

Initiatives and implementation of e-Governance Programmes: A Case Study of Odisha

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Abstract— E-governance is more than just a government website on the Internet. The strategic objective of e-governance is to support and simplify governance for all parties; government, citizens and businesses. The use of ICTs can connect all three parties and support processes and activities. In other words, in e-governance electronic means support and stimulate good governance. Therefore, the objectives of e-governance are similar to the objectives of good governance. Good governance can be seen as an exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to better manage affairs of a country at all levels. It is not difficult for people in developed countries to imagine a situation in which all interaction with government can be done through one counter 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, without waiting in lines. However to achieve this same level of efficiency and flexibility for developing countries is going to be difficult. The experience in developed countries shows that this is possible if governments are willing to decentralize responsibilities and processes, and if they start to use electronic means. This paper is going to examine the legal and infrastructure issues related to e-governance from the perspective of developing countries. Particularly it will examine how far the developing countries have been successful in providing a legal framework.

Index Terms— ICT, e-Governance, G2C, G2B, G2G, e-Registration, IGR Odisha, Commercial Taxes, VAT IT Implementation, e-Municipality, e-Governance initiatives in Odisha, Orissa e-Governance Services Ltd. (OeSL), Orissa Computer Application Centre (OCAC).

1 INTRODUCTION

E-governance is the application of information & communication technologies to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of informational & transactional exchanges with in government, between govt. & govt. agencies of National, State, Municipal & Local levels, citizen & businesses, and to empower citizens through access & use of information.

e-Governance is an instrument of the Information Society in the form of governance principles, strategies, systems and tools that enable the use of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) in mutual interactions between and among the key members of the society; state, citizens, and businesses.

For governments, the more overt motivation to shift from manual processes to IT-enabled processes may be increased efficiency in administration and service delivery, but this shift can be conceived as a worthwhile investment with potential for returns. Following are some of the recent e-governance projects implemented by various state governments.

The three main benefited user groups that can be distinguished in e-governance concepts are government, citizens and businesses. e-Governance is the use of information and communication technologies to support good governance.

The most common interactions in e-governance are Government to Citizens (G2C), Citizens to Government (C2G), Government to Businesses (G2B) and Government to Government (G2G). The various interactions in e-Governance are presented schematically in Figure.

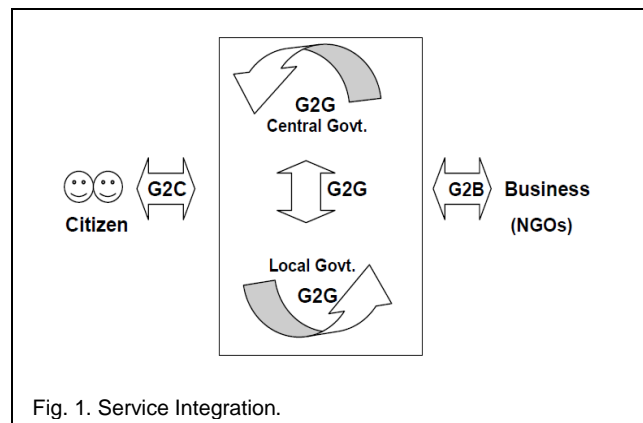


Fig. 1. Service Integration.

Information, interaction, transaction & transformation are the four phase of e-Governance. Most governments start by delivering online information, but public demands and internal efficiency soon require more complex services. In some cases the public demand is the driving force, in other cases, cost saving aspects for the government are leading. e-Governance will mature according to the four phases: Information, Interaction, Transaction, Transformation. The first two phases concentrate on the information exchange via web-portals; the last two phases are mainly oriented towards an integrated service delivery approach.

2 NEED OF E-GOVERNANCE

Odisha state is attempting to revitalize their public administration and make it more proactive, efficient, transparent and especially more service oriented. In this context, the appropriate use of ICT plays a crucial role in advancing the goals of the public sector and in contributing towards an environment of social and economic growth.

e-Governance can support significantly the process of transformation of the government towards a leaner, more cost-effective government. It can facilitate communication and improve the coordination of authorities at different tiers of government, within organizations and even at the departmental level. Further, e-Government can enhance the speed and efficiency of operations by streamlining processes, lowering costs, improving research capabilities and improving documentation and record-keeping.

Odisha has recognized Information Technology (IT) as an effective tool in catalyzing the economic activity, in efficient governance and in developing human resource. They have, therefore, made significant investments in it and successfully integrated it with the development process, thereby reaping the benefits to their society.

In Odisha also these developments have impacted the industrial, education, service and Government sectors and their influence on various applications is increasingly being felt of late. As the era of digital economy is evolving, the concept of governance has assumed significant importance.

3 FLAGSHIP PROJECTS OF ODISHA

Government of Odisha has initiated many projects for implementation of e-Governance in the state. Some of the successful projects running in the state to cater different citizen and business centric services are as follows:

TABLE 1
LIST OF IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS OF GOVT. OF ODISHA

Project	Description
e-dhaRani	This project is the IT enablement in all (180) Sub Registrar Offices of Odisha. It's cater the computerized registration of 64 kind of deeds resulting the fast document delivery to citizens. www.igrorissa.gov.in
VATIS	This is implemented to achieve excellence in the formulation and implementation of different taxes administered by Commercial Taxes Department, Govt. of Odisha. https://odishatax.gov.in/
e-Shishu Project	Odisha Primary Education Program Authority has implemented this project which is the first of its kind in the country. The project has two components - Child Tracking system (CTS) and Intervention monitoring & information system (IMIS). Under CTS, a comprehensive database of all children below 14 years has been created which includes their socio-economic as well as demographic details. Under IMIS, all the 14 interventions under Sarva Shiksha Aabhiyan are monitored online. www.opepa.in
BETAN	Web Based Payroll package has been implemented in all 314 Blocks, 30 DRDAs, along with Odisha Secretariat and other state Govt offices.

TABLE 2
LIST OF UNDER IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS OF GOVT. OF ODISHA

Project	Description
e-Municipality	This is the implementation of an integrated Municipal e-Governance application Software System in all Urban Local Bodies of Government of Odisha' along with integration with the existing software applications. www.ulborissa.gov.in
Odisha Online	This project is to provide citizen centric services of all departments on single interface through Common Service Centres. www.orissaonline.gov.in
e-Procurement	e-Procurement is being implemented in 4 Departments (IT, RD, Works & Water Resources) in the 1st phase with the support of NIC, New Delhi.
Food Grain monitoring system	An RFID based food grain monitoring system is currently under development. Pilot implementation is being done in Khurda & Koraput districts.

3 ROLE OF IT IN E-GOVERNANCE

Advances in IT offer potentially beneficial effects on governance. For instance, the increased performance and availability at reduced cost of microelectronics, fiber optics, voice and video compression, fast-packet switching and high-density storage technology could be utilized to make public administration more efficient. Technology convergence due to digitalization, wide band transmission, compression technologies, and standards development lends support for the low cost provision of public services such as health care and education. The pursuit of democratic governance could be fostered with a nation's access to a much greater diversity of communication sources and network designs. This is facilitated by the unbundling of communication functions and services due to the emergence of competing technologies, the dispersal of intelligence through diverse communication networks, the demands of large users, and the institution of competitive markets. In developing countries like the India, the expansion of two-way interactive media can support local grassroots participation. Democratic politics could be enhanced through the utilization of updated networking capabilities due to improvements in integration and switching technologies such as routers, intelligent hubs and asynchronous transfer mode, together with advances in wide band transmission technologies and software support applications. The increased mobility and portability arising from distributed intelligence and innovations in wireless technologies such as satellite receivers, cellular telephony, radio paging, private branch exchange equipment, and local area and wide area networks also provide a rich environment for cultivating good governance. IT promotes good governance in three basic ways: (1) by increasing transparency, information, and accountability; (2) by facilitating accurate

decision-making and public participation; and (3) by enhancing the efficient delivery of public goods and services.

4 ODISHA E-GOVERNANCE PLAN

Keeping in line with the increased thrust on e-governance across the country, the state also took initiatives to computerise various departments, which started in mid 80's with a few isolated initiatives. But since year 2000 the state has taken up statewide planned initiatives, which includes policies, infrastructure and software application development specifically to create an ICT enabling environment to enable citizen centric service delivery.

In the year 2004 the government came out with the Information Technology & ITeS Policy. The e-Governance roadmap of Odisha was released on 14th June 2006 by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, which comprised of governance Vision, governance Strategy & Blue print and Capacity Building road map.

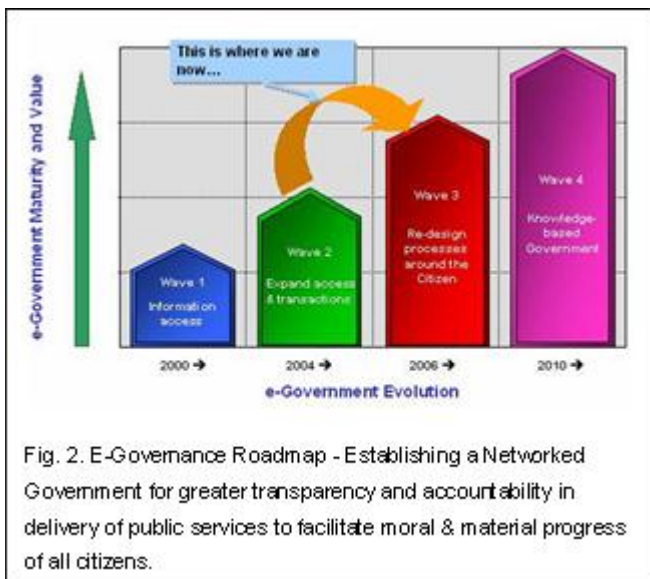


Fig. 2. E-Governance Roadmap - Establishing a Networked Government for greater transparency and accountability in delivery of public services to facilitate moral & material progress of all citizens.

15 Departments were identified to provide more than 200 services under the Mission Mode Programme (MMP) of National eGovernance Programme. The eRegistration Project has also been included into the ambit of MMP. The state Government has implemented the eRegistration Project on PPP (Public Privat Partnership) and successfully implemented at 180 Registration Offices. Further to enable access to public utility services at citizen door step, establish of 8558 nos. of Common Facility Centre has been initiated and the much need Citizen Centric Services will be provided through these facility centres.

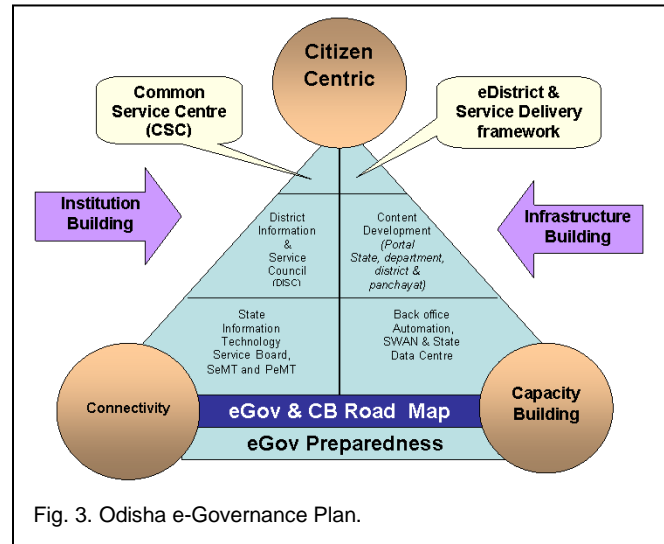


Fig. 3. Odisha e-Governance Plan.

5 FLIP SIDE OF E-GOVERNANCE

There are criticisms that most of the projects initiated by government departments, are dysfunctional, outdated, have ineffective links, and do not encourage interactive communication with the population. In nutshell, for implementing a concept like e-governance, there is a total transformation of the public systems and procedures led by a change in the administrative mind-set. In this paper, the author has attempted to review the concept of e-governance; technology requirements and impediments to e-governance; need for re-engineering as a pre-cursor to e-governance; and made certain recommendations for implementing e-governance solutions.

6 CONCLUSION

E-governance has been responsible for the progression in technology of developing countries and in this context Odisha has implemented some good projects in the state. The goal of E-governance is the ability to access and interact with the world on an even plain. No state should be left behind when it comes to being able to communicate with one another. Without E-governance, developing countries will be left behind when it comes to technology because almost every day, ICT technologies are advancing and changing. Developing countries now have the opportunity to better themselves through electronics and make their society be more advanced and more efficient than ever before.

Some of these core principles of e-Governance include a clear understanding and appreciation of the objectives to be achieved, making governance reforms rather than ICT the key focus for these projects, a step-by-step approach to maximum outcomes and benefits, complete re-engineering of government systems and procedures, constant monitoring and evaluation, and use of local languages for ensuring citizen-friendly interface.

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