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Lend a banking hand

India's financial inclusion
aims will be met only when
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CAN IT RAIN FOR THE
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TOO MANY POSITIVES
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**CASE STUDY
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UN takes world closer to ICT4D

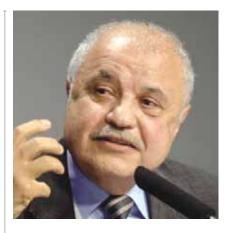The New York meeting focused on eNabler—the portal-cum-planning tool for achievement of Millennium Development Goals

By **egov Bureau**

The United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development (UN-GAID) preparatory meeting, held on September 1-2, 2010, witnessed participation of 140 representatives from 44 countries, besides those from United Nations agencies, the private sector, civil society and academia. The meeting reviewed the developments in creation of a one-stop Web portal solution—eNabler for aiding the developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Endorsed by the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the project was conceived at the GAID Annual Meeting held in September 2009 at Monterrey, Mexico, and was given approval by the Board of the Alliance. The meeting was chaired by Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman, UN-GAID.

Speaking about the potential of eNabler, Abu-Ghazaleh said in an interview with egov magazine, "We have created a web based dynamic vehicle that any development agency—from government, industry or non-profit sector can access for free and use to develop strategic plan through our strategic planner."

"This is an implementation tool, an actual vehicle—it's like a GPS in a car. You need a driver. You need a car and you need to know where you are going. The GPS tells you how to go. So this is our GPS device for economic development," he added.

Speaking at the preparatory meet, Cheick Sidi Diarra, United Nations Under-Secretary-General said that the eNabler project is particularly encouraging for the African and many other developing countries, given the lack of accessibility of information to further the course of development. He said that the project could consider including a feature to track the performance of least developed and developing countries in their efforts to reach their goals. Diarra also suggested that the project could serve as a useful blueprint for the development of country-specific portals of a similar nature.

Prince Hassan of Jordan, in a video message, emphasised the importance of a long-term, comprehensive and integrated view of world development, taking into account the rapid pace of change in technologies and societies. Reiterating his country's support, Ivo Ivanovski, Minister of Information Society

of the Republic of Macedonia, in another video message, highlighted the continuous challenges encountered due to the fragmented information channels available. He emphasised on the need for a 'system' that could consolidate the wealth of information, projects and best practices available around the world and offer governments the tools and practical connections to implement projects faster and at lower costs.

Ambassador Francis Lorenzo, of the International organisation for South-South Cooperation, applauded the initiative and stressed upon the importance of this product for the developing world, which so often lacks access to ICT necessary for successful and sustainable development.

Drawing on the experience of and expertise of government officials, the private sector,

> **TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH**
> Chairman, UN-GAID
>
> "It's like a GPS in a car. You need a driver, you need a car and you need to know where you are going. eNabler tells you how to go"

civil society and a multitude of international organisations and diverse development practitioners, MDG eNabler is not just a knowledge repository but also a tool that converts raw data and information into useful and user-specific knowledge to help practitioners address various development challenges. These unique features make the MDG eNabler the first tool of its kind and a potent instrument in advancing progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Abu-Ghazaleh said, "If there is one enabler that can accelerate achievement of the MDGs, it is ICT." He proposed to change the working name of the Project MDG eCenter to MDG eNabler, and emphasised that this project will remain the main focus and objective of UN-GAID in the coming years. Outlining a timeline for the implementation of the project, Abu-Ghazaleh said eNabler would be fully operational by early 2011.