Performance of e-Governance in Indian Economy

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Abstract

E-Governance or "electronic governance" is defined as the delivery of Government services and information to the public, using the electronic means including the dissemination of information to the people and the agencies. In India the concept 'e-governance' began with National Informatics Center's efforts to connect all district headquarters though computers in 1980s. In 2002 it further proposed the setting up an Indian portal for public access to information on various aspects of government functioning. e-governance promotes the efficiency, enforces accountability, brings transparency in the working of the government system and reduces time delays; All important government policies are useful to people, e-governance also beneficial to the citizens. It involves technology, policies and infrastructure. This paper reveals the performance of e-governance in India in the context of its role in Agriculture sector, rural development and promoting social welfare.

Keywords: e-Governance, Policies, Agriculture, Rural Development and Social Welfare.

1. Introduction:

Information technology is a tool in the functioning of government activities to provide bitter services to citizens. E-government describes the use of technologies to facilitate the operation of government and the disbursement of government information and services. E-government, short for electronic government, government includes the use of electronics in government as large-scale as the use of telephones and fax machines, as well as surveillance systems, tracking systems such as RFID tags, and even the use of television and radios to provide government-related information and services to the citizens. e-governances the relationships between government to government, government to citizens, citizens to government, government to business sector and government to NGOs using Information and Communication Technology(ICT).

a) **Delivery models and activities of e-Government:** The primary delivery models of e-Government can be divided into:

a) Government to Citizens or Government-to-Consumer (G2C):

- In this model, the G2C model apply the strategy of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) with business concept.
- By managing their customer (citizen) relationship, the business (government) can provide the needed products and services fulfill the needs from customer (citizen).

b) Government to Businessman(G2B)
c) Government to Government(G2G)
d) Government to Employees (G2E)

In each of these interaction domains, four kinds of activities take place:

- pushing information over the Internet, e.g.: regulatory services, general holidays, public hearing schedules, issue briefs, notifications, etc.
- two-way communications between the agency and the citizen, a business, or another government agency. In this model, users can engage in dialogue with agencies and post problems, comments, or requests to the agency.

- conducting transactions, e.g.: lodging tax returns, applying for services and grants.
- governance, e.g.: To enable the citizen transition from passive information access to active citizen participation by:

2. Methodology:

The study is based on secondary data obtained through scanning of available literature on the subject from various libraries and institutes. Various magazines, newspapers, journals etc. were consulted. Interviews and group discussions with knowledgeable people in this field. The relevant data from various sources has been collected and the updated report has been compiled.

3. Objectives:

1) To know the e-Governance Policies in India.
2) To study the role of e-Governance in the Agriculture sector.
3) To identify the performance of e-Governance in the rural development.
4) To reveal the impact of e-Governance on the social welfare aspect.

4. The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP):

The Government approved the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), comprising of 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 components, on May 18, 2006. The Government has accorded approval to the vision, approach, strategy, key components, implementation methodology, and management structure for NeGP. However, the approval of NeGP does not constitute financial approval(s) for all the Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and components under it. The existing or ongoing projects in the MMP category, being implemented by various Central Ministries, States, and State Departments would be suitably augmented and enhanced to align with the objectives of NeGP. The National e-Governance Plan takes a holistic view of e-Governance initiatives across the country, integrating them into a collective vision, a shared cause. Around this idea, a massive countrywide infrastructure reaching down to the remotest of villages is evolving, and large-scale digitization of records is taking place to enable easy, reliable access over the internet. The ultimate objective is to bring public services closer home to citizens, as articulated in the Vision Statement of NeGP.

A) National e-Governance Division

The Capacity Building Scheme under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of Government of India envisions establishment of an institutional framework for State-Level decision-making including setting-up of State e-Mission Teams (SeMTs) having relevant expertise and experience to provide technical and professional support to States and Union Territories.

a) For immediate tasks for NeGD include the following projects

- Programme Management of NeGP, inter-alia including facilitating and supporting DIT in undertaking the following tasks and responsibilities assigned to DIT under NeGP:
- Facilitating implementation of NeGP by various Ministries and State Governments
- Providing technical assistance to Central Ministries and State Line Departments
- Serving as a secretariat to the Apex Committee
- Undertaking technical appraisal of all NeGP projects to examine issues such as overall technology architecture, framework, standards, security policy, service delivery mechanism, sharing of common infrastructure etc.
- Human Resource Development, Training and Awareness Building
- Framing core policies, technical assistance, R&D, awareness and assessment and creation of organization structure
- Acting as a Central Agency for an effective implementation of Capacity Building Scheme inter-alia involving provisioning of manpower at various SeMTs across States/ UTs

A) E-Governance Services with its Infrastructure:

a) State Wide Area Network (SWAN).
b) Data Centre.
c) National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG).
d) Common Services Centers.

A .State Wide Area Network (SWAN).

Wide Area Network is an advanced telecommunication infrastructure, which is used now-a-days extensively, for exchange of data and other types of information between two or more locations, separated by significant geographical distances. The medium of connectivity can be copper, optical fibre cable or wireless,

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as may be found feasible Department of IT obtained Government approval in March 2005, for the SWAN Scheme for an overall outlay of Rs. 3334 Crores. This outlay has a Grant In Aid component of Rs. 2005 Crores, to be expended by Department of IT in five years. The Scheme has a State / UT share of balance Rs.1329 crores, which has been provisioned by the Department of Expenditure, Govt. of India, under Additional Central Assistance (ACA). Under the SWAN Scheme, Wide Area Networks are being established in 27 States and 6 UTs across the country. The State of Goa and UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands have implemented Wide Area Networks in the respective State / UT, outside the SWAN Scheme.

Implementation of the SWAN Scheme is in full swing in 33 States/ UTs and the Department of IT has so far approved an outlay of Rs. 1965 Crores of GIA for this purpose

A wide area network deployed in a State or UT would have two components viz.

- Vertical Component
- Horizontal Component

The vertical component of SWAN is implemented using multi-tier architecture (typically, three-tier) with the State/UT Headquarter (SHQ) connected to the each District Head Quarter (DHQ) which in turn gets connected to the each Block Head Quarter (BHQ).

. For the horizontal component, the government departments at each tier are connected to the respective PoPs.

b) Data Center

State Data Centre (SDC) has been identified as one of the important element of the core infrastructure for supporting e-Governance initiatives of National e-Governance Plan (NeGP).

Under NeGP, it is proposed to create State Data Centers for the States to consolidate services, applications and infrastructure to provide efficient electronic delivery of G2G, G2C and G2B services.

c) National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG).

a) The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of the Govt. of India aims to cooperate, collaborate and integrate information across different departments in the Centre, States and Local Government. Government systems are characterized by islands of legacy systems using heterogeneous platforms and technologies and spread across diverse geographical locations, in varying state of automation, make this task very challenging.

b) The National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG), an integrated MMP under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), can simplify the above task by acting as a standards-based messaging switch and providing seamless interoperability and exchange of data across the departments.

d) Common Services Centers

The CSC is a strategic cornerstone of the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), as part of its commitment in the National Common Minimum Programme to introduce e-governance on a massive scale.
The CSCs would provide high quality and cost-effective video, voice and data content and services, in the areas of e-governance, education, health, telemedicine, entertainment as well as other private services. A highlight of the CSCs is that it will offer web-enabled e-governance services in rural areas, including application forms, certificates, and utility payments such as electricity, telephone and water bills.

B)India Development Gateway

India Development Gateway (InDG) is a nation-wide initiative, supported by DIT and executed by C-DAC, Hyderabad. InDG facilitates rural empowerment through provision of credible information products and services in local languages that respond to the real and strategic needs of the unreached especially women and poor. In the process, it catalyzes the use of ICT for collaboration and knowledge sharing among development stakeholders.

5. E-Governance – Agriculture:

The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, therefore, is in the process of preparing a National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGP-A) for a more focused implementation of e-governance activities in the agriculture sector. In order to promote e-governance in agriculture at the centre and provide support to states/UTs for the same, the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing a central sector scheme, "Strengthening/Promoting Agricultural Information Systems' during the Tenth Plan with a budgetary provision of INR 100 crore. The scheme has the following components: (i) Development of agricultural informatics and communication; (ii) Strengthening of IT apparatus in agriculture and cooperation in states and UTs (AGRISNET); (iii) IT apparatus at Department headquarters and its field offices; (iv) Agricultural

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Resources Information Systems (AgRIS); and (v) Kisan Call Centers. The Department has developed four portals and 40 websites covering both headquarters and its sub-formations under the component "Development of Agricultural Informatics and Communications". Some important portals which has till now been developed are: (a) AGMARKNET Portal (http://agmarknet.nic.in); (b) DACNET Portal (http://dacnet.nic.in); (c) DAC Portal (http://agricoop.nic.in); (d) INTRADAC Portal (http://intradac.nic.in); (e) SEEDNET Portal (http://seednet.gov.in); (f) Agricultural Census Portal (http://agcensus.nic.in). The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is supporting e-governance activities at the state agriculture and allied departments through AGRISNET, a state sector mission mode project, which aims at providing improved services to the farming community using Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Agricultural Resources Information System (AgRIS) project has been launched for implementation in two pilot districts of Rohtak (Dairy Typology) in Haryana and Banaskantha (Arid Typology) in Gujarat. Kisan Call Centres initiative aims to provide information to the farming community through toll-free telephone lines. Usage of GIS satellite imaging in India had been happening since a long time in India.

a) Online Land Records

The Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) is one of the earliest initiatives of e-Governance in India, at the grass-roots level. The focus of the entire operation has always been to employ state of the art Information Technology (IT) to galvanise and transform the existing land record system of the country. This web enabled service would aim at:

- Ensuring efficient, accurate, transparent delivery mechanism and conflict resolution in ownership
- Providing electronic record of rights (ROR) to land owners at nominal rates
- Information empowerment of land owners
- Low cost and easily reproducible data for reliable and durable preservation
- Value addition and modernisation in land administration
- Integration with other data sets towards comprehensive LIS.

5. E-Governance in Rural Development

India is a nation of villages. The rural mass in the nation comprises the core of Indian society and also represents the real India. According to the Census Data 2001, there are 638,387 villages in India that represent more than 72 per cent of the total population.So development of these rural mass is one of the key areas of consideration in the government policy formulation, which is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standard of the rural people by providing adequate and quality social services and minimum basic needs becomes essential. The present strategy of rural development mainly focuses on poverty alleviation, better livelihood opportunities, provision of basic amenities and infrastructure facilities through innovative programmes of wage and self-employment etc.The government of India has started many programmes aimed at improving the standard of living in villages or rural areas. To build rural infrastructure, the government launched a time-bound business plan for action called Bharat Nigam in 2005. Under Bharat Nirman, action is proposed in the areas of Water Supply, Housing, Telecommunication and Information Technology, Roads, Electrification and Irrigation. In view of the sheer size and diversity of our country, delivery of governance to the remote corners in a meaningful and locally relevant manner is a huge challenge. The administrative setup has evolved by incorporating our age old institutions with the modern democratic organs to meet this challenge. To make this challenge easy Panchayat Raj came into existence. Panchayats have historically been an integral part of rural life in India, and the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 has institutionalised the Panchayati Raj at the Village, Intermediate and the District levels, as the third tier of governance. In May 2004, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj was formed as the Nodal agency looking after the empowerment of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the country. The use of information - communication technology has made this challenge more convenient.

6. e-Governance Social Welfare:

a) Women empowerment:

Under the National e-Governance Plan Common Services Centers can be an effective vehicle to help women acquire digital literacy skills that enable them to further their education, gain employment, help start and build their own business, secure their livelihood and become socially

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adn politically active. The scheme for empowering women in Rural India through Digital Literacy envisages training of 2500 women on thecource of Computer Concepts designed and admistered.

b) National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

The National Social Assistance Porgramme which came into effect from 15th August,1995 represents a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Article 41 of the Constitution. The programme introduced a National Policy for Social Assistance for the poor and aims at ensuring minimum national standard for social assistance in addition to the benefits that states are currently providing or might provide in future.

e-Governance in NSAP includes the following schemes:

- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) (External website that opens in a new window)
- Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) (External website that opens in a new window)
- Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) (External website that opens in a new window)

Other online information like beneficiary abstract, monthly progress reports: data gap report, report on PDAs created, report on linking of beneficiary to PDA, annual progress reports, area-wise disbursement report, month-wise disbursement report, released pension amount report, acquittance abstract, pass book for pensioner, beneficiary search, category-wise disbursement report, funds receipts and expenditure, fund utilisation and disbursement are also available.

7. Conclusion:

E-Government is to be able to offer an increased portfolio of public services to citizens in an efficient and cost effective manner. E-government allows for government transparency. Government transparency is important because it allows the public to be informed about what the government is working on as well as the policies they are trying to implement. Simple tasks may be easier to perform through electronic government access. Many changes, such as marital status or address changes can be a

long process and take a lot of paper work for citizens. E-government allows these tasks to be performed efficiently with more convenience to individuals. E-government is an easy way for the public to be more involved in political campaigns. It could increase voter awareness, which could lead to an increase in citizen participation in elections. It is convenient and cost-effective for businesses, and the public benefits by getting easy access to the most current information available without having to spend time, energy and money to get it.

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