

African Legal Resources:
Challenges
& Opportunities of Legislative
Informatics

Parliamentary Knowledge Networks: existing experiences and lessons learned

National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

- 50 State and Territories (USA)
- 6,500 Legislators
- 54,000 Legislative Staff
- Membership Requirements ; an elected legislator or full-time legislative staffer

NCLS is sustained by:

- Due from each member state
- Grants
- Foundation

Although the states within the US are very similar, they are also very different in their approach to the legislative process and implementation of legislative ICT

NCSL Organizational Structure

- Governance
- Standing Committee
- Staff Sections

National Association of Information Technology (NALIT)

- US State Legislative ICT Knowledge Network
- Membership includes legislative staff involved or interested in Legislative ICT
- Anyone including Department Directors, programmers, webmasters, network specialist and staff from other legislative disciplines

Mechanisms of Networking

- Seminars and Conferences
- Newsletters
- Forums and List serves
- Website

Personal Contact Considered Most Useful for Networking

- Relate on professional basis
- Relate on Personal basis
- Most useful for future and continued exchange of ideas

Networking Issues

- Technical aspects of Legislative ICT
- Management of ICT operations
- Institutional issues specific to legislative ICT

More than Parliamentary Document Management Systems

- Office functions
- e-mail and communications
- Research
- Library service
- Government oversight
- Internet and Web presence

Sharing of:

- Knowledge and Skills (Specialized Training Sessions)
- Best Practices – posted on web site
- Successes and Failures
- Management Practice

NALIT Sustainability

- Self-Governance
- Central Secretariat (from NCSL)
- Central ICT Resources (from NCSL)
- **In-Kind contributions from membership**
- Vendor Community – within limitations
- Champion
 - Individual
 - Member state
 - NGO or Donor

Parameters for Success

- Cultural and political acceptance of ICT and ICT Staff
 - Given the proper respect, status and resources they deserve and require
 - Acknowledge ICT's Role in the Parliamentary Process

Parameter for Success

- Capacity Building
 - Basic Infrastructure
 - Cultural and Political Acceptance
 - Staff Development
- ... and every Parliament has a variation of each

The Role of NCSL

- 20 Years of International Program Development
- ICT Programs for 10 Years
- RAPP
- UNALE – Brazil

NCSL Committed to Continue International Parliamentary Programs

- Continued interest in i-Africa Program
- Partnerships with International Parliamentary Building organizations (i.e.
 - The Global Centre for ICT in Parliaments.

National Conference of State Legislature and National Association of Information Technology

Your Partner in Parliamentary Informatics!