its members<sup>11</sup>. The strengths of ECPRD are the system for comparative requests, the regular organization of seminars, the publication of studies and analyses, and a useful portal with parliamentary directories. In the framework of this network four Areas of Interest were created to allow focused discussion and knowledge sharing: Information and Communication Technology in Parliaments; Parliamentary Practice and Procedure; Parliamentary Libraries, Research and Archives; and Macro-Economic Research.

<sup>8</sup> The Report of the meeting is available at: <http://www.ictparliament.org/node/2832>.

<sup>9</sup> The Executive Committee of RIPALC is composed by the Secretary General of the Parliament of Barbados, the Director General of the Chamber of Deputies of Brazil, the Director General of the National Assembly of Nicaragua, the Secretary General of the National Assembly of Panama and the Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies of Uruguay. Correspondents were appointed by the Members of the Network.

<sup>10</sup> See [www.apkn.org](http://www.apkn.org).

<sup>11</sup> The European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Assembly of the Western European Union and all parliaments of member states or special guests at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe are members. For parliaments with two chambers, each chamber is a member in its own right. The Centre's services may also be used by parliaments having observer status in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe: Israel, Canada and Mexico and by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) of the United States of America.

The Area of Interest on ICT in Parliaments has been actively at work in the last two years. It has established discussion groups on themes such as ICT Governance and frameworks, Open Data, web sites, web services for mobile platforms, cloud computing, Media, Web 2.0. It has also organized seminars on themes such as parliamentary websites, mobile services, best practices for transparency and open parliament, and improvement of IT services at a time of budget constraints<sup>12</sup>.

### **Inter-Parliamentary EU information eXchange (IPEX)**

IPEX, the Inter-Parliamentary EU information eXchange, is a platform for the mutual exchange of information between the national Parliaments and the European Parliament concerning issues related to the European Union<sup>13</sup>. The main section of the IPEX website is represented by a database of draft European Union legislative proposals and related scrutiny in national parliaments; in addition, the website hosts a calendar of inter-parliamentary cooperation meetings in the European Union as well as links to national parliaments' websites. It also hosts the European Union Speakers Conference website.

Besides its ordinary activity in the framework of the EU legislation, IPEX received in 2010 a high level mandate to promote standardization and openness in EU institutions and Parliaments. The Presidency Conclusions of the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments, held in Stockholm on 14 and 15 May 2010, encouraged all initiatives aimed at establishing standards for digital data and documents so as to make information on the activities of parliaments and EU institutions more easily accessible and transparent, and entrusted the IPEX Board with this task. Under this mandate, the IPEX conducted a survey revealing that the number of parliaments in the EU using open standards is still limited despite the possible gains in terms of transparency, efficiency of administration, cost reduction, cooperation.

The meeting of Secretaries General held in Warsaw on 6 February 2012, already mentioned in Chapter 5, took into account the findings of the survey and gave IPEX a further mandate to initiate a cooperation process on this issue at the European and international level - namely with the ECPRD, the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, and the relevant EU institutions in order to establish a unique "information point" in the field of digital standardization. As mentioned before, the Presidency conclusions of the 2012 EU Speakers Conference in Warsaw noted the Conclusions of the meeting of the Secretaries General and encouraged initiatives for digital standardization, transparency and parliamentary openness.

### **Arab Institute for Parliamentary Training and Legislative Studies**

Besides the progress evidenced by these formal networks, it is worth mentioning that in January 2012 the National Assembly of Lebanon hosted a regional workshop for Arab parliaments in Beirut on the theme "Emerging trends and challenges for ICT in Parliament" This was the first activity of the Arab Institute for Parliamentary Training and Legislative Studies, a collaborative

12 For example: Seminar "Present and future of e-parliament services, technologies and inter-parliamentary cooperation", Bucharest (17-20 November 2010); Seminar Parli@ments on the Net IX - Third generation parliamentary websites, evolution or revolution", Brussels (12-13 May 2011); Seminar 'Do more with less: tight budgets and improved IT services to MPs and Administration', Athens (11-12 November 2011); Seminar 'Parli@ments on the Net X - Mobility, transparency and open parliament: best practices in Parliaments' web pages', Madrid (31 May – 1 June 2012).

13 See [www.ipex.eu](http://www.ipex.eu). The establishment of IPEX derives from a recommendation given by the Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the European Union in the year 2000.

effort of the Lebanese Parliament and the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, supported by SUNY's legislative strengthening project in Lebanon, funded by USAID<sup>14</sup>. The regional workshop was attended by Secretaries General from parliaments of the region, along with IT Directors, and addressed ICT management and policy issues.

## Working groups

### Working Group on social media

In June 2012, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament (ASGP), in association with the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament and the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services in Parliament, set up a working group of experts to prepare a draft document that provides practical guidance to parliaments about the use of social media to enhance representation and communication. The document will be tabled for discussion during a one-day parliamentary event to be held on 26 October 2012 in Quebec City, Canada, as part of the 127th IPU Assembly. The event is jointly organized by the IPU and the ASGP<sup>15</sup>.

### Working Group on Technological Options for Capturing and Reporting Parliamentary Proceedings

During a specialized session at the World e-Parliament Conference 2009, participants called for increased inter-parliamentary cooperation in the area of capturing and reporting parliamentary proceedings, in order to share available expertise on the implementation of different technological solutions. In July 2010, the European Parliament's Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD) organized, in cooperation with the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, the workshop "Technological Options for Recording Plenary and Committee Sessions in Parliament", which intended to build parliaments' capacity in the area of reporting proceedings. At the workshop participants recommended the establishment of a working group of parliamentary staff and experts to develop a handbook that would guide parliaments in selecting the appropriate technology to improve their preparation and publishing of parliamentary records. The working group has finalized its work and the handbook will soon be made available.

### Working Group on ICT in Parliamentary Libraries

As mentioned in Chapter 6 of this report, in July 2012 the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions published the Handbook *Information and Communication Technologies in Parliamentary Libraries*. The Handbook was prepared by the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament and the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments through a working group of parliamentary librarians and staff who worked collaboratively under the moderation of a senior expert.

14 More information can be found at [http://www.cid.suny.edu/newsroom/news2011/newsroom\\_2011\\_Institute.cfm](http://www.cid.suny.edu/newsroom/news2011/newsroom_2011_Institute.cfm).

15 See <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/asgp12.htm>.



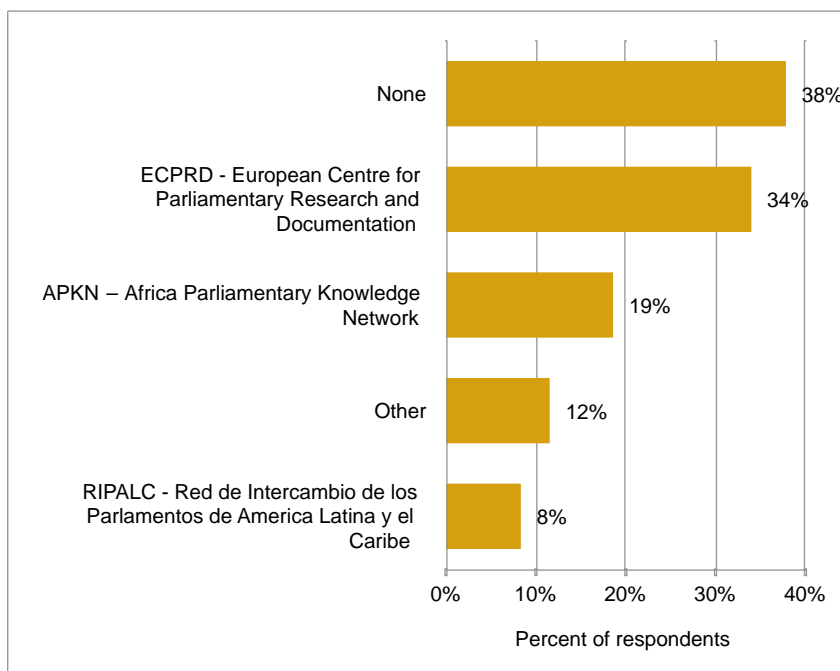
## FINDINGS FROM THE 2012 SURVEY

Questions regarding cooperation among parliaments in the 2012 Survey focused on the type and extent of participation in networking and sharing, and on the areas of ICT in which parliaments were willing to provide or wanted to receive assistance<sup>16</sup>.

### Extent of cooperation and participation in parliamentary networks

The 2012 survey first asked whether, for the purpose of exchanging information and experiences regarding the use of ICT, the parliament's staff participated in any of the specific networks listed in the response choices. Figure 10.1 shows the percentage of respondents in 2012 that identified each of the choices. The 2009 survey approached this issue somewhat differently. It asked first if the parliament participated in such networks<sup>17</sup>; for those that responded *yes* the survey then asked them to name the network(s), using an open ended format. For the purpose of comparing the results from the two years, an analysis was done of those that did not choose any networks in 2012 (considered to be the equivalent of *none*) and those who said *planning or considering* or *no* in 2009 (also considered to be the equivalent of *none*).

Figure 10.1: Participation in parliamentary networks



(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 1; 156 respondents)

The analysis indicated that the percentage of parliaments that answered the equivalent of *none* was approximately the same in both years: 2012=38 per cent; 2009=41 per cent<sup>18</sup>. Put affirmatively, these results mean that in 2009 59 per cent of parliaments said *yes they do participate* and in 2012 62 per cent said *yes, they do participate*. A further analysis by income level and year (see Figure 10.2) showed that parliaments in high income countries and low income countries had the highest

16 The questions in the 2012 survey differed slightly from those in the 2009 survey, but the results from the two surveys can still be usefully compared. The variations in wording are noted either in the main text below or in the appropriate footnotes.

17 The 2009 survey asked if *the parliament* participated; the 2012 asked if *the parliament's staff* participated".

18 Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 1; *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 152, Figure 9.1.

percentage of participants in 2012 (81 per cent and 70 per cent respectively) and the lowest percentage of non-participants (21 per cent and 30 per cent respectively). As shown in Figure 10.2 this was the same pattern found in the 2009 survey. Those in the middle income levels had the lowest percentages of participants in both years, although those in the lower middle group increased their participation significantly from 39 per cent in 2009 to 53 per cent in 2012.

**Figure 10.2: Participation in formal networks for the exchange of information about ICT, by income level**

Participation in networks for exchange of information about ICT, by income level				
	High	Upper middle	Lower middle	Low
2012 - Yes*	81%	49%	53%	70%
2009 - Yes	76%	45%	39%	70%
2012 - None**	21%	51%	47%	30%
2009 - None***	24%	54%	60%	30%

(\*Listed at least one network; \*\*Listed no networks; \*\*\*Reply was *planning or considering or no*)

(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 1; Survey 2009, Section 1, Question 18; and, *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 152, Figure 9.1)<sup>19</sup>

### Nature of inter-parliamentary cooperation and collaboration

To understand the nature of inter-parliamentary cooperation, both the 2009 and 2012 surveys asked all parliaments whether they were *providing* support to other legislatures to help them strengthen their general functional capacities or *receiving* support from others for this purpose. The surveys then posed questions concerning ICT specifically: Was the parliament providing support or receiving support in technology? Would the parliament be willing to provide or receive such support? In the case of receiving support, the survey asked if the support was received not only from other parliaments, but also from outside organizations<sup>20</sup>.

#### General support/assistance

General support/assistance refers to cooperation in the legislative, oversight, representational, and administrative areas. Figure 10.3 shows the percentages of those who do *provide general support/assistance*, those *willing to provide it*, and those parliaments that said *no/not willing to provide it* for 2012 and 2009. As Figure 10.3 indicates in row 1, while the percentage of those that provide general assistance remained relatively constant, parliaments *willing to provide it* increased significantly, from 20 per cent in 2009 to 44 per cent in 2012. And as would be expected, given this increase, those parliaments that said they were *not willing to provide it* dropped almost in half from 51 per cent in 2009 to 27 per cent in 2012.

**Figure 10.3: Parliaments that provide or receive support/assistance to strengthen capacities in all areas: legislation, oversight, representational, administrative**

General support	Yes		Willing to		No/Not willing to	
	2009	2012	2009	2012	2009	2012
1. Provide	28%	29%	20%	44%	51%	27%
2. Receive	16%	23%	27%	42%	57%	35%

(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Questions 2 and 8; Survey 2009, Section 1, Questions 20, 23, 26, 28; and *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 153, Figure 9.2)

<sup>19</sup> The combined percentages of participants and non-participants from the various income levels may sometimes total more or less than 100 per cent due to rounding.

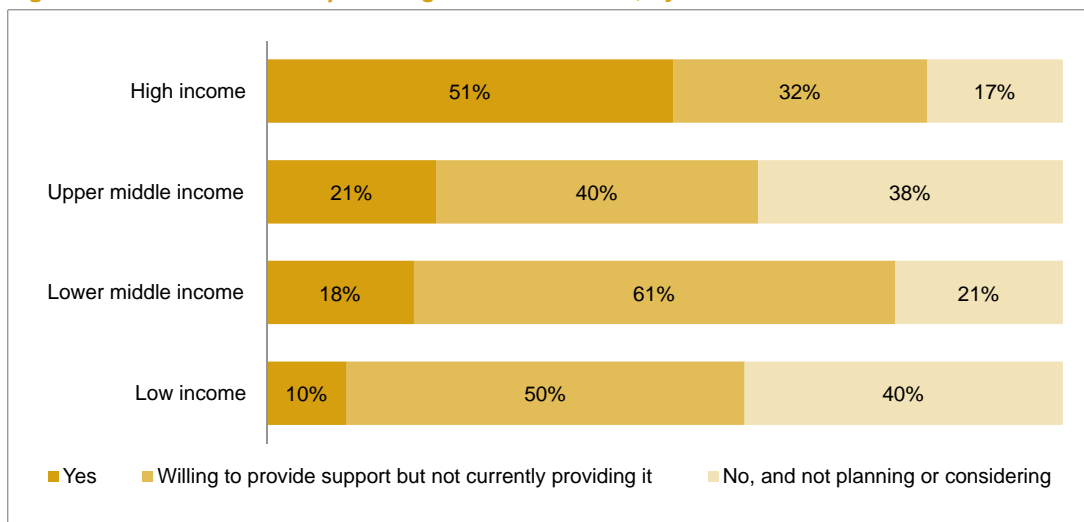
<sup>20</sup> The wording in the 2012 survey was modified slightly by adding the word “assistance” to questions concerning support, i.e. “support /assistance” rather than just “support”. In 2009 the survey used the words “willing to” in questions about providing support; in 2012 “willing to” was a response option. The comparative analysis treated the response option “willing to” in 2012 to mean the same thing as the “planning or considering” response option in 2009. Similarly, in 2009 the expression “or would like to receive” was used in the questions regarding “receiving support”; in 2012 “No, but would like to receive” was a response option. The comparative analysis treated the response option “No but would like to receive” in 2012 to mean the same as the “planning or considering” response option in 2009.



A similar pattern can be seen among legislatures that would like to *receive general support/assistance* (see Figure 10.3, row 2). The percentage of those that receive it increased somewhat from 16 per cent in 2009 to 23 per cent in 2012. For those that would like to receive, it increased from 27 per cent to 42 per cent, and for those not willing to receive it, it fell from 57 per cent to 35 per cent.

As expected, there is a direct correlation between income level and those parliaments that *provide general support*. Figure 10.4 shows that the largest percentage of parliaments providing general support is in the high income level (51 per cent). This mirrors the findings from 2009 for this income group (48 per cent). Furthermore, there has been almost a three-fold increase of the parliaments in the high income group that are *willing* to provide this type of support (2012=32 per cent; 2009=11 per cent). In fact, increases of this significance occurred among the other three income groups as well, including those in the low income category<sup>21</sup>. It appears that the willingness of parliaments to assist each other to improve their capacities for legislation, oversight, and representation has increased substantially since 2009 across all income levels.

**Figure 10.4: Parliament that provide general assistance, by income level**

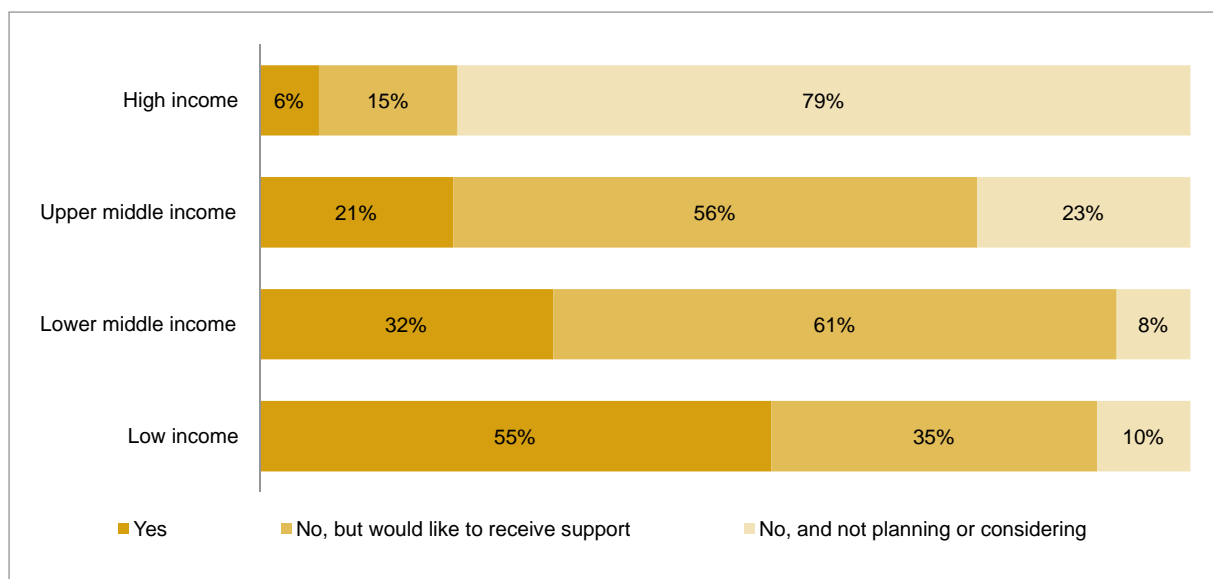


(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 2; 153 respondents)

Figure 10.5 shows the 2012 results of parliaments that *receive general assistance* by income level. In this instance, the positive finding is that there have been increases since 2009 across all income levels among legislatures that receive general assistance or would like to receive it. For example, in the low income group, the percentage of parliaments receiving general assistance increased from 35 per cent in 2009 to 55 per cent in 2012. In the lower middle income group, the percentage of those receiving general assistance went up from 18 per cent in 2009 to 32 per cent in 2012. Among those in the upper middle income group, parliaments that receive assistance grew from 12 per cent in 2009 to 21 per cent in 2012 and the percentage of those willing to receive help more than doubled from 27 per cent in 2009 to 56 per cent in 2012<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> See *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 154, Figure 9.3 for all 2009 percentages.

<sup>22</sup> See *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 155, Figure 9.4 for all 2009 percentages.

**Figure 10.5: Parliaments that receive general assistance, by income level**

(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 8; 154 respondents)

**Box 10.1**

A main goal of our parliament is to learn from other successful parliaments and to share our success with others. We feel with the fast pace of the technological advances and the explosion of the social media presence and impact, it would be extremely beneficial for parliaments around the world to always collaborate on creative way of reaching out to citizens in the effort of moving towards an open democracy model.

*Comment by a respondent to the 2012 Survey*

**Support/assistance for ICT**

The survey also asked specifically about support/assistance for ICT. Figure 10.6 shows in row 1 a drop in parliaments that *provide support for ICT* from 28 per cent in 2009 to 22 per cent in 2012. This is mirrored by a drop among parliaments that *receive support for ICT* from 46 per cent in 2009 to 32 per cent in 2012. However, the percentages of those *willing to provide support* doubled between 2009 and 2012 and the same degree of increase occurred among those *willing to receive assistance with ICT*. The increase among those *willing to provide support* more than offsets the decline among those that currently provide it so that the percentage of parliaments that said they were *not willing to provide* help to other parliaments with ICT decreased from over half in 2009 to 40 per cent in 2012.

**Figure 10.6: Parliaments that provide or receive support to strengthen capacities in ICT, by year**

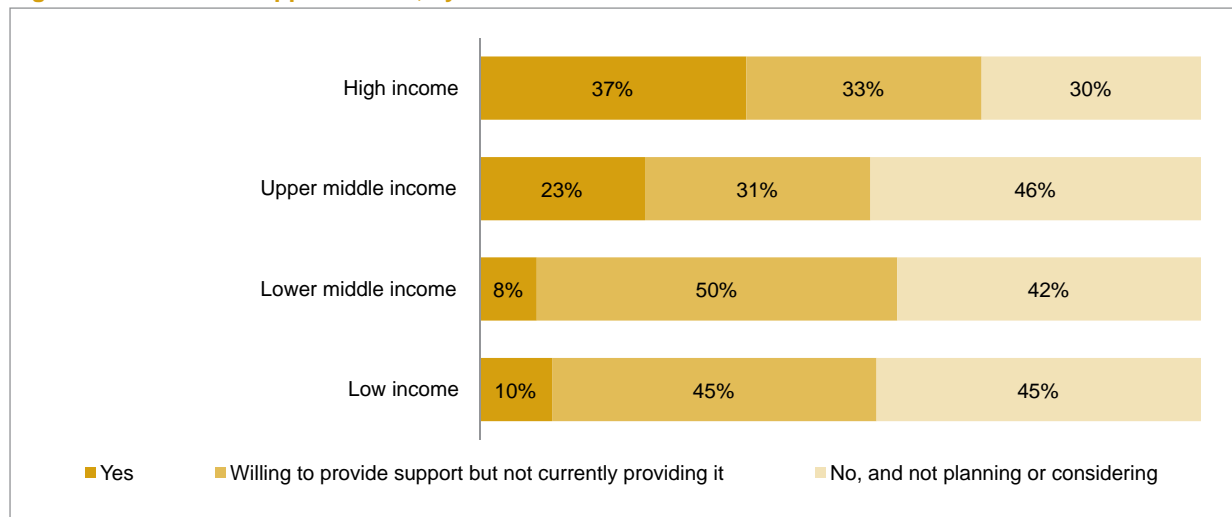
ICT support	Yes		Willing to		No/Not willing to	
	2009	2012	2009	2012	2009	2012
1. Provide	28%	22%	19%	39%	52%	40%
2. Receive	46%	32%	18%	38%	36%	31%

(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Questions 4 and 9; *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p. 153, Figure 9.2)

As with general assistance, support for ICT correlates directly with income level, although the percentages reflect the decreases among the parliaments that provide or receive this support. Figure 10.7 shows that the largest number of parliaments that provide ICT help is in the high income group, although the percentage is not as great for ICT (37 per cent) as it is for general assistance (51 per cent) as showed in Figure 10.4. However, parliaments at the high income level that are willing to provide assistance with technology is the same as those willing to provide general assistance.

There were decreases among the other income groups of parliaments that provide support for technology, but again these were offset by significant increases since 2009 of those willing to provide it. For example, among those in the upper middle income group, the percentage of parliaments that provide assistance dropped from 33 per cent in 2009 to 23 per cent in 2012, but the percentage in this income group willing to help doubled from 15 per cent in 2009 to 31 per cent in 2012. There were similar shifts in the other two income groups<sup>23</sup>.

**Figure 10.7: Provide support for ICT, by income**



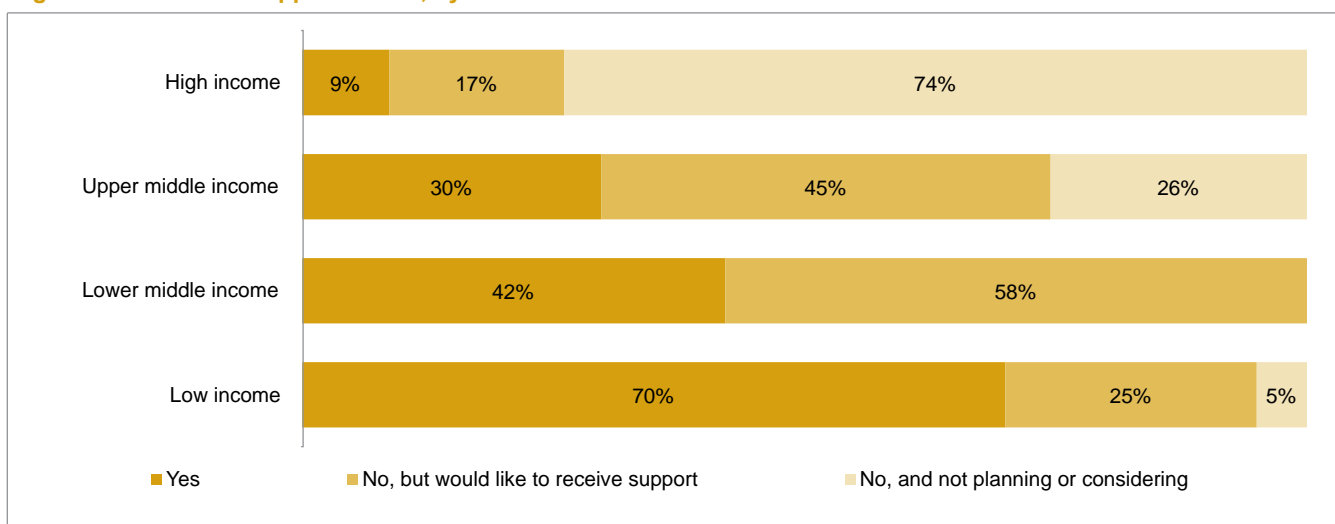
(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 4; 153 respondents)

Figure 10.8 shows the results of legislatures that receive ICT support/assistance by income level. The general decline of those that provide/receive support/assistance for technology seen in Figure 10.6 is reflected here. While 70 per cent of parliaments in the low income group receive assistance, this is less than in 2009 (80 per cent). There were similar declines for lower middle income (2009=58 per cent; 2012=42 per cent) and upper middle (2009=58 per cent; 2012=30 per cent). Need remains high, however, and there were increases in each of these income groups of those that would like to receive assistance. For example, while parliaments in the lower income group receiving assistance in 2012 went down by 16 percentage points, those that would like to receive assistance increased by 22 per cent points (2009=36 per cent; 2012=58 per cent), and no one in this group said they did not want help in 2012.

<sup>23</sup> See *World e-Parliament Report 2010*, p.154, Figure 9.3 for all 2009 percentages.

There are a number of potential explanations for the decrease in the percentages of parliaments that are providing support for ICT or receiving it. The state of the international economy and its impact on government and parliamentary budgets is an obvious one. Most parliaments are less willing or less able to help others when their own budgets are being cut. There is also a possible reduction in the resources available from international donors. Some donors may also be shifting focus or approaches, which can affect the time needed before new projects are initiated.

Figure 10.8: Receive support for ICT, by income



(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 9; 152 respondents)

Regardless of the reasons for the decline in ICT support, the results of the 2012 survey are encouraging. The willingness of many parliaments to offer both general and ICT support has increased significantly since 2009 among all income groups. And the openness of many parliaments to receiving that support has also increased substantially. In 2012 the environment for increased cooperation and collaboration among parliaments appears to be excellent.

### Specific areas and opportunities for cooperation and collaboration

Figure 10.9 summarizes the results of five survey questions regarding support/assistance to help develop or enhance the use of ICT. These were:

- In what areas does the parliament *currently provide* support/assistance?<sup>24</sup>
- In what areas would the parliament be *willing to provide* support/assistance?<sup>25</sup>
- In what areas does the parliament *receive support from other parliaments*?<sup>26</sup>
- In what areas does the parliament *receive support from outside organizations*?<sup>27</sup>
- In what areas would the parliament *like to receive support* from other parliaments or outside organizations?<sup>28</sup>

24 Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 5.

25 Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 7.

26 Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 10.

27 Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 10.

28 Survey 2012, Section 7, Question 11.

**Figure 10.9: Specific areas of ICT support among parliaments**

	Currently provides support		Willing to provide support		Receives support from other parliaments		Receives support from outside organization		Would like to receive support		Total mentions
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
ICT planning	20	61%	31	62%	10	40%	18	56%	33	58%	112
ICT services for members	13	39%	31	62%	5	20%	9	28%	39	68%	97
Staff development and training	13	39%	22	44%	10	40%	17	53%	35	61%	97
Hardware/software	11	33%	18	36%	15	60%	16	50%	29	51%	89
Document management systems	8	24%	23	46%	6	24%	14	44%	34	60%	85
ICT services for plenary	11	33%	27	54%	6	24%	7	22%	34	60%	85
Library and research services	10	30%	22	44%	7	28%	12	38%	34	60%	85
ICT management	12	36%	27	54%	7	28%	11	34%	27	47%	84
ICT services for committees	8	24%	25	50%	5	20%	6	19%	36	63%	80
Websites	10	30%	24	48%	10	40%	11	34%	22	39%	77
Application development	9	27%	17	34%	6	24%	10	31%	34	60%	76
Communication with citizens	9	27%	13	26%	5	20%	6	19%	37	65%	70
Network operations	8	24%	22	44%	5	20%	12	38%	20	35%	67
Document standards	6	18%	14	28%	5	20%	9	28%	31	54%	65
Other	4	12%	4	8%	1	4%	2	6%	2	4%	13
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>50</b>		<b>25</b>		<b>32</b>		<b>57</b>		

Number and percentage over total respondents. Areas of support are ranked by total mentions.

(Source: Survey 2012, Section 7, Questions 5, 7, 10 and 11)

The first column of Figure 10.9 - *currently provides support* - shows the number and percentage of parliaments that provide each type of support. The last row shows the total number of parliaments that offer assistance in at least one of the areas listed in the column (33). The second column indicates the number and percentage of parliaments that are *willing to provide support* in each area; the total number of these parliaments willing to provide assistance in at least one area is 50 (see second column, last row), which means that even more are willing to help in specific areas of ICT than are currently doing so.

#### Box 10.2

There is need for support from other parliaments and organizations especially for staff development, network operations, and document management systems, to name a few.

*Comment by a respondent to the 2012 Survey*

Over 40 per cent of the parliaments willing to provide support are prepared to do so in all ICT areas except for *Hardware/software* (36 per cent), *Application Development* (34 per cent), *Communication with citizens* (26 per cent), and *Document standards* (28 per cent). The smaller percentages of parliaments willing to offer support in these areas are similar to findings from the 2009 survey<sup>29</sup>

29 World e-Parliament Report 2010, p. 156, Figure 9.5.

and are understandable for a variety of reasons. Hardware and software ultimately needs to be funded by the receiving parliament, even if startup costs are borne by outside donors. Application development can be very time consuming, although there are opportunities for shared approaches; the same is true for document standards. And communication with citizens is very culturally dependent, and not an area in which parliaments may feel prepared to provide advices.

The last column - *would like to receive* - shows the areas in greatest demand among parliaments that would like to receive assistance. As the last row indicates, 57 parliaments (over one third of the total) would like to receive help in at least one aspect of ICT. The largest percentages of parliaments would like to receive support in:

- ICT services for members (68 per cent)
- Communication with citizens (65 per cent)
- ICT services for committees (63 per cent)
- Staff development and training (61 per cent)

Four other high need areas, all expressed by at least 60 per cent of parliaments are:

- Document management systems
- ICT services for plenary
- Library and research services
- Application development

Despite some of the large gaps in certain areas, such as *application development* and *communication with citizens*, between parliaments needing support and those willing to provide it, the responses in Figure 10.9 show that there is a rich opportunity for sharing knowledge and for meeting critical ICT needs among many parliaments.