

1. The role and responsibility of the Government in financing: what is experience of the Republic of Azerbaijan?

As practice says financing is important in building and developing the Information society in general.

According to the international experience the Government as a main investor plays immense and leading role on financing.

Establishing a core-infrastructure, formation of information systems of state bodies and e-services delivery to citizens are main responsibility of Government. It demands the competitive human resources development, improvement of ICT literacy and awareness of society which is requiring a broad expenditures and committed actions toward it.

There is a practice of adoption of the national strategies in Azerbaijan.

The Government of Azerbaijan has developed the National ICT Strategies, and adopted multistage long-term state programs for their implementation.

As you may know, according to the outcomes of the Millennium Summit, Azerbaijan is one of the leading countries which has adopted the National ICT Strategy in February, 2003, and until now is the only country in the South Caucasus region. There have been adopted and implemented two state programs in order to realize above mentioned national strategy within 2003-2012.

Positive results of the realization of the nation strategy has served as a basis for adoption the new information society development strategy for period 2014-2020.

In financing this strategy it has been identified the leading role of the Government, and also considers the public-private partnership.

As expectations, first off, the private sector by providing its ICT demands could contribute to the delivering valuable services to the information society. Primarily,

by development of infrastructure projects, service delivery, the development of mobile applications and apps on base of open governmental data could serve ICT development in country.

We think PPP is the best model for financing.

2. What is the practice of financial support for SMEs and start-ups in Azerbaijan?

Nowadays, it is valuable and important to provide a financial support to SMEs and start-ups as a step to innovative ICT sector development. Speaking so, the financing of PPP is the most appropriate model for that.

In order to provide this support, the Government follows up to the “golden triangle” principles by developing favorable environment, providing financial support and ensuring the competitive human potentials for sustainable continuation.

The State Fund for entrepreneurship support was established many years ago and up to now provides loans to all fields of economy including ICT. Along with that, the Government of Azerbaijan in 2012 has been established the special fund and High Technologies Park for sustainable ICT development. Those two basic entities play crucial and important roles for innovative entrepreneurship development in Azerbaijan

The Government of Azerbaijan is creating a favorable business environment, and provides access to financial resources.

The State Fund for Development of Information Technologies also attracts local and foreign investments in this area as well as support projects to expand the application of scientific researches and innovations.

The established High Tech Park gives a special advantage to ICT companies and startups by 7 years tax holiday and providing infrastructures, business support resources and services.

Within the High-Tech Park is operating business incubation center. The other main approach is creation of techno-parks in the regions of country.

Azerbaijan has sufficient scientific and economical potential for profiting from the experience of the development and application of the ICT.

We are confident, that successful approach can greatly increase country's economic competitiveness and ICT industry potential.