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Sharon Dawes Keynotes LOG-IN Africa Conference in Cairo, Egypt

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Earlier this summer, CTG senior fellow Sharon Dawes was a keynote speaker at the LOG-IN Africa conference in Cairo. The Local Governance and ICTs Research Network for Africa (LOG-IN Africa) is an emergent pan-African network of researchers and research institutions from nine countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda). The conference focused on work being done to understand and exploit the potential benefits of e-governance to improve internal government processes, deliver information and services, promote the principles of good governance, and encourage public participation and consultation.

Sharon's talk, *(e)Governance: a research framework for an uncertain future*, reflected on some global demographic, economic, and social trends and suggested ways that the emerging evaluation framework in Africa might take advantage of relevant experiences in other parts of the world, especially for defining and implementing change. In his welcome to the delegates, the Egyptian Minister of State for Administrative Development, Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud Osman Darwish, observed that African countries face common challenges in readiness, sustainability, poverty, and illiteracy that they can "team together to resolve." He also pointed out that ICT "has become a cardinal tool for developing the economy, eliminating corruption, diffusing transparency, and attaining community."

Formed in 2005, LOG-IN Africa assesses the current state and outcomes of e-local governance initiatives in Africa, with a special focus on how ICTs are being used to realize general good governance goals adopted by the UN such as accountability, rule of law, and equity and inclusiveness. Led by Professor Tim Waema of the University of Nairobi in Kenya, the network is coordinated through the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD), whose responsibilities include effective implementation, a pan-African outlook, and high-level policy dissemination of research results.

LOG-IN Africa's overall research question is "What progress has been made and what are the outcomes in the provision of e-local governance in Africa; what are the challenges and threats; and what are the good practice strategies and solutions that are emerging?" The overall objective is to inform, support and orient African countries and other stakeholders in their policies and practices concerning the application of ICTs to local governance.