

**DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND ITS STAKES FOR TERRITORIAL  
ADMINISTRATION OR conditions for an effective e-administration of local authorities  
in Côte d'Ivoire**

**Raymond Kouassi KRA**  
Senior lecturer  
Félix Houphouët-Boigny University  
[kraraymond@yahoo.fr](mailto:kraraymond@yahoo.fr)

**Abstract**

This article deals with the contribution of E-administration, in general, in the management of local authorities in view of their numerous difficulties. In a more and more difficult environment, where the involvements of the state are defaulting; where populations are more and more demanding and where the projects of local development require more and more means to raise, how, without being a panacea, digital communication can pave a possible way to solution to local people in power? What are the conditions for a success of the e-administration of Ivorian local authorities?

**Keywords:** ICT, e-administration, conditions of success, local development

## 1. Introduction

Originally, territory is the ground of geographers, defined as a building which limits present a relative stability in history, easy to find in space throughout a coherent agrarian structure (system of forms), carried by a particular biophysical environment. However, other activities have progressively found landmarks in this notion of territory: spatial, urban or geographical economy; urban or rural sociology; urban anthropology, communication. In marketing, territory is defined as: “a reality that is at the same time historical, socio-economical, institutional, and geographical; dimensions that converge to give a set of public and private actors the conviction of a shared fate, which one part at least is hanging in the balance throughout the territory”.

Territory has become important as the years go in a great number of sectors and its role within economy has proved to be prominent. The scale of competition goes on, today, no more on nations, but on territories within nations. Before this new competition, territory must be attractive in time and space.

The attractiveness of a territory lays on the productive fabric, the residential fabric and the tourist fabric. In one word its ability to attract and maintain financial, technological and human resources. Local development has promoted and enhanced a rising approach going from local actors. This method can be qualified as a development from the bottom. One can understand that the territory must rely on its own strengths and must thus be the object of an endogenous development.

In its quest for an inclusive and endogenous development, the Ivorian government has laid emphasis, since some years, on its process of decentralization by the creation of communes and regional councils. It is obvious today that the development from capital cities has shown its limits. The real development that will lead to populations' welfare will come only by decentralized entities.

Simultaneously the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) to nearly all sectors of life is supposed to improve the quality of this one, improve spatial and socio-economical disparities and promote political participation.

Therefore, it becomes legitimate, before the important role played by ICT in the life of states and administrations, to ask a crucial question: in the eyes of the functioning difficulties of local authorities (financial, budgetary, human resources, organizational difficulties...), under which ones can e-administration be an adequate answer to the management of decentralized administrations?

In other words, this article tries to bring some answers to the following specific questions:

- How will local communication in the period of ICT contribute to the development of territorial entities?
- What conditions can allow local authorities to benefit fully from the advantages offered by ICT in order to bring an answer to their management difficulties?

The choice of this topic is dictated by a remark: Digital revolution hails today development agents in general and local actors in particular, as it has affected, also, the world of enterprise. It questions the management of organizations, their culture, and their relationship with society. The management of information becomes an important stake in the process of territorial development.

This article lies within the framework of the theory of the intelligent uses of ICT; it is a comment and undertakes to set the important role that ICT can play in local development; the answer that the digital administration can give to the current problems of local development and the conditions to satisfy.

## **2. About the Ivorian territorial administration and essay of an assessment of decentralization**

### **2.1. Modes of territorial administration**

Ordinance N° 2011-262 of September, 28<sup>th</sup> 2011 relative to the orientation on the general organization of the territorial administration indicates that the territorial administration of Côte d'Ivoire is structured according to the principles of devolution and decentralization.

Devolution: There is devolution when within the same institution; the decision-making powers held by the highest authorities are transferred to lower authorities in the inner hierarchy of this institution. It is said to be a redistribution of power without any change of the sphere of competence, only integration at the top is lessened. The administration gets closer to the constituents, while unblocking its upper levels.

Decentralization is a system of management in the framework of which proper powers are given to an entity that is different from the Central administration.

- It is technical when it concerns state-owned companies.
- It is territorial when it concerns local authorities.

Territorial decentralization consists for the state in transferring to elected organs competences that they exert on their territories. Local authorities are endowed with legal personality, financial autonomy and competences that they manage freely on their territories under the state's supervision.

Throughout decentralization, the state creates local authorities and gives these ones competences and the freedom to rule their own affairs considered as affairs of local interests. This decentralization is a process that leads not to the state's lack of interest, but to the latter's disengagement for the promotion of the private initiative, local actors' responsibility and populations' participation.

In total, devolution and decentralization are the two key-words in terms of administrative organisation. Except the authorities who are at the top of the state, any administrative authority is, in principle, either a devolved authority or a decentralized authority.

In the first case, that authority is under the dependence of a power above, to whom instructions they have to obey and that holds as of right the power to invalidate their decisions. In the second case, they do not have any powers above, because they have a self decision-making power that they exert under a simple administrative supervision.

The devolved administration is managed, in this framework, by five (05) categories of administrative districts organized along hierarchical lines that are presented in the chart below:

**Chart n°1 : Local authorities**

Districts	Created	Functional	Non functional
Villages	8563	8563	00
Subprefectures	509	378	131
Departments	108	108	00
Regions	31	31	00
Autonomous districts	02	02	00
Districts	12	00	12

The decentralized administration is made with two (02) categories of local authorities that are: the Commune which is composed of areas and villages and the Region that is composed of departments.

The chart below presents the numbers of local authorities

**Chart n°2 : Communes and Regions in Côte d'Ivoire**

Districts	Created	functional	Non functional
Communes	197	197	00
Regions	31	31	00

### 3. Local authorities in Côte d'Ivoire: management inventory

It is possible to date the real decentralization process from 1980's. It is in fact from this period that the Ivorian state has launched the creation of communes of full exercise.

At the beginning of year 2011, one could note, on a quantitative point of view, an evolution of the number of created regions (See supra chart). Besides, one can note that all the created local authorities are functional, with a portfolio rich of transferred competences (16 in total going from education to communication passing by all other issues such as health, security...)

If one can note a quantitative evolution of local authorities, one should not forget that those entities face many problems which affect their functioning. One can categorize them as follows:

- Problems related to finances and budgets: it is no more a secret; one knows that the state's contribution to local authorities' financing is liable for the restrictive principles of public funds (yearly recurrence, balance in the budget...). These constraints slow down the local development process. What's more, a great majority of these local authorities rely much on those state's financings, especially as their capital stock is sometimes insignificant. This has inevitably an impact on the set of projects to carry out.

In 2014, in a commune located in the center of Côte d'Ivoire (Bocanda), the town council (Center, N'Zi region) started the repairing of 25 km of public road network in the commune, in order to make streets more practicable.

According to the head of the technical service, ETTIEN Tanoh Felix, this operation will concern "the major roads" of the town. "It was the 50 km of roads that the city has that were programmed for an amount of 12,5 millions of CFA. But, before the financial constraints,

only six millions of CFA have been budgeted, what corresponds to 25 km of roads", Mr ETTIEN indicated<sup>1</sup>.

In another region, the president of Me regional council (Adzopé), SOMBO Yapi Jean Claude, exhorted his constituents to be patient because some projects that had been announced by the aforementioned council had not started yet.

Drawing up his balance sheet, Mr SOMBO indicated that over the sixty projects that have priority, estimated to 542,647,000 FCFA, about ten had started, until the state contributes for the start of the ones that are on hold.

He invited the population to be patient, because according to him, the state's subsidy takes a long time to be transferred to local authorities, reminding that the will of his council is to go beyond these achievements<sup>2</sup>.

In fact, local authorities finance their budget from their private means that are made up with taxes that they are transferred. However, citizens do not always fulfill this duty; they are not used to paying taxes systematically; it is a great shame for local administrations' coffers.

- Problems related to the functioning of the different organs and services: the slownesses in the execution of some deliveries of services: since the beginning of 1980s, communes are entrusted with the drawing up of some certificates that was a matter for devolved administrations (subprefectures). It is about birth certificates and the legalization of some papers, burial certificates...

Very often, the process to elaborate these certificates is relatively long and very slow (length and slowness due to the Administration itself or to the agents who do not do correctly their work). In many cases, to walk around these malfunctionings, customers are obliged to use unofficial ways (intervention of a head, corruption...) For example, one should remember that in 2003, in the majority of the besieged towns, the salaries of the personnel were unpaid for more than six months. One understands well that in these conditions the agents favour such practices<sup>3</sup>.

To that, one can add the environment of work which is a problem too. The tools of work are obsolete, and naturally this obsolescence constitutes a danger, for example in the strategies of documents' preserving and archives. During the war, many documents were destroyed and definitely lost<sup>4</sup>, due to the fact that they were only under material shapes.

Before the scope of the difficulties that they face, and knowing no more what to do, the town councils, throughout their organisation (UVICOCI) are sometimes obliged to use strong measures as it is the case concerning unions. In December 2008, UVICOCI organized a strike in all the Ivorian town councils. According to the spokesman of the organisation, "after

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<sup>1</sup> Ivorian Press Agency, Infrastructures: Repairing of 25 km of public road network in the commune of Bocanda, Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Ivorian Press Agency, The President of Me regional council exhort his constituents to be patient for the execution of the projects that have been promised, Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Rémi Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire: Uvicoci : Town councils claim 4 months of pay for their agents, in *Fraternité Matin* (Abidjan), February, 26<sup>th</sup> 2003.

<sup>4</sup> The union of towns and communes of Côte d'Ivoire (UVICOCI) deplored, in 2003, at the end of a general assembly, the destruction of files, materials, vehicles and municipal places (*Fraternité Matin*, February, 26<sup>th</sup> 2003).

careful consideration, it has been decided that the cessation of town councils' functioning is maintained. However, there will be a minimal service. It concerns only the service of wedding celebration and that of burial certificate<sup>5</sup>. UVICOCI was denouncing that way the slownesses in the commitments of the state vis-à-vis local authorities.

- Problems related to the behaviours of populations: It is today difficult to elaborate a development action without the effective participation of the beneficiaries, that-is-to say populations. Any project in this way would fail otherwise. This can allow thinking that the civic behaviour of populations is one of the factors of success of any project in territories.

In this situation, and in many communes and regions, the behaviours of populations are not in compliance with the actions ran by local councilors.

Administration is sometimes obliged to step into the breach. In Daloa, in the mid-west of Côte d'Ivoire, the regional director of Environment, urban salubrity and sustainable development, Kouakou Kouassi Paul, recommended to the populations to adopt an eco-civic behaviour to, on the one hand, preserve environment and on the other hand, maintain their living environment in cleanness. The regional director, who was intervening in the framework of the world day of Environment 2015, wished that the inhabitants of Daloa adopt from then on attitudes that participate in preserving their environment.

"Remember, did he say, this date of june 5 of each year, established by the United Nations, since 1972, for this day devoted to environment, by acting at least so as to contribute to protect your environment, either by sweeping the streets or by planting trees or even by refusing to empty out the rubbish anywhere and any old how<sup>6</sup>."

According to the African Development Bank (ADB) 2015 report<sup>7</sup>, the economic growth of Côte d'Ivoire in 2014 remained strong, as it was during the two previous years, with a rate estimated to 8.3%; the financial situation much strengthened in 2014, in the framework of the program ran with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), under the effect of the rise of tax revenue and the control of expenditure.

Besides, according to the same report, the political situation, which is improving slowly, is still marked by the slowness of the dialogue between the political actors.

But in terms of spatial inclusion, the very challenge will be to include the development in duration and to strengthen its impact in rural zones and out-of-town centers... Hence the importance to strengthen the power of local authorities, their management capacity to initiate structuring projects and to accelerate the access of local actors to services of quality.

The report concludes at last that the Ivorian regions offer in principle a lot of assets. Their road network is heavier than the African average. Many types of agricultural lands and climates enable to develop different agro-industrial and food-processing products with strong world demand.

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<sup>5</sup> Nomel Essis, Côte d'Ivoire: strike of UVICOCI- Town councils blocked with minima service, in Nord Sud Quotidien, Decembre, 19<sup>th</sup> 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Ivorian Press Agency, JME 2015: eco-civic behaviours recommended to populations of Daloa to preserve environment, Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> 2015.

<sup>7</sup> YEMBILINE Pascal and all, Côte d'Ivoire 2015, country report, [www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fr](http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fr)

It goes without saying that the objectives assigned to local authorities would be luckier to be carried out if solutions were found to this range of aforementioned problems. Naturally, in this kind of situation, a question is asked inevitably: How to find an answer to all of this?

Without being a panacea, it is possible to say that a new approach to administration by digital technology can be another opportunity to be seized by local authorities.

#### **4- E-administration: an opportunity for local development**

##### **4.1 The electronic administration in some main points**

The electronic administration can be defined as “the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), and internet in particular, in the aim of improving the management of public affairs.” Vehicle for the improvement of the administration/citizen relationship, the electronic administration enables to propose a more competitive offer of services to customers and to enhance the administrative transparency. It is also in the centre of the sets of issues of the state modernization, because it is a tool of improvement of its procedures and its internal functioning (decompartmentalization, agility), as well as this of the optimization of its costs.

In France, for example, the first telematic services appeared at the end of 1980s thanks to Minitel and the administrations participate in the development of internet from the second half of 1990s. But it was from 1997 that the electronic administration emerged gradually as a full public policy and that a global strategy was elaborated, nursed by several reports that took concrete form in a set of programs: Government’s program of actions for the Information society in 1998, Electronic administration for the period 2004-2007.

In Côte d’Ivoire, it was really at the beginning of the year 2000 that the Government started using a digital policy in the management of public administrations. This role will be entrusted to the Ivorian Center of Government Communication (ICGC).

Since then, the electronic administration has become a main issue of the state’s reform policy. In terms of services offered to customers, one can distinguish two main steps in the use of ICT: The first one consists in placing information at citizens’ disposal in order to simplify their administrative procedures; the second one, that goes further, allows customers to take directly their steps on line. One talks so about on-line services.

In the development of these digital services, the issue of their accessibility (rural zones internet coverage, display of high and very high rate, public in situation of weakness: people living on the poverty line, old people, disable persons) and that of strong legal constraints in terms of personal data protection and individual liberties are raised.

At last, the development of the electronic administration lies within a viewpoint of the control of public spending (an electronic procedure having a processing cost estimated a hundred times weaker than a paper procedure) and can favour the emergence of a new mode of management (less authoritarian, more horizontal), whereas the “policy of datum” must generate a better circulation and enhance the value of the information appropriate for the decompartmentalization of administrations and to the improvement of their functioning.

One can clearly see that if digital technology can be a vehicle for the improvement of administration/citizen relationship, and if the electronic administration enables to propose a

more competitive offer of services to customers and to enhance the administrative transparency, E-administration can be a possible answer to a set of problems raised by local authorities in Côte d'Ivoire.

#### **4.2. Advantages of digital technology for local authorities**

Local development is a local dynamics based on the local mobilization of resources and the know-how and lay emphasis on the development of initiatives, the reinforcement of joint solidarities, the consideration of the aspirations and the needs of the population in the political, economic, social and cultural fields. It allows a qualitative jump by a full empowerment of local actors in the exercise of their political, economic, social and cultural roles, a collective capacity to define a coherent strategy of actions of development and an organisation of civil society.

Local development could be described as an approach of global territorial and multi sector-based development favouring the endogenous development, mobilizing the set of human and financial means that contribute to it and assuring their convergence.

A process based on the involvement of all the actors concerned (local councilors, economic, organisation and union actors) but also on that of the population, in order to set a local democracy. It is built on an elaborated collective project of development, implemented and evaluated from an analysis of the needs and by putting the forces of territory in good use at best. Local development involves a joint approach including around the local authority, the different local actors as well as a strong development of the participative local democracy next to the representative democracy.

Participation is the most accomplished form of local democracy. It is totally different from information that consists in making know; consultation of people that consists in collecting a point of view which is not necessarily taken into account in the decision; dialogue that consists in starting the discussion, in trying to find a common position.

#### **4.3 E-administration for interactivity**

Local development implies transparency and participation. These two principles are evaluated well at the political, social and economic level. In this process of local development, as borne by the territorial administration, ICT play an important role.

In fact, the dematerialization of the territory in the cyber space facilitates the interactivity of local actors. Allowing the citizen to accompany decisions, or even to contest them, involves the fact to give him the means to exercise his rights, what requires partly a really interactive communication to invent. The approach was first perceived as “revolutionary” for the local authority: opening a territorial blog frightened. It meant the fact of turning the page of a descending communication, locked in its “ivory tower” during decades. It means taking a chance to open oneself to dialogue, so to critics, by “stooping” to the same level as the citizen to communicate on the Web. It was the fact of making a “political” decision, which involves a training of the agents concerned, true reorganizations of services and a heavier work.



#### **4.4. E-administration to bring an answer to local authorities' lack of means and to administrative delays.**

Investments in digital technology can help fighting against poverty which undermines more and more Ivorian local authorities. The means of digital communication allow the local authority to increase its financial autonomy and to reduce its dependence towards state allocations. This resource allows the local authority to carry out the plans of fight against poverty without constraints.

ICT can, in fact, increase the effectiveness of the services of income tax at the local level and particularly inform the population on the importance of taxes on local development. Data related to land assessment and income tax can be facilitated, as well as invoicing and receipt; what can contribute to the increase of registered properties; to the creation of a system of systematic analysis and more equitable of property tax; to effective property tax bills: the result, an increase of global tax revenue.

In many developing towns and regions, computers connected to the network are used to improve the systems of public management having an important effect on populations' quality of life, for example by the reduction of the waiting time and the corruption associated to the issue of certificates or by the improvement of the functioning of the system of public support. This insertion of ICT could help reducing considerably the time limit to get administrative papers and particularly to reduce corruption practices that rot the local public administration.

#### **4.5 Virtual communities to reinforce the debate in the public space**

At the political level, many discourses underline the "citizen Web", a certain "electronic democracy."

Today, many tools allow internet users to gather, to communicate and to leave "information traces" of their actions. These gathering together can be compared with "virtual communities" (VC) that are defined as "affiliated groups for which online interactions lay on the sharing of enthusiasm and knowledge for a specific activity of consumption or related to a group of activities".

The main interest of VC is to give a piece of information coming from the experience and the expertise of the participants, which constitute the information value of these gathering together. The emergence of communities on internet has lead to the development of many sites according to this model or more simply to the suggestion of communication spaces.

This induces meta-information. Meta-information is defined as "information about information". This notion is used in many fields such as information sciences, information economy and in management sciences. Though this concept has not been developed in an empirical way, it is relevant to integrate it because it permits to materialize the affluence of VC. So we distinguish the motivation for the information from that for the meta-information. Meta-information is "the key of the value of information assets, even though it is not suitable for trade". This approach which lies within the framework of the communities of experience and which users are the favored receivers matches well with our analysis framework. In fact, if some information related to the products cannot be given only by the manufacturer or the traders, it means that these communities represent a way to have other additional information. They are materialized by the recommendations of the users, who lean on their own experience and expertise. VC propose information coming from users that we consider as meta-

information. In fact, the user refers to the information given by the site or the firm about a product. In the framework of the territory, they contribute to the development of the tourist sector. Well, according to the Tourist international organisation, the tourist sector constitutes a pillar of territories' development that should not be neglected.

### **5. General conditions to favour E-administration in Ivorian local authorities**

The passage from an old management practice to the use of new technologies requires deep changes and some conditions necessary to its execution. This transformation involves an adaptation of agents and processes and requires prior financial investments (accessibility and ergonomics of tools, interoperability of information systems, harmonization of data processing, respect of their security and their privacy) before becoming source of economy.

#### **- Material and infrastructure conditions**

Digital technology imposes the structures which embark on it huge investments. Well, we know it, and that has been revealed by the study, local authorities do not have financial means to embark on such undertakings, at least for local authorities of medium importance.

In most of the countries, this kind of investments is always entrusted to the state. In Côte d'Ivoire, one can note that the state makes great efforts to create a global environment favourable to the use of digital technology.

These efforts are remarkable in terms of the extension of internet access to everybody<sup>8</sup>. During a press conference, the government spokesman and also minister of Digital Economy and Post office, after reminding that the world was today dependent on information and communication technologies (ICT); and that dependence towards the digital sector has given birth to a new form of economy called "digital economy". To the question concerning the fact that internet access to a small number of people would not be an obstacle to a real existence of a digital economy, the minister claimed to be comforting: "We are going to build cybercafés in all subprefectures to allow all citizens to have access to ICT".

It is good to remind that the number of people who have access to mobile telephone went up from 16 millions in 2011 to 24 millions in 2016<sup>9</sup>.

Besides, in its policy to facilitate the access to equipments, the Ivorian government, which access to computer equipments is a constant concern<sup>10</sup>, has invited tenders for the project "*one citizen, one computer*"<sup>11</sup>. The government is discussing with Samsung group for an agreement in this way.

One can underline the fact that the state has created a free zone<sup>12</sup> to facilitate the setting up of economic operators and companies in this sector.

Finally, at the international level, according to an announcement released by Eutelsat, the French group and the social network Facebook are working on the display of the solution Internet.org (renamed Free Basics by Facebook) in new countries among which there is Côte d'Ivoire. Eutelsat Communications and Facebook have announced that they have joined

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<sup>8</sup> Arnaud HOUSSOU, Digital economy/ Bruno Koné: "We are going to build in all subprefecture cybercafés", | La Tribune Ivoirienne, Published on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>9</sup> , Arnaud HOUSSOU, Idem.

<sup>10</sup> Intelligent d'Abidjan, ICT/Access to equipments – Bruno Koné solicits the services of a world computer science group, April, 17<sup>th</sup> 2013

<sup>11</sup> Intelligent d'Abidjan, Idem

<sup>12</sup> The Village Information technologies and de la Biometrics (VITIB)

forces to work on a new initiative that will make the most of satellite technologies to connect more Africans to Internet<sup>13</sup>.

If in some of those African countries the solution of Facebook is already available through some phone operators, this new initiative aims at covering the continent in an effective way than telecom networks often limited by the local partners of the American social network.

Some plans are under way to connect 7 new countries including Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Cameroun, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and DR of Congo at the end of 2016 and cover the whole continent in 2019.

One can say that conditions are being met and that the state is playing its role; its role of facilitator.

- **The competence of human resources and the political will of local councilors.**

The constraints of the competence of the agents and the political will of local councilors seem, from our point of view, the most difficult problems to be solved; and that for many reasons.

First, the use of digital tools requires from the users some competences; and also thorough knowledge in computer science and multimedia. One knows that this field is very dynamic and that many graduates take a spill a little time. At the same time, one should recognize that local authorities, generally, do not pay well. How convincing a graduate newly coming from an engineering school to work in a local authority where the salary is relatively low?

Then, in the present state of affairs, agents who have been recruited and are working in local authorities, in the majority of cases, do not have a good training level<sup>14</sup>. For this category of agents, one can easily guess that the administration will finance a series of trainings to help them.

Finally, it will be more difficult to convince some local councilors to change some work methods and practices. It is known that digital technology permits to “demystify” information and to make it available to everybody. But also and particularly, E-management implies new behaviours of transparency (including transparency in terms of budget), of sharing and collaborative work.

Giving information to taxpayers so as they take part in the debate in the city; being psychologically ready to accept contradiction, and sometimes opposition... these are also new expected behaviours.

It is not obvious that transparency, yet wished by everybody, will be easily accepted by local administrators who are used to managing public affairs in the greatest opacity.

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<sup>13</sup> The writer, the free internet of Facebook is coming in Côte d'Ivoire soon, <https://afriqueitnews.com/category/internet>, searched in February 2016.

<sup>14</sup> There are two kinds of agents in local authorities: Civil servants posted by the state (chief executive, head of technical services, collector of municipal taxes...) and agents recruited by the local administration on the ground. These agents are in charge of the execution of tasks. Very often, their recruitment is the result of their political commitment by the side of the elected mayor.

Transparency in budget, yet considered as one of the principles of good governance, can be considered as a will of wresting a bit of power from the local administrator. For him, it is possible to think it, once the budget is adopted by the council it is out of the question that its daily execution is given a communication to people, who are inhabitants of the city.

- **Efforts to make for the taxpayer**

The success of a technological change could lay, in this case, only on the state upstream and local councilors downstream. In fact, E-management involves also and particularly the inhabitants of the city; the real beneficiaries of technological changes.

Participation has been laid down, a little above, as one of the conditions of success of all action of development. Participation must be expressed in the behaviour of daily local actors. What would all these investments (very heavy besides) and all the might of the law around digital technologies be used for if the customer, the user or the citizen does not understand anything about it?

The capacity to understand the language of digital technology, the competence to use it... all of this requires a digital cultural from the users.

Mobile telephony experienced a boom in Côte d'Ivoire these last years; today daily monetary transactions through mobile phones have risen to a record-breaking 8 billions of CFA<sup>15</sup>, according to the Ivorian minister of Post offices and Information and communication technologies.

According to the minister, "Côte d'Ivoire experiences one of the highest penetration rates of mobile telephony and internet of our continent"... "The segment of mobile telephony, the quality of services and the penetration rate in our regional economic space got significantly better during these last years", according to the same source<sup>16</sup>.

If this is true for the telephone, none can say the same for E-management. In fact, the use of digital services to gain access to information or to ask for a certificate requires more than a phone call.

## **6. Conclusion**

In its policy of development, Côte d'Ivoire has boosted a process of decentralization in order to promote an ascending development; that-is-to say which goes from the bottom. With the development of ICT, this decentralization lies within a more and more dematerialized world.

Digital technology is significant for territorial administrations' management considering the advantages it brings (direct broadcasting of information; access to local information on mobile support; log-on of users and agents; effectiveness of metadata processing; reduction of procedures and decision-making circuits; offer to help constituents; broadening of the public debate...)

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<sup>15</sup> <https://afriqueitnews.com/category/internet>, Côte d'Ivoire: More than 8 billions of CFA of daily transactions through mobile phones, May 21<sup>st</sup> 2015.

<sup>16</sup> <https://afriqueitnews.com/category/internet>, idem.

Of course, if local authorities really want to change their form of management, they have to create an adapted environment and favorable conditions for that purpose. This rests at the same time on the state, on local administrations themselves and the beneficiary populations.

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