

## Using the Internet to Fight Corruption

Internews Network and the Center for Democracy and Technology hosted a panel discussion on May 10, 2007 at CDT's offices in Washington, D.C. on using the Internet to fight corruption and promote economic growth.

The panel consisted of George Sadowsky, Executive Director for the Global Internet Policy Initiative (GIPI), Jim Dempsey, Policy Director for CDT, David Sandukhchyan, GIPI Armenia Country Coordinator, and Jerker Torngren, Chief of Party of the Macedonia e-Government project. The discussion focused on key lessons learned from more than 10 years of experience in ICT Policy Development and e-Government work. The GIPI Program in Armenia and the USAID

funded five year e-Government Project in Macedonia were presented. The panelists presented a variety of experiences to underscore the common theme that the most successful e-Government applications have proven to be ones that were developed through a holistic, approach that fosters

meaningful linkages among e-applications, policy makers, and end users.

The involvement of NGOs can be critical to bringing together stakeholders to address the policy environment and defining and engaging the end users. Building e-applications is not a stand-alone solution to reducing corruption and reforming administrative processes. As Jim Dempsey, pointed out, "The Internet is uniquely democratizing but it is not a silver bullet – it takes a regulatory

framework to support it." To ensure the success of these applications, the proper regulatory framework needs to be in place, as well as the support and understanding of key government, business, and civil society stakeholders that are the implementers and the end-users. "Think of the applications as the middle of a sandwich with national policy on one side and users who are enabled and empowered to interact on the other," explained George Sadowsky.

Creating applications that fit the needs of end users, such as the ones in Macedonia that focus on improving transparency for the process of applying for government jobs or trucking licenses can influence the expectations that populations have



Young people got a free IT crash course and internet surfing time at the Macedonia Surfing road show.

Photo: Internews Macedonia



Jerker Torngren (right) and Elena Stamatoska (left) present the IT Handbook for beginners, developed by the e-Gov Project, to the Prime Minister of Republic of Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski.

Photo: Internews Macedonia



INTERNEWS

**Internews Administrative Headquarters:** P.O. Box 4448 • Arcata, CA 95518, USA • +1 707 826-2030 telephone • +1 707 826-2136 fax • [www.internews.org](http://www.internews.org)  
**More Information:** Marjorie Rouse • Vice President, Eurasia and ICT Policy • +1 202 833-5740 x304 • [mrouse@internews.org](mailto:mrouse@internews.org)

**Center for Democracy & Technology:** 1634 Eye Street NW #1100, Washington DC, 20006, USA • +1 202.637.9800 telephone • +1 202.637.0968 fax • [www.cdt.org](http://www.cdt.org)



of their governments. “To change the atmosphere in society you need to change the attitude of citizens so people don’t expect to pay a bribe and you can stop taking paying bribes for granted,” noted Jerker Torngren. The Honorable Ambassador Zoran Jolevski voiced his support of the project and the beneficial impact that it has had in Macedonia.

The discussion was attended by a diverse range of individuals from the public and private sectors alike. Representatives from USAID, World Bank, Department of State, Google, Microsoft and National Endowment for Democracy among others were in attendance.

## Lessons learned:

### Parachute models work badly

The amount of engagement required to successfully address the policy issues and application development means there needs to be a long-term presence on the ground to foster links between all the players.

### Building a multistakeholder process

Convening a local working group of stakeholders and experts is key to developing the right applications as well as creating an enabling environment to implement the e-applications.

### End user needs must be recognized

Applications must be designed to meet the needs and priorities of those who use them

### Policy must be addressed

The Internet cannot exist in a legal vacuum. A set of policies to promote an enabling environment in which the Internet can thrive is necessary to ensure adequate access to applications

### Monitoring and evaluation is critical

Flexibility and constant assessment of changing needs are necessary to continue to provide the right services to the intended user population



The Mayor (right) points out the cheap rates to use the internet at the community communications centre.



Assisted by the e-Gov Deputy Chief of Party Jovce Platinovski, dedo (dedo means grandfather in Macedonian) Stavre used a computer mouse for the first time, and talked to his daughter, living in Australia, via Skype.