

Advice Note on eGovernment Project Plans

Each eGovernment project must have an associated plan that, at a minimum, details –

- I. Ownership
- II. Schedules/Timelines
- III. Facilities being offered
- IV. Costs
- V. Benefits/Impacts
- VI. Capacity of Organisation to deliver
- VII. Monitoring arrangements
- VIII. Progress to date

I. Ownership

All plans must clearly identify the Organisation and individual responsible for the project. The individual must be a senior manager in the organisation and hold a rank equivalent to or higher than the grade of Principal Officer in the civil service.

If the project relates to a range of organisations (e.g., Local Authorities, Libraries, VECs), an agreed lead organisation or the Department responsible for these organisations must develop the plan and make subsequent progress reports to the Department of Finance.

II. Schedules/Timelines

The plan must include a timeline against which progress can be measured. This timeline should be agreed with all parties on which it is dependent. Where necessary, the timeline should include phases and milestones. Subsequent reports to the Department of Finance will need to detail progress against this timeline.

III. Facilities being offered

The plan must provide a detailed description of the project setting out target audiences, functionality and services being provided, delivery channels being targeted, e.g., online or mobile access to information, forms, full transactions, etc. Subsequent reports to the Department of Finance will need to record progress in achieving the stated functionality.

IV. Costs

The plan should provide a detailed and reasoned statement of anticipated expenditure. This stated cost should be agreed with all parties on which it is dependent. Subsequent reports to the Department of Finance will need to detail adherence to this stated cost or provide detailed explanations for variance.

V. Impacts/Benefits

The Plan should detail the expected/intended impacts and benefits of the project. Impacts/Benefits of eGovernment services can be analysed in two categories -

- Category A – Impacts/Benefits for the Department/Agency/the State
- Category B – Impacts/Benefits for the citizen/customer

They can also be analysed under two broad headings -

- Monetary
- Non-Monetary (which could in turn be sub-divided into monetisable and non-monetisable impacts)

Any claimed benefits/impacts should be supported by evidence, stating clearly how they will be achieved. Subsequent reports to the Department of Finance will need to explain the achievement or otherwise of the benefits/impacts. The listings below are provided as a guide.

Category A – Impacts/Benefits for the State.

- Staff Savings
 - Direct Staff Savings – staff redeployed, re-assigned or no longer required – thus constituting a saving in respect of the provision of the relevant service – this should include fractions of staff – e.g. if a CO is freed up for 2 days a week as a result of an initiative the saving is 40% of the costs of a CO.
 - Projected Staff Savings – staff who would have had to be employed if the eGovernment initiative in question had not been delivered to provide what would be the current level of service to the current number of customers/citizens.
 - In calculating staffing costs account should be taken if/as relevant to their salaries, PRSI, overtime and pension costs/savings.

- Administrative overhead savings, e.g.,
 - Paper/Stationery/Printing/ Postage
 - Distribution/Storage
 - Phone/Telecoms
 - Travel/Transport costs
 - Equipment
 - Advertising
 - Rent/Accommodation
 - Reduced consultancy costs
 - Better compliance/Elimination of fraud
 - Additional revenues generated for the State
 - Future cost avoidance
 - Any other savings which can be quantified and are not accounted for elsewhere.

- Non monetary benefits, e.g.,
 - Improved Service Delivery
 - Improved user satisfaction
 - Improved communication
 - Improved reputation/increased user trust and confidence
 - Enhanced customer service
 - Improved service consistency
 - Enhancements to policy processes
 - Simplification of processes/procedures
 - Enhanced policy alignment and outcomes
 - Better information to facilitate policy making
 - Enhancements to democracy
 - Increased user involvement/participation/contribution
 - Allows more/better/new data to be collected
 - Improved health and safety
 - Improved security

Category B – Value for Citizens/customers.

- Reduced queuing times
- Reduced waiting times
- Reduced transaction times
- Reduced regulatory burden or paperwork
- Reduced or eliminated travel time
- Reduced transaction costs, e.g.,
 - Average transaction cost reduction x number of transactions/users.
 - Reduced postage cost (number transactions x number users)
 - Value of any additional services made available to citizens which previously cost the citizen money or time.

VI. Capacity to Deliver

Ideally, all projects should be developed and delivered from within existing resources. Plans should state clearly if this is possible and how, detailing the individual resources that will be assigned to the project, their functions and capacities. Any requirement for external resources should be justified together with an explanation of how the engagement of external resources complies with Circular 02/09.

VII. Monitoring Arrangements

Each plan should include details of the project monitoring arrangements that are in place and how these are operated. The guidance on ICT project management at <http://www.ict.gov.ie/ictexpenditure/prerequisites/project.aspx> should be considered.

VIII. Progress to Date

The progress of the plan should be regularly monitored and updates noted on the plan. Ideally, this exercise should be updated on a monthly basis to ensure that realistic deadlines can be set for achieving the various milestones en route to delivering the final service. If progress is not as projected, a clear explanation and justification for the variance and the planned remedial action should be detailed.