



## First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the "Distance Learning for Innovative Public Sector" Program

Rome, March 19, 2010

### Chair Summary

The representatives of eight MENA Countries, Italy and the OECD (Annex 1) gathered in Rome on March 19 to participate in the first Steering Committee (SC) meeting of the DL4iPS Program. This meeting was dedicated to the discussion of key elements of the Program.

Within a day of cooperative decision making, a consensus was reached on all the aspects of the Program as set in the Agenda (Annex 2).

The SC reviewed the arguments in favor of including a wider base of civil servants as the key beneficiaries of the program. However, recognizing the different training needs for a wide range of civil servants in each country, the members of the SC agreed that flexibility should be the guiding criterion. Therefore, the beneficiaries of the program would be determined on a case by case basis, according to the available innovative e-learning modules and to each country's specific needs, with a potential initial focus on middle and high level management.

A common agreement on the languages was also reached. The e-learning modules will be delivered in any of the three languages - Arabic, English, and/or French - allowing for maximum flexibility in the creation and delivery of e-content.

After an extended discussion, the SC agreed on devising a basic scheme of the Program (Annex 3) and the relative road map for its implementation:

- defining quality and methodology standards for e-learning modules in order to ensure that the shared e-learning modules will be standardized at a determined level of excellence and based on common characteristics;
- defining interoperability standards to ensure that the highest possible number of countries will be able to deliver the e-learning modules through their existing platforms (in the initial phase, this solution will avoid costs and complications of developing a new common platform);
- defining the characteristics of a "shared multilingual Portal" which will serve as the common area for access to the Program's collection of e-learning modules, as well as for any other shared services.

With a view to an effective advancement of this road map, the SC members discussed and decided to establish three workgroups with their relative mandates and Co-Chairs: Content Working Group (CWG), Technical Working Group (TWG), and Portal Working Group (PWG). Each member country will be welcome to participate in all workgroups. The OECD confirmed its participation in the three workgroups, as needed. The mandates and Co-Chairs of the three workgroups are indicated in the attached original SC's working documents (Annexes 4, 5, and 6).

Regarding the functioning of the three workgroups, the SC agreed on the following terms:

- The Co-Chairs of the Working Groups will facilitate the highest possible contribution from the members.
- The three Working Groups will present the result of their work to the next Steering Committee meeting, tentatively planned for mid September, for approval.
- The Chair of the Steering Committee will ensure that the Working Groups will comply with the mandates according to schedule and facilitate communication between them, periodically informing all members of the SC.

With regard to the crucial issue of the financial sustainability of the Program, the SC discussed and approved the creation of a Task Force to promote the Program and explore the possibility of raising funds. The Chair of the Steering Committee will supervise and promote this process, coordinate the work of the Task Force and will periodically inform all members about its activities. The OECD proposed to participate in the work of this Task Force by facilitating its contacts with the international donors' community.

The participants agreed that the SC should meet, in principle, in person on an annual basis and maintain communication throughout the year via e-mail and videoconference. The SC welcomed and accepted the proposal of the delegate from Morocco to host the next SC meeting in Rabat at the end of this year or at the beginning of 2011, to be determined. The SC, also agreed that the September mid-term meeting of the SC (see above) would again take place in Rome.

Finally, the SC held an open session in which experiences and proposals were presented. The delegation from Morocco presented the modernization of e-learning practices in the public service. Italy presented a concept of an innovative e-learning platform based on experiential learning (gaming simulations) and social networking.

The meeting was adjourned at 18:00 with a collective round of compliments for the proactive participation of all the delegates and for the renewed determination to successfully accomplish the established goals.

---

Annex 1: List of participants  
Annex 2: Commented Agenda  
Annex 3: Basic scheme of the Program  
Annex 4: CWG Mandate  
Annex 5: TWG Mandate  
Annex 6: PWG Mandate



## **First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the “Distance Learning for Innovative Public Sector” initiative**

Palazzo Vidoni – Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, 116, Rome  
Friday, March 19, 2010

### **List of participants**

#### **Members of the SC and/or Alternates**

---

##### **Bahrain**

- Raed Shams, Director General of the Baharain Institute for Public Administration (BIPA)
- Mohammed Hassan Al-Sabba, Director e-Training, BIPA

##### **Egypt**

- Tamer Rady, Deputy Executive Director, National Management Institute

##### **Italy**

- Giovanni Tria, President of the National School of Public Administration
- Renata Pavlov, Adviser to the Minister for PA and Innovation

##### **Jordan**

- Badrieh Bilbisi, Director of Human Resources Policies and Development

##### **Lebanon**

- Samer Hankir, Senior Training Officer - Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform in Lebanon (OMSAR)

##### **Morocco**

- Azzeddine Diouri, Secretary General – Ministry of Modernization of the Public Sector
- Ahmed Laamoumri, Director of Modernization of the Administration

##### **PNA**

- Mohammed Al Subù, Head of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC ) - Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE)

##### **Syria**

- Okba Rida, Director of National Institute for Administration

##### **Tunisia**

- Fethi Bdira, National Coordinator of The Governance for Development Initiative

##### **OECD**

- Carlos Conde, Senior Programme Coordinator, MENA-OECD Governance Program
- Alessandro Bellantoni, E-Government Policy Analyst, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate



### **Other participants**

---

- Gianluigi Benedetti, Diplomatic Adviser to the Minister for PA and Innovation
- Federiga Bindi, Head of the Office for International Affairs, SSPA
- Massimo De Cristofaro, Head of the Innovation Department, SSPA
- Francesco Lutrario, INFOBYTE
- Giada Marinesi, CATTID
- Carlo Maria Medaglia, CATTID
- Enrico Pennarola, Office of the Diplomatic Adviser to the Minister for PA and Innovation
- Francesca Temperini, Assistant to the President, SSPA



## **First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the "Distance Learning for Innovative Public Sector" initiative**

Palazzo Vidoni – Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, 116, Rome  
Friday, March 19, 2010

### **Commented Agenda**

**09:30 Prof. Giovanni Tria opens the session of the Committee, which follows the November 12, 2009 meeting (Chair Summary attached)**

**10:00 Discussion on four key aspects of the DL4iPS program**

#### **a) Beneficiaries**

- *The November 12 discussions stressed the importance of the fact that in some countries training programs should preferably be addressed to an ample range of civil servants. However, the group considered that, at least in the initial phase of the program, the target could be limited to executives, in order to have the possibility to start with a more homogeneous base, considering also motivational issues.*
- The Steering committee should review these criteria and decide on the initial target, as well as on other levels of beneficiaries in the long term, compatible with the scope of the program.

#### **b) Language**

- *On November 12, there was a general agreement on the fact that the program should be multilingual, with a strong preference for the Arab language. However, the need for a flexible system that would allow for different types of content in different languages was recognized.*
- The Steering committee should review these criteria and agree on the language(s) to be used for a pilot project(s).

#### **c) Technology/Methodology**

- *The participants in the November 12 meeting agreed on the need for a flexible solution: the e-learning content management platform would have to be highly interoperable allowing for local content production based on common standards. As far as for the methodology, it was also agreed to aim at high quality e-learning activities, based on simulations, social networks and similar innovative best practices. Given a flexible platform, should there be a mixed catalogue of learning modules also including more traditional e-learning formats? Do we agree that a social network-type platform, with its characteristics of*



*interaction/motivation, would positively contribute to our distance learning program?*

- The Steering committee should review these criteria and decide on a mandate for a Working Group to define guidelines/standards on these issues.

#### **d) Functioning of the Program**

- *On November 12, the group agreed to set up the current Steering Committee and two temporary Working Groups:*
  - *One on content (CWG). The CWG could be the starting point for a future Scientific Committee. Considering the profiles of the members of the Steering Committee, would it be possible to select a restricted number of members to take part of the CWG? How many participants should the CWG have?*
  - *The other on Methodology/technology (TWG). Which countries would be willing to provide technically skilled human resources to staff the TWG (both from the public and the private sector)? How should they cooperate/interact with the CWG? How many participants should the TWG have?*
- The Steering committee should review these criteria, identify some of its members who volunteer for the CWG, and acknowledge commitments from countries willing to contribute to the TWG. The modalities of communication and reporting between the two WGs and the Steering Committee should also be determined.

**12:00**

#### **Discussion on pilot project(s): defining one or more pilot projects to kick off the program and determine how they will be financed**

- *Regarding the financing issues, the November 12 session remarked both the need for the commitment of governments in the short term, and the need for medium and long term involvement of sponsors and international development partners.*  
*In the short term, the objective is to start-off the program with one or more pilot projects. Which countries would be willing and able to identify funds to co-finance this/these pilot project(s)?*  
*With regards to the medium and long term perspective, would the creation of a dedicated Fund - based on the contributions of participants and with set guidelines for the allocation of resources - be a viable solution to consider?*
- The Steering Committee should identify one or more pilot projects and countries willing to co-finance it/them. The Steering committee should also discuss possible solutions for the medium-long term financial sustainability of the program.

**13.30**

#### **Buffet lunch at the Hotel Minerva, Piazza della Minerva, 69**



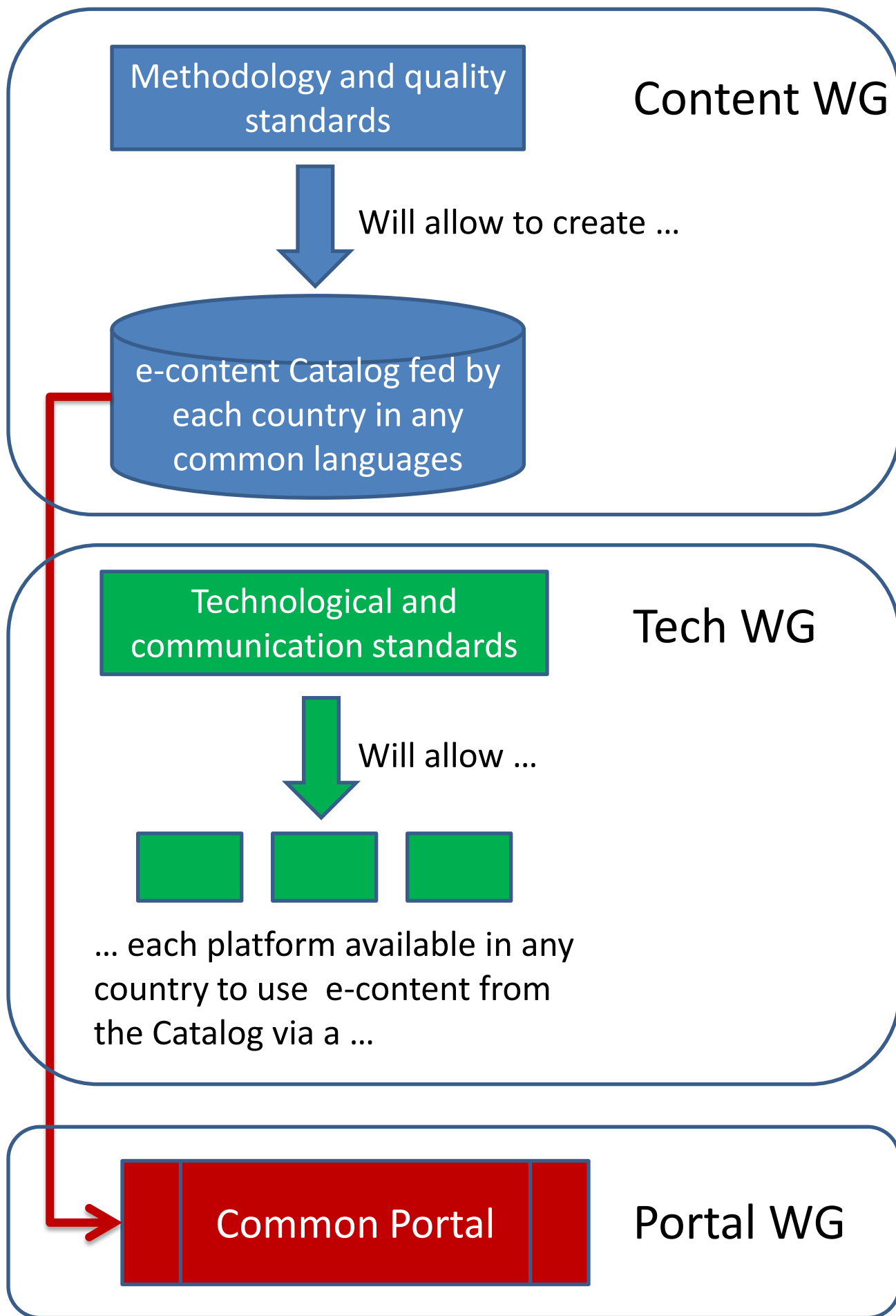
**15:00 Discussion on innovative solutions for e-learning and on methodological formats for simulation-based e-courses delivered through social network platforms**

- *The Italian academic experience indicates that a productive effort on e-learning should be based on certain innovative approaches. In consideration of this information, Italy has worked on developing a technologically advanced e-learning format with a social networking component. The theme on which this methodology is being tested is an academic study (presented by Prof. Batini in the November 12 meeting) on e-government strategies. As an innovative learning approach, the study is being converted into a simulation of decision making processes that lead to sound and efficient e-government policies.*
- Italy will contribute to this session with two short presentations, one by the Centre for Distance learning of the "Sapienza" University (CATTID) and the other by INFOBYTE. Other participants to the Steering Committee are welcome to present their ideas and experiences.

**17:00 Agreement on the functioning, communication modalities and next meeting of the Steering Committee**

- Would you consider it useful if each member of the Steering Committee should designate an Alternate/Assistant in order to have a second level network?
- Do you agree that the Steering Committee members/alternates should communicate via e-mail and meet whenever necessary via teleconference, allowing for only one meeting in person per year?
- Can the annual meeting of the Steering Committee be hosted with a rotation system and on voluntary basis by the countries participating in the Steering Committee?

**17:30 Concluding remarks**



## Content Working Group (CWG)

**Co-Chair:** Morocco, Egypt, Syria

### **Mandate:**

The CWG should identify international standards on quality and methodology for e-content to be adopted by the Steering Committee Member Countries.

The CWG should also provide guidelines for localization and customization of available e-content in line with international standards on IPR.

The CWG should also identify, on the basis of the decided standards, the initial available courses and national priorities.

## Technical Working Group (TWG)

**Co-Chair:** Italy, Egypt, Tunisia

**Mandate:**

The TWG should identify interoperability standards to allow “approved e-content” to be deployed and accessed through existing national e-learning platforms.

The TWG should take into account issues regarding: security, broadband, and existing software solutions.

## Portal Working Group (PWG)

**Co-Chair:** Bahrain, Morocco

### **Mandate:**

The PWG should propose the structure, layout and components of the “Shared Multilanguage Portal” and the sustainable management practices.