

A cross-national analysis of the cases revealed four critical success factors that transcend national boundaries: leadership, trust, risk management, and communication and coordination. These were crucial in every setting regardless of service focus, level of government, or type of collaboration structure.

### Leadership

All of the projects were initiated by public sector leaders who shared a vision of better government. The leaders in each project were committed to developing working relationships within government and between government and private and nonprofit organizations. Commitment of top political leaders proved critical to initiation and sustainability of these efforts. Leadership also emerged within project teams, not only from project managers, but also from different individual participants who had the necessary skill or knowledge to lead specific tasks or respond to particular problems.

### Trust

All of the cases involved the development and exercise of trust. Two kinds of trust relationships were critical to the successful implementation of these projects:

- public trust or the degree to which citizens and other groups in society believe the project or service program can be trusted to treat them fairly; and
- professional trust or the degree to which people and organizations charged with developing and delivering a service believe they can rely on the motives and predict the performance of other participants. Three types of trust (calculus- based trust, identity-based trust, and institution- based trust) were evident in the ways that project teams handled issues they faced.

### Risk management

Collaboration within government or between the public and private sectors involves partners from different organizations pursuing different, sometimes conflicting, objectives. These are usually large-scale projects that address very visible problems, making significant use of new processes and technologies. All these factors are potential sources of risk. Two categories of risk were important in these initiatives:

- external risks that come mainly from the socio-economic, political, and technological environments; and
- internal risks that stem from the nature of the project, the participants, and their relationships.

Fortunately, most risks can be managed if they are identified and understood early in the process.

### Communication and coordination

High levels of information sharing, good communication, and well-orchestrated coordination and problem solving help a collaboration project succeed. The likelihood of success depends on how well managers can leverage technology, organizational, and human resources in coordination with collaborating partners. These initiatives require employees of all partners to work in a highly coordinated fashion and require the partnering organizations to provide the motive, opportunity, and structure for this to happen. The case studies demonstrated a related set of effective approaches. These include clear governance principles, both formal and informal structures, and innovative problem solving mechanisms such as "war rooms."