Digital government toolkit

Digital Government Strategies: Good Practices

Colombia: Development of Digital Government Institutional Framework

---

The OECD Council adopted on 15 July 2014 the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. The Recommendation provides a set of 12 principles structured around 3 pillars. The OECD Secretariat is developing a Digital Government Policy Toolkit to support OECD member countries and non-member adhering countries with the implementation of the Recommendation. This practice was submitted by the government of Colombia to be considered as a good practice in the implementation of one or more of the principles contained in the Recommendation.

Description of the practice:

Organisation: Ministry of Information Technology and Communications

Name of the practice: Development of Digital Government Institutional Framework

Principles implemented: Principle 5 – Secure leadership and political commitment to the strategy

Principle 6 – Ensure coherent use of digital technologies across policy areas and levels of government

Principle 7 – Establish effective organisational and governance frameworks to co-ordinate the implementation of the digital strategy within and across levels of government

Principle 12 – Ensure that general and sector-specific legal and regulatory frameworks allow digital opportunities to be seized.

Description: This is the Digital Government policy (www.gobiernodigital.gov.co) of Colombian State, which has been constantly evolving in its scope and implementation, recognizing the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) as a fundamental instrument to improve public management and relationship between Government and citizens.

Digital government toolkit

From this part, Digital Government policy (before, the Online Government Strategy), has a normative framework that has allowed the policy to develop as a State policy along different governments: Presidential directive 02/2000, Decree 1151 of 2008, Decree 2693 of 2012 and Decree 1078 of 2015, Title 9 (It incorporated Decree 2573 of 2014 and 1008 of 2018).

Currently, the Digital Government policy is established by Decree 1078 of 2015 - Title 9, which establishes general guidelines of the Digital Government Policy for Colombia, before the Online Government strategy, which from now on should be understood as: the use and exploitation of information and communications technologies to consolidate a competitive, proactive and innovators citizens and Government, who generate public value in an environment of digital confidence.

Results

One of the main results of the digital government framework has been the establishment of common guidelines related to the use ICT across all sectors and levels of government. This common conceptual and technical base has accelerated the usage and uptake of ICT in the Public Sector generating visible and measurable improvements in the citizen-government, business-government and government-government relationships.

This digital government institutional framework has become a public sector innovation driver and accelerator, as it challenges and encourages institutions for usage of latest technologies and trends for the achievement of governance and sustainable development goals.

During the last 3 years, the Ministry of ICT has strengthened the normative and policy framework of digital government in Colombia, developing an approach that responds to the needs of an economy and a digital society, as well as to the trends in the use of technology in the state.

Based on this, the Digital Government Directorate has generated different models, regulations and guidelines for the implementation of the policy and has participated in the development of related regulations. Among the most relevant are:

Decree 415 of 2016: defines the guidelines for institutional strengthening through ICT.

Resolution 2710 of 2017: establishes the guidelines for the adoption of the IPv6 Internet Protocol.

Decree 1413 of 2017: establishes the general guidelines for the use and operation of digital citizen services.

Information Security and Privacy Model: defines the guidelines for the development of the Information Security and Privacy System, to preserve the confidentiality, integrity and availability and privacy of data and information in public agencies.

Reference Framework for Enterprise Architecture: defines the guidelines for the implementation of the Enterprise architecture and the strengthening of institutional and management capacities of T.I. in public agencies.

Decree 1499 of 2017: defines the Management System for the public sector and integrates Digital Government as one of the 17 management and performance policies.

Decree 1008 of 2018: establishes the general guidelines of the Digital Government policy.

Development

Design:

Traditionally, the Digital Government policy is built through consultation exercises and participation with different players, such as public agencies, citizens, civil society, academia and the private sector. As a result, the decrees that regulate the policy, the manual, and the guidelines for its implementation, have been built through collaborative processes. Get to know the most recent participation exercise for the generation of the regulatory framework of Digital Government: https://www.mintic.gov.co/portal/604/w3-article-61775.html

For instance, the National Planning Department of Colombia, the Administrative Department of the Public Function, Presidency, the National Archive and the National Procurement Office, are constantly giving inputs to the digital government institutional framework. In the same way these agencies include in their policies and actions, the Digital Government principles and guidelines formulated by the Ministry of ICT. Is a double way process in which the stakeholders strengthen the framework both by construction and usage.

As a result of these participation processes, the Digital Government policy is structured around two lines of action: ICT for the State and ICT for Society, which are developed on three transversal enabling elements: Architecture; Security of the information; And Digital Citizen Services.

From these elements, the Digital Government policy has five main purposes:

1. Enable and improve provision to digital services of trust and quality.

2. Achieve internal, safe and efficient processes through the strengthening of information technology management capabilities.

3. Make decisions based on data to increase usage and exploitation of information

4. Empower citizens through consolidation of an Open State.

5. Promote the development of intelligent territories and cities, to answer social challenges and problems through ICT.

Likewise, with the updating of the regulatory framework of the Digital Government policy, the monitoring and evaluation methodology consists of a continuous improvement plan, in which the agencies must show improvements every year, according to their characteristics and needs.

Accordingly, the policy has compliance indicators, indicators of results and quality indicators that seek to measure the progress of Digital Government in Colombia.

Testing:

The development of the institutional framework of Digital Government, contemplate stages and processes of testing and validation with those responsible for implementation, in this case national and local governments, as well as beneficiaries, citizens and businesses.

This institutional framework has been tested in different ways in national and territorial agencies. This was carried out simultaneously, ensuring that the results were contrasted between them:

- Consultations with external stakeholders, such as universities and research bodies, civil society organizations and other public agencies that lead the process of accountability and State modernization programs, among others.
- Implementation accompanied by specialized consultants in national and local governments, which allowed the Ministry of ICT to identify improvement opportunities, corrections and additional needs not covered by initial design.
- Development of co-financing programs for implementation of policy through projects with territorial agencies and the private sector.
- Accompaniment of the Ministry of ICT to national agencies, for development of priority projects in order to implement the "Route of Excellence in Digital Government".
- Analysis and documentation of cases of implementation of the policy, to generate learning lessons and success stories to be replicated in public agencies.

Implementation:

The institutional and legal development of the digital government policy in Colombia, began with the Decree 1151 of 2008 which established as goals of the policy the construction of a more efficient, transparent and participative government which offers better services to citizens and businesses, through the intensive use of ICT's.

The implementation has been developed by different policy instruments as the updated decrees (Decree 2693 of 2012, Decree 2573 of 2014 and now Decree 1008 de 2018), national laws, guidelines, and the constant improvements in the monitoring and evaluation model.

Digital Government Decrees

The digital government decrees have primarily defined among others:

- Levels and scales for the implementation of the policy among different types of public agencies. Now, the Decree 1008 of 2018 established an implementation according to the characteristics and needs of public agencies and their context.

- The duty of implementing the Digital Government manual, which contains specific guidelines for public agencies in topics related with ICT for Government, ICT for Society and transversal elements, as a: Architecture, Information Security and Digital Citizen Services.

- A "Seal of Excellence in Digital Government", which assures the quality of digital government solutions offered by the public agencies.

The digital government policy has been a transversal component of different national laws that develop public policies related with good governance. The strategy has been included in laws that state the National Development Plans as well as in laws related with public information access, transparency and accountability, public service delivery improvement, among others.

Digital government guidelines

Guidelines for implementing specific topics of the policy have been formulated, such as the ones for open data, security model, the Colombian Government Enterprise Architecture Framework - MRAE, among others. In addition, guidelines have promoted a digital government policy aligned with National Managing and Planning Integrated Model, which assigns responsibilities to national and local public institutions, in order to assure of implementation and monitoring of the policy.

Specifically, the Digital Government Manual is the main tool for policy implementation. It contains guidelines and standards that public agencies must apply and groups all the documents, guides, models and guidelines to facilitate the policy development.

Digital Government website

The Digital Government policy has an official website aimed at public servants, academia, the private sector and citizens, which has all the tools, guides and documents available for its implementation; the results of national and international measurements and news about events and training programs for public servants. See: www.gobiernodigital.gov.co

Resources

The Directorate of Digital Government has a policy coordination, which aims to define the regulatory framework and guidelines for the implementation of the policy, seek the international positioning of Colombia on Digital Government, exchange knowledge and good practices at the regional level and monitor and evaluate the policy implementation.

The work team of the Policy Coordination is made up of eight professionals from different areas (law, international relations, political science, public administration, engineers), who permanently

interact with other teams of the Directorate of Digital Government, the Ministry of ICT, public agencies and external stakeholders.

Diffusion and scaling:

The methods used to transfer knowledge to the actors that implement the policy are the following:

- Face-to-face and virtual training
- Formal and non-formal academic education
- Public consultation campaigns
- Conferences
- Webinars
- Practical workshops
- Guides and documents through the Digital Government website: www.gobiernodigital.gov.co
- Social networks of the ICT Ministry and the Digital Government Directorate
- Other websites of Digital Government initiatives led by the Digital Government Directorate, in order to promote the implementation of the policy, like the following:
  - http://centrodeinnovacion.mintic.gov.co/es
  - https://www.datos.gov.co/
  - http://www.softwarepublicocolombia.gov
  - .co/es/public-software
  - http://lenguaje.mintic.gov.co
  - www.nomasfilas.gov.co
  - www.rutadelaexcelencia.gov.co/634/w3-channel.html
  - http://www.urnadecristal.gov.co/
  -

Expansion to other areas

Since 2000, the Digital Government policy has been implemented by the public agencies of the Executive Branch of the Public Power at national and territorial levels, managing to reach nearly 2000 agencies.

In case of public agencies of Legislative and Judicial Branches and autonomous agencies, the policy has been implemented through a harmonious collaboration scheme, where these agencies develop specific projects to apply the policy guidelines.

The main challenge to implement the policy with those agencies, has been the scope of the rule, since not being mandatory for agencies of Executive and Judicial Branch and autonomous agencies, it is difficult to implement the policy throughout the State.

The solutions that have been developed to overcome this limitation have been the following:

- Promote strategic projects of national interest, with technical and economic resources of the ICT Ministry.
- Support high-impact projects for citizens led by those agencies.

- Develop collaboration agreements with control bodies to support follow-up to the policy.
- Position the policy through laws and regulations at the national level, such as the National Development Plan or the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information.

Partnerships: Private Sector, Civil Society, Academics and Research Bodies, Public Sector Organisations, Other

- Institutions of the Colombian State: National Planning Department of Colombia, Administrative Department of Public Service, General Archive of the Nation and Administrative Department of the Republic Presidency.
- International Organizations: United Nations (UNDP and UNDESA), World Bank and OECD.
- Committees of international experts: Public sector based on data and emerging technologies for the public sector.

Lessons learned

- The development of a digital government institutional framework is not a static process but an iterative one. Because it deals with two very variable factors: technology and society. As both factors are constantly changing, institutional frameworks should be permanently analysed, revised and adjusted.

- The early involvement of institutional partners that could take advantage of the framework for the achievement of their own goals is also a very important issue for the development of the institutional framework.

- The institutional framework must attend the needs of public agencies of different level, taking into account their real needs and capabilities.

- The Digital Government Policy must be seen as a transversal policy and its institutional framework should allow interaction with other national public policies related with good governance.

- All projects and initiatives that make use of ICT should be accompanied by highly effective communication strategies that highlight the value of technology to satisfy needs and solve problems.

- The establishment of deadlines and levels of compliance with the Digital Government policy is not always an effective method to promote its implementation, since it can generate a legal requirement that cannot be met, but takes into account the context and needs of the agencies.

Conditions required

- Focus on the use of technology to meet the needs and problems of the Government, citizens, users and interest groups.

- Develop spaces and mechanisms to allow players such as industry, academia, research centres and civil society, to be part of the digital environment and contribute to the development of value services and solutions to public problems, where ICTs are a tool that leverages this process.

- Increase the participation of society in the government and in the resolution of problems of public interest in order to empower and promote the development of digital governance.

- Align the Digital Government policy with the agendas and priorities of senior management.