

E-GOVERNANCE | INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | INNOVATION

TRANSFORMING BANGLADESH



A revolution is reshaping how the world works. It isn't loud, but powerful. For the past three decades, information technology has been the driving force of this revolution. At its core, there's a simple idea but with a massive impact— E-Governance. It's transforming the way governments operate and deliver services to citizens. It narrowed the gap between government and the people. It made services faster, simpler, and more transparent. However, it was not just about digitizing information — it was about rethinking governance itself — with the people at the core. Within the phased implementation of E-Governance, private institutions also play a crucial and multifaceted role in building an inclusive and technology-driven society.

E-Governance is not just about delivering services just through computers, it rethinks governance itself. It makes essential services easily accessible anywhere and anytime, without the usual hassle.

The Journey of e-Governance in Bangladesh



2014

- Service Portal (Sebakun)
- Forms Portal
- Open Government Data (OGD) Portal
- Empathy Training or Innovative Approach
- National Information Portal Framework
- Secretariat Instructions - Digital Office Management
- Innovation Circle
- Multimedia Talking Book

2015

- Online Integrated Service Framework (OISF)
- Land Information and Services Framework (LISF)
- Idea Bank
- 10-digit Unique ID for Citizens
- Google Street View
- Grievance Redress System Guidelines
- Online Khatian System

2017

- e-Mutation System for Land
- Judicial Portal
- Online Police Clearance Certificate System
- Online System for Copyright Management
- RS-Khatian and Land Records Management System
- South-South Network for Public Service Innovation

2018

- National Helpline 333
- Kishore Batayan (Konnect)
- Krishi Batayan
- e-Challan
- Accessible Dictionary
- Online Social Security Allowance

2004

- Formulation of the e-Governance Action Plan and Publication of 50 government forms online
- Launch of the 'Strengthening ICT Capacity of Prime Minister's Office' project

2006

- Issuance of the e-Governance 'Plan of Action'
- Establishment of the e-Governance Cell
- Formation and approval of the Access to Information (a2i) Project

2016

- e-Filing Management System - Nothi
- Muktopath
- e-Mobile Court
- Digital Financial Inclusion and Agent Banking
- e-Participation
- Environment Clearance Certificate System
- Inheritance Calculator

2020

- MyGov - All Government Services at One Place
- COVID-19 Dashboard
- Corona Info Portal
- e-Port Management System

2021

- Digital Heat
- Unified Business Identification (UBID)
- Digital Flood Forecast Warning System in Partnership with Google
- Data Leadership

2003

- Launch of the 'Support to ICT Task Force (SICT) Project

2007

- e-Governance Horizon Scan Report
- Community e-Center (Piloting)
- 60+ Stakeholder Consultation Meeting

2008

- DC Office Website / District Web Portal (Piloting)
- Union Information and Service Center (UISC) (Digital Center)
- Agriculture and Fisheries Information and Community Center

2009

- e-Purji - SMS-based Purji System
- District Web Portal
- National Broadband Policy
- Right to Information Act
- Utility Bill e-Payment Guidelines
- First e-Service Training for UNOs and DCs

2010

- 4501 Union Information and Service Centers
- 700 Quick Wins
- m-Ticketing

2024

- Hospital Management System
- Vaccination Management System
- National Dashboard

2025

- Nagorik Sheba
- D-toll (Pilot)
- e-Apostille
- National Portal Framework 2.0
- mygov e-ticketing

2013

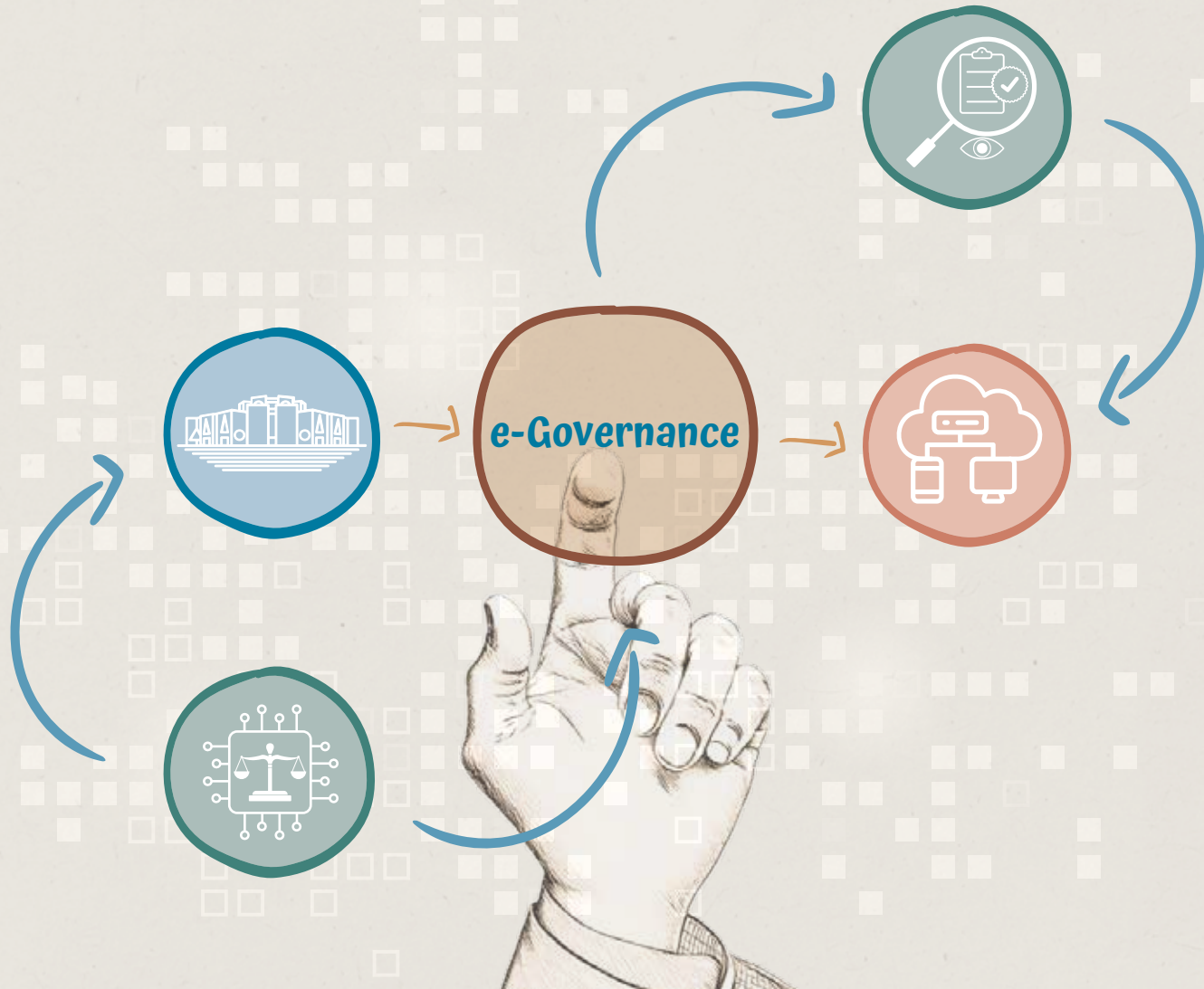
- Teachers' Portal
- Multimedia Classroom Monitoring System (MMCM)
- Innovation Team Circular
- ICT Service in Education Master Plan
- Service Innovation Fund
- Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act

2012

- National e-Service System (NESS)
- Retired Teachers Welfare Management System
- Bangla SMS
- Citizen Core Data Structure Guidelines
- Digital Land Record System (DLRS) for 64 DC Offices

2011

- 64 District e-Service Centers
- e-Porcha
- Service Process Simplification-SPS
- e-Information Database
- e-Ticketing



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Advancements in information technology have significantly changed our lives, not just personally but also how governments operate and deliver services. Once, availing a government service meant waiting in long queues and visiting one office after another. Now, many tasks — from applying for documents to paying taxes — can be done from home, saving time, money, and effort.

This transformation did not happen overnight. Since the 1980s, people have become more aware of their rights, demanding faster and better services. Governments had to adapt and thus, the idea of e-Governance was born. But ideas alone are not enough, real changes need actions. And to make it a reality, fostering a culture of innovation is imperative — it's the very lifeblood of e-Governance.

To keep pace with this transformation, the administration must change too. It needs to be faster, more efficient, and more focused on what the people need. Building new office premises is not enough, but the people working there must adapt and learn the necessary skills.

Imagine a new online system being introduced at a government office. If employees cannot use it, then it is pointless. That's why training is just as important as technology itself.

This left with no alternative but to develop new strategies, to break free from outdated methods, and the state had to rethink how it delivered services — from the ground up. At this turning point, information technology emerged as a game-changer. However, it was not just a tool — it was a new way of thinking — a cultural transformation.

For developing countries, this concept is still relatively new. Governmental services often suffer from delays, financial indiscretions and sometimes the

service itself becomes inaccessible. e-Governance can solve these problems; however, it requires a positive shift in mindset and a willingness to embrace new technology. Many people are not accustomed to using new technologies, and for them, adapting to e-Governance takes time. That is why simply introducing technology is not enough — people need training and support to effectively use it.

What pushed this transformation forward was something deeper — a 'culture of innovation'. The private sector was constantly finding new ways to improve. But for government offices, this was uncharted territory. In the 1980s, a concept of 'New Public Management' (NPM) emerged, encouraging governments to make their operations more efficient, effective, and cost-effective. Slowly, many countries began reshaping their administrative systems. And that was the beginning of a new kind of governance.

However, the road to e-Governance was not smooth. At the very outset, not all countries had access to the necessary technology. Affluent nations advanced quickly while others lagged behind creating a substantial 'digital divide'.

This gap became a major concern. Recognizing the challenge, the United Nations (UN) stepped in. They saw e-Governance as not just a tool for service delivery but a means to bridge inequality, ensure accessibility, and uphold social justice. For the UN, e-Governance was not only about making the administrations more efficient, but also about empowering the people and protecting their rights.

In 2000, the UN announced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), emphasizing poverty eradication, better education and healthcare, and the establishment of good governance and efficient administration for sustainable development. The following year, during the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the decision

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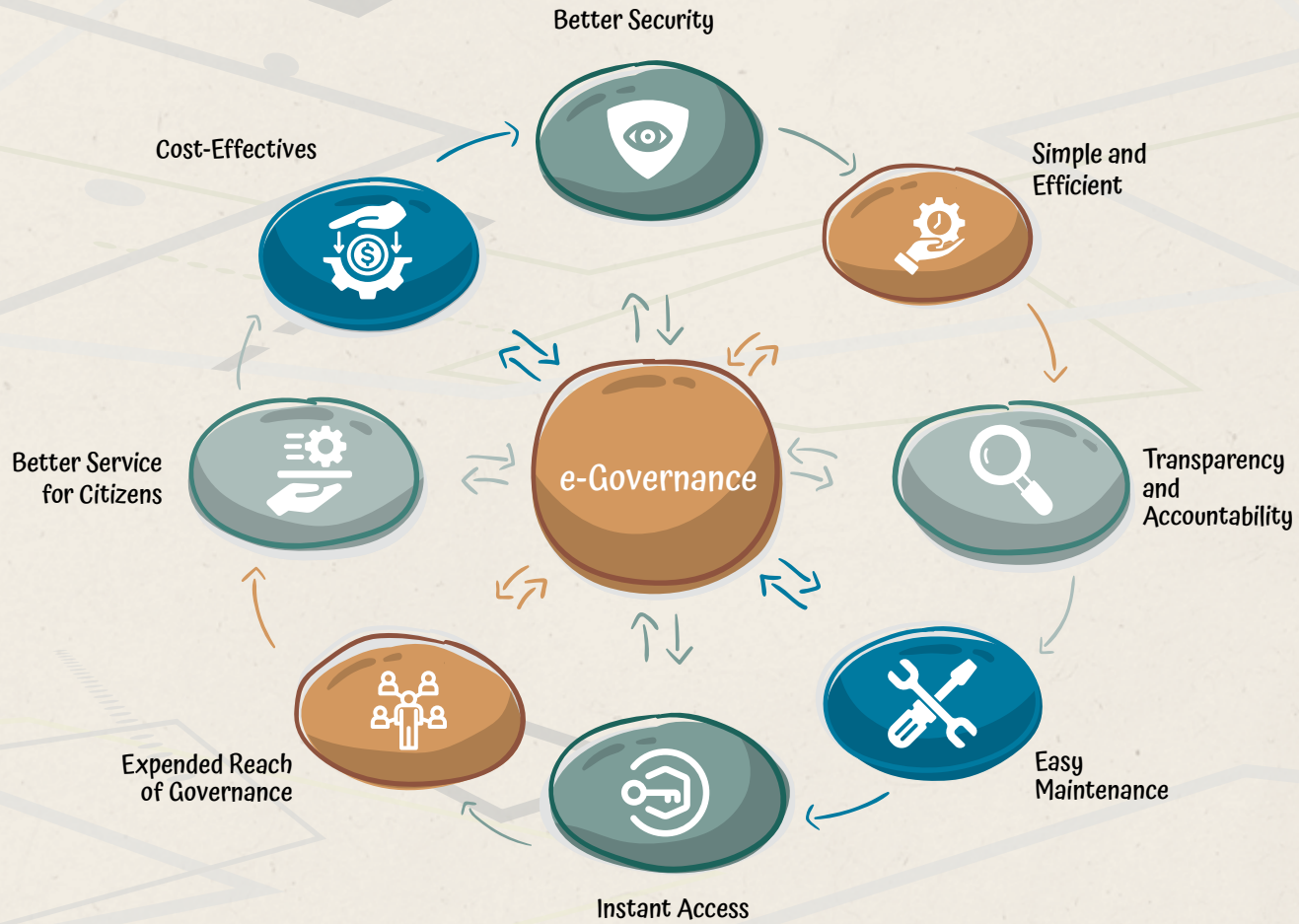
**In 2005, before
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was made to host the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). This sparked Bangladesh's growing interest in advancing information technology. Riding this wave of change, in 2002, the Government of Bangladesh initiated the formulation of the National ICT Policy and established the Support to ICT Task Force (SICT) program, which was implemented the following year.

In 2003, during the first phase of the WSIS summit in Geneva, Bangladesh aligned itself with the 11-point agenda, starting off its SICT-driven ICT development journey. Meanwhile, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), inspired by the WSIS resolutions, took actions to implement e-Governance in developing countries to bring transparency and efficiency to public services. Governments across the globe began experimenting with integrating technology into their institutions.

In 2005, before the UN General Assembly's WSIS conference, Bangladesh kicked off its e-Governance journey in 2003 with the Support to ICT Taskforce (SICT) project, backed by the nation's commitment to digital progress.

Then, in 2006, with support from the UNDP, the 'Access to Information' (a2i) program was launched under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). For nearly two decades, a2i has not only helped deliver government services to citizens through technology but also fostered a 'culture of innovation' within government institutions. This transformation continues to this day, where both senior and newer generations of government employees are working together to build something new, not just through using new technology; but by breaking ancient barriers and creating an administrative system that truly meets the people's needs.



For nearly two decades, a2i has not only helped deliver government services to citizens through technology but also fostered a 'culture of innovation' within government institutions. This transformation continues to this day, where both senior and newer generations of government employees are working together to build something new

Bangladesh's e-Governance drive has steadily gained momentum with many ministries and departments introducing online services. Now, land records are being digitized so citizens can easily access property information such as the E-Mutation system of the Ministry of Land.

Even till 2019, land registration was a tedious and frustrating process — people had to run from office to office, wait endlessly, and often deal with exploitation. Now, with E-Mutation, applications can be submitted online, cutting down delays and hassle. The government has also rolled out an online tax return system, making it easier for citizens to pay taxes from home. Even school and college admissions can now be handled online, streamlining the entire process.

Initiatives like 'MyGov' have centralized multiple government services under one platform, making it easier for citizens to access what they need. Farmers benefit from the 'Agriculture Information Service' where they can get counsel. Students can access the 'E-Learning' platform to study online.

However, a lot more needs to be done. To make e-Governance truly successful, continuous innovation is essential, and the people's participation is vital. The government must take more proactive steps to ensure technology reaches all

and that people can fully utilize the benefits. This requires not just access to technology but also a mindset open to new ideas, the skills to use digital tools effectively, and citizens' willingness.

Bangladesh's e-Governance journey has been supported by numerous organizations, extending beyond the contributions of UNDP. Key supporters include the Gates Foundation, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, World Bank, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Meta (Facebook), Citi Foundation, USAID, ActionAid, and many others, all driving the nation's digital transformation forward.

But e-Governance is not just about technology. To truly succeed, an innovative culture within the government institutions is essential. What does this innovative culture look like? It is a mindset where service holders are encouraged to think differently, solve new challenges, and embrace change rather than fear it. For instance, when new software is introduced at a government office the real impact comes when employees actively explore ways to use it more efficiently, discovering new approaches to improve service delivery. That is when technology truly becomes meaningful.

This book explores how e-Governance and a culture of innovation are transforming Bangladesh's public service delivery. It dives into various initiatives, the challenges faced, and the solutions that emerged. It also draws comparisons with leading global e-Governance models to understand Bangladesh's strengths, current progress, and future roadmap. Furthermore, this book is more than just a story of Bangladesh's e-Governance journey. It is a call towards thinking bigger, collaborating better, and building a citizen-centric, technology-driven public service system that truly serves the nation.

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Horizons of Transformation

While e-Governance has created a digital divide, efforts are underway to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for automated service delivery with the government actively working to bolster digital literacy and foster a culture of innovation.

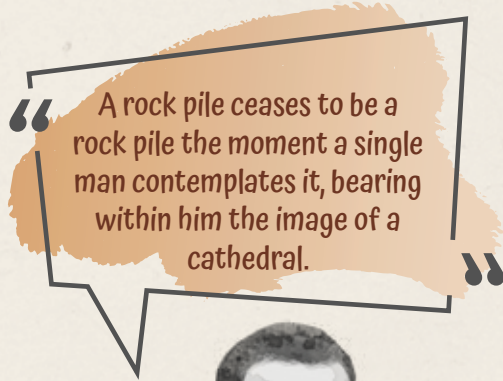




Culture of Innovation: E-Governance

As early as the 1980s, innovation in information technology augmented the philosophy of 'individual freedom'. People started to realize they had a right to access public services. At the same time, governments around the world began to identify cracks in traditional service delivery. The old ways were not keeping up with evolving expectations.

In line with this shift, public administration had to be reimagined. Fixing infrastructure was just not enough, governments needed new strategies. They needed to build real capacity — not just systems, but people and processes too. This called for a major change of mindset. IT had to be woven into state operations. In e-Governance, innovation means using technology to simplify how services are delivered. It is about turning outdated systems into smarter ones. And to keep that momentum going, a strong support system — a full ecosystem — was essential. One that could help this transformation take root and grow.



A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.



Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, author of the famous novella *The Little Prince*.

In his 1948 book *The Wisdom of the Sands*, he used this metaphor to illustrate the necessity of culture and vision in innovation.



Several initiatives may fail before one succeeds.



Elon Musk, CEO of SpaceX, X (formerly Twitter), and Tesla.

This statement appeared in a 2005 *Fast Company* interview following SpaceX's early struggles.



Geoff Mulgan, former CEO of NESTA (UK's National Endowment for Science, Technology, and the Arts).

From his article "Whole of Government Innovation and Action" on his personal website.



Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple.

Quoted in Jeffrey Young's 2009 book
The Journey Is the Reward.

Growth Stages

Creating a culture of innovation in a developing country is never easy, due to limited resources, economically struggling nations face challenges in establishing technology-based infrastructure, connectivity, and administrative transformation. This made the transition both complex and time-consuming. As a result, altering long-standing administrative structures, laws, and policies along with the mindset of those involved remains a difficult task.

Public awareness of technology, cybersecurity, and big data plays a key role in making e-Governance work. At the same time, training and building tech skills push the government's innovation efforts — and its culture — forward.

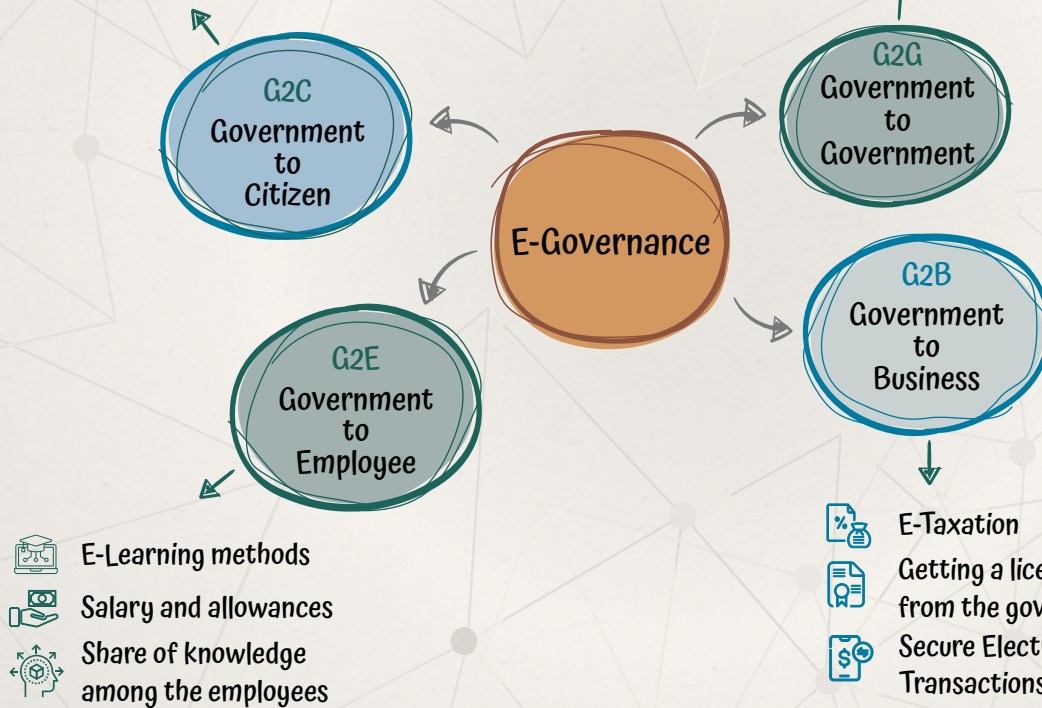
E-governance fosters a culture of mutual trust and cooperation among the government, citizens, and stakeholders. Beyond just administrative reforms, it lays the foundation for a creative and inclusive society.

By integrating IT, wance becomes a core part of modern government. It connects operations across departments and strengthens links with key stakeholders. Initially, e-Governance creates a supportive environment for four key stakeholder groups: G2C (Government to Citizens), G2B (Government to Business), G2E (Government to Employees), and G2G (Government to Government).



-  Government website
-  Online service
-  Passport, NID, TIN
-  Birth-death registration

-  Live fingerprints scanning and verification
-  Electronic entry of reports and paperwork etc.
-  E-Secretariat, E-Police, E-Court
-  Electronic data interchange



E-Governance focuses on what citizens truly need in a bid to deliver services that are transparent, timely, and cost-effective. It uses technology to update, adjust, and connect systems — making it easier for citizens, businesses, employees, and departments to work seamlessly.

In G2C model, the government uses technology to directly deliver services, information, and benefits to the public. Bangladesh began its G2C journey in 2004 by publishing information online about how citizens could access key services. After continuous innovation of nearly two decades, that journey has grown. Today, it is not just information, citizens can access a wide range of services online, with just a few clicks.

Ongoing innovation is steadily solving the complexities that once made public services hard to access. Today, almost all state-provided information and services like birth registration, national ID, passports, driving licenses, and education to land records, are all available online.

G2C is making government services more accessible, convenient, and citizen centric.

A prime example is the E-Ticketing of Bangladesh Railway. The demand for train tickets skyrockets ahead of the Eid holidays. In the past, black market sales were common. Some traders sold tickets at inflated prices. Others created artificial shortages or issued the same seat to multiple passengers. Travelers faced delays and frustration as well as the government was deprived from revenue. Ticketless travel was also on the rise. In recent years, E-ticketing has completely changed that. No more waiting in long queues at the station. Now people can buy tickets in advance from their home, pay through their mobile phones and check the train schedules and locations — all online.

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G2E makes internal government operations smoother. It improves how the government communicates and works with its employees. This includes digital systems for document management, recruitment, performance tracking, payroll, training, and leave management. Meanwhile, G2G ensures that different government offices, departments, and agencies stay connected.

Following the government's 2012 railway E-Ticketing initiative, private transportation systems also adopted it, and over time, the system expanded, giving rise to numerous online ticketing services.

In G2B, e-Governance connects the government with businesses, reducing both time and operational costs. This includes services like licensing, permits, import-export processes, and revenue collection. Business-related transactions and approvals from regulatory authorities have become more streamlined. Bangladesh's Mobile Financial Services (MFS) is a prime example of this model.

Another strong example of G2B is ride-sharing apps. The convenience of booking transportation through mobile phones seems simple — but it relies on an entire ecosystem. Mobile networks, internet access, real-time location tracking, rider availability, and traffic data all work together. The government plays a key role by issuing licenses and providing the infrastructure that keeps this system connected.

However, this streamlined system did not happen overnight. Ride-sharing evolved through trial, testing, and continuous refinement. The apps themselves are innovations — and innovation never stops. New services are included to meet the people's changing needs. Today, everything from food delivery and parcel services to grocery shopping and even booking domestic help can be done online.

G2E makes internal government operations smoother. It improves how the government communicates and works with its employees. This includes digital systems for document management, recruitment, performance tracking, payroll, training, and leave management. Meanwhile, G2G ensures that different government offices, departments, and agencies stay connected.

“E-governance is not just about bringing government services online. It transforms the way governments operate and how they interact with citizens.”

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Hicks, R. (2002). Reforming Government in the Information Age: An International Perspective on E-Governance. Routledge.



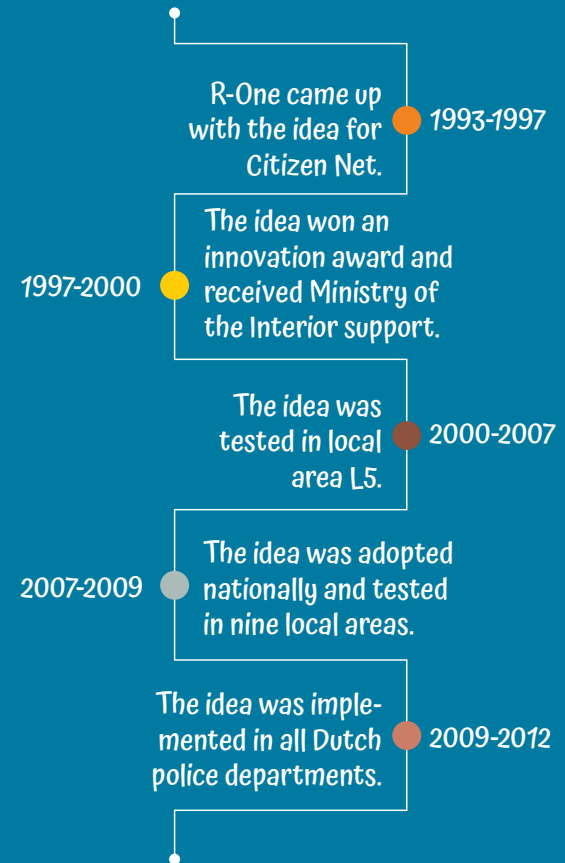
Citizen Net: Early Experiences

A specific case study on innovative culture is widely discussed. It is said that a key innovation by a member of the Netherlands police played a crucial role in integrating a culture of innovation into public services.

This individual, referred to in the case study as R-One or Respondent One, introduced the concept of Citizen Net in 1993. Through his experience investigating various criminal incidents, he realized that even if the police arrive at a crime scene quickly after receiving a report, gathering information often proved difficult, and criminals frequently escape. So, he came up with the idea of a system where citizens could report suspicious individuals or potential crimes via telephone. This meant that citizens would be encouraged to take an active role in crime prevention. Since the internet was not widely accessible at the time, information was collected and shared through community meetings, posters, leaflets, and telephone calls.

When R-One shared his idea with colleagues, they did not take it seriously. He, however, continued to refine the idea over time.

Finally, in 1997, R-One's innovation was recognized, and he was awarded by the regional police department for his idea of the Citizen Net project. The system was implemented across the Netherlands gradually between 2009 and 2012.



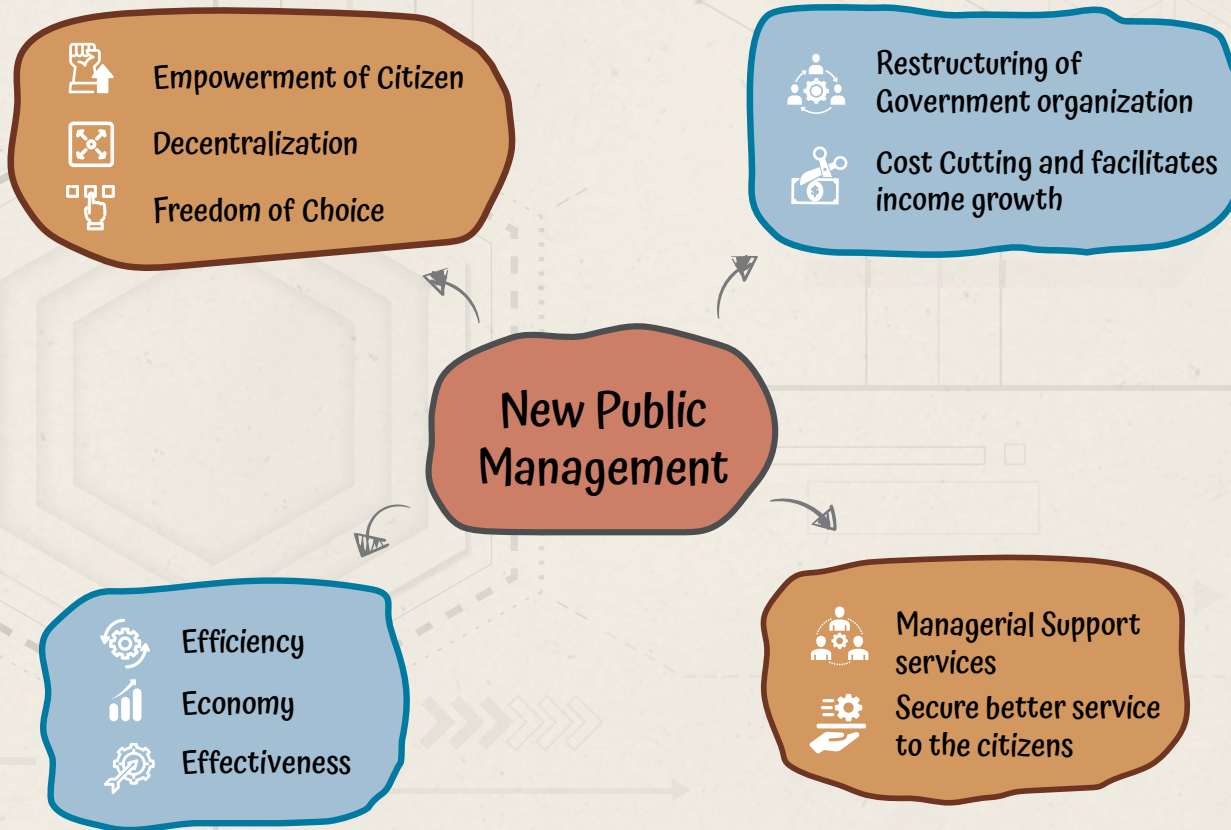


Creative Destruction

The culture of innovation in public services evolved in stages — long before the idea of e-Governance took shape.

Its roots go back to the 1980s, during the rise of neoliberalism. This is when countries like the UK and Australia began incorporating innovation into public administration. These neoliberal governments aimed to make their systems leaner and more efficient. They cut spending, reduced control, and moved away from heavy subsidies. At the same time, they began shifting toward citizen-focused services. This transformation came to be known as New Public Management (NPM).

Christopher Hood, a Scottish-born professor at Oxford, is often credited as the key theorist behind NPM, but many other thinkers majorly contributed as well. In 1992, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler published *Reinventing Government*, a book that pushed the idea of applying market-based approaches to the public sector.



Reference: New public mangement. schoolofpoliticalscience.com



Neoliberalism, NPM, and the culture of innovation are closely linked to the idea of 'Creative Destruction'. Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter coined this term in his 1942 book *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. His theory quickly gained attention among economists and policymakers.

Schumpeter's concept can be explained using a Lego set analogy. A Lego set can be used to build either a palace or a skyscraper, a government structure can be redesigned for better efficiency. However, if a palace has already been built, it must first be dismantled before constructing a skyscraper.

Over time, governments across different countries adopted NPM, reducing subsidies in public service sectors while ensuring services reached citizens more efficiently. Today, e-Governance is the primary tool for implementing NPM.

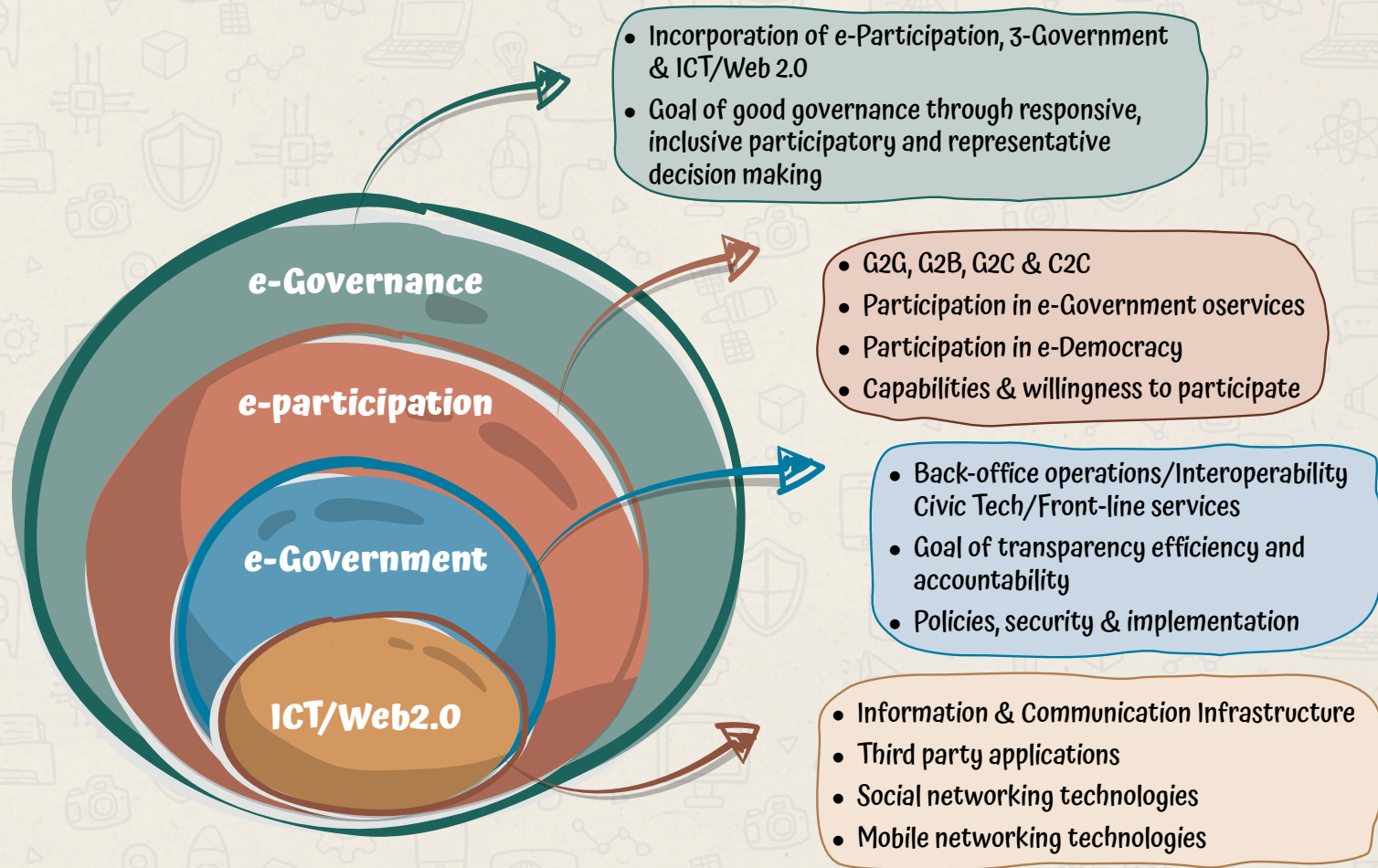
E-Governance is a broader concept that includes government, citizens, development organizations, and private institutions in ensuring citizen-centric public service structures through good governance, policy-making, and participatory development.

Structural Transformation

E-Government and e-Governance are often used interchangeably, however, there is a difference between two. E-Government refers to the use of IT to deliver government services to citizens quickly and easily. On the other hand, e-Governance is a broader concept that includes government, citizens, development organizations, and private institutions in ensuring citizen-centric public service structures through good governance, policy-making, and participatory development. e-Governance forms a larger framework that includes E-Government within it.

In both cases, 'innovation' refers to the application of technology to simplify the administrative structure. And this transformation is a continuous process. Depending on the scope, innovation in government offices happens in three ways: incremental (gradual improvement), disruptive (fundamentally altering the existing system), and radical.

Type of Innovation	Definition	Example
Incremental	Continuous improvement of an existing system	Transition from E-File Management to E-Nothi and D-Nothi
Disruptive	Introduction of new technology or business models in an existing system	Mobile financial services and online marketplace in Bangladesh
Radical	Creation of an entirely new system through innovative technology	Introduction of smartphones and the establishment of digital centers in unions, municipalities, upazilas, and city corporations in Bangladesh



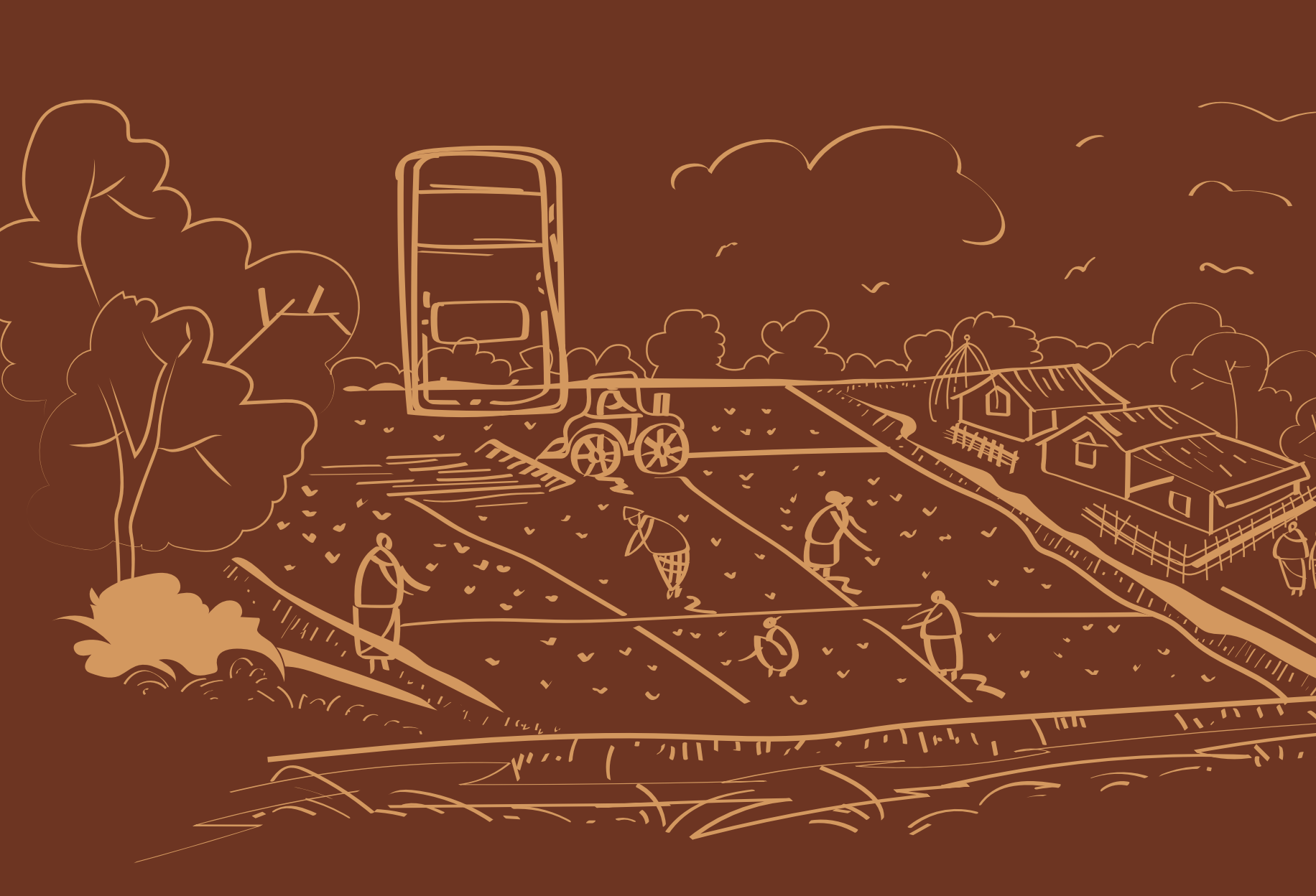
Reference: Huffman, Benjamin, Evaluation of e-Government 2.0 models, ResearchGate, 2017



The practice of innovation in government offices began long ago. The internet we use today was actually invented in 1960 through an initiative of the US Department of Defense.

Over the past two decades, significant progress has been made in implementing E-Governance in Bangladesh. However, there have been failures in effectively connecting citizens with tech-driven services, as well as in utilizing modern technology for service delivery.

However, the hopeful facet is that in the process of transforming a century-old service structure, tech-driven frameworks have brought significant improvements in transparency and accountability. Initiatives such as the Bangladesh government's National Information Portal, Digital Centers, E-Nothi/D-Nothi, MyGov, E-Courts, iBAS, the Surokkha app for Covid-19 vaccine management, and various e-services or service simplifications are all examples of innovations. These innovations have opened new doors for ensuring government services reach citizens equitably and efficiently.





Catalyst of Transformation

Back when the UN established the WSIS in 2001, Bangladesh promptly joined the global move toward a tech-driven society. Just a year later, the country formulated its first E-Government Policy in 2002. Between 2003 and 2006, the ICT Task Force and the SICT Program were launched to turn that policy into action. However, the initiative gained significant momentum in 2006 with the launch of the Access to Information (a2i) program under the Prime Minister's Office.

Since then, Bangladesh's e-Governance journey took off — marked by numerous projects — including Quick Win Projects, Digital Centers, the National Information Portal, the 333 Helpline, MyGov platform, and the Empathy Training Program. All of these shared one goal, making public services simpler, faster, and more inclusive. The digital transformation of government services continues to positively impact economic growth, administrative efficiency, and corruption reduction.



Ensuring access to information, knowledge, and communication technologies is essential for all nations. To fully realize its benefits, global unity and commitment are required. A collective vision must be developed to address the challenges of the information society. Governments, international organizations, and civil society must jointly adopt a declaration and action plan.

UN General Assembly Resolution on WSIS Establishment
New York, December 21, 2001



We are resolutely committed to harnessing information technology for the benefit of all humanity. Together with stakeholders, we will address related challenges by developing ICT infrastructure and applied technologies.

Through mutual cooperation, we will enhance information-knowledge development and capacity-building to make technology safe and trustworthy for all. We will foster an enabling environment for ICT expansion while respecting cultural diversity, encouraging media participation, and establishing ethical standards for the information society through international and regional collaboration. Collectively, we will define principles and benchmarks to build an inclusive information society.

World Summit on the Information Society
(WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/4-E)

Declaration of Principles, Geneva, December 12, 2003



This Geneva summit has laid the foundation for an information society. Bangladesh will establish ICT infrastructure nationwide to ensure every citizen can access information. Simultaneously, we will leverage ICT to advance sustainable economic development, e-Governance, e-Commerce, banking, and citizen services. The primary challenges for poorer nations are resource and ICT infrastructure shortages, alongside the digital divide between developed and developing countries. The policies and action plans adopted in this summit's preparatory meetings will address these gaps."

Begum Khaleda Zia, then Prime Minister of Bangladesh
World Summit on the Information Society (Phase 1),
Geneva, 2003

In 2002, the National ICT Policy of the Bangladesh government officially emphasized the implementation of e-Government, stating: "The government will use information technology in administrative activities to enhance efficiency, reduce resource wastage, improve planning, and upgrade service quality."

The Foundation of E-Governance

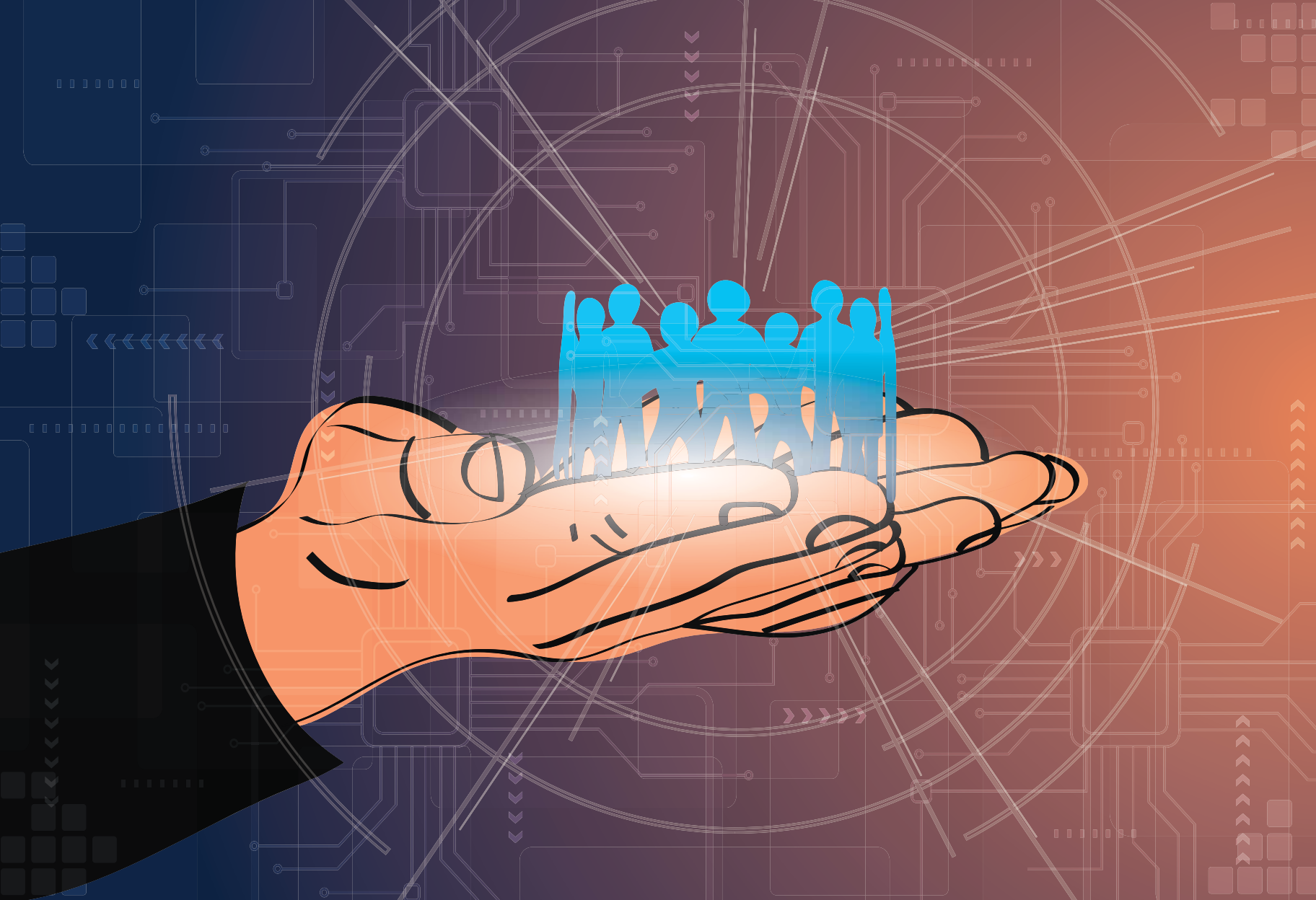
During the 56th UNGA in New York 2001, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was initiated through Resolution 56/183. It aimed to build an information society that was people-centric, inclusive, and development-oriented. The WSIS unfolded in two phases. The first phase in Geneva, Switzerland, during December 10-12, 2003. The second phase, in Tunisia during November 16-18, 2005.

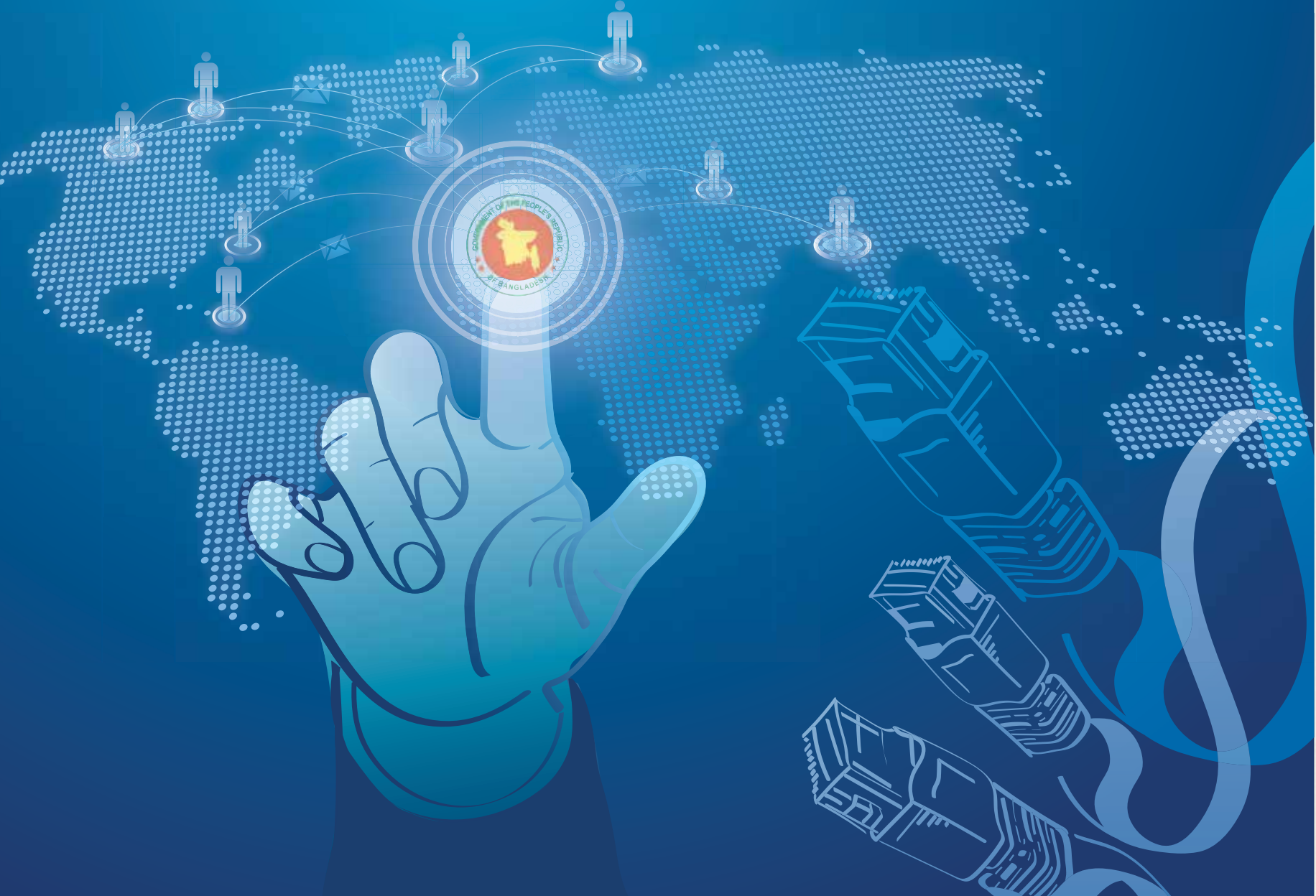
Bangladesh's delegation to WSIS, led by the then-prime minister, endorsed an 11-point agenda. Their goal: to transform Bangladesh into an information-rich society by 2006.

In 2002, the National ICT Policy of the Bangladesh government officially emphasized the implementation of E-Government, stating: "The government will use information technology in administrative activities to enhance efficiency, reduce resource wastage, improve planning, and upgrade service quality."

To achieve the ICT policy goals, the government formed an ICT Task Force led by the prime minister, with the secretary to the planning ministry as the member-secretary. In 2002, they launched the Support to ICT Task Force (SICT) project. This was the first government move to use ICT for development. SICT's job was to design, plan, and implement E-Government projects. It also supported the ICT Task Force with administrative and secretarial tasks.

The project kicked off in 2003. Under the project, approximately 150 initiatives were implemented. Notable projects include: online result system for education





boards, Manikganj land record archive, online market information system for the Agriculture Ministry, online reporting system for DC offices and Cabinet Division, simulation systems for fisheries, livestock, and river research institutes, local area network in the Secretariat, automation of prisons and DC offices, PSC exam automation, Bangabhaban process automation, video conferencing in government offices, Digital Town, e-Police, and National Data Resource Center establishment.

Meanwhile, the first phase of WSIS in Geneva emphasized ICT's role in poverty alleviation and ensuring digital inclusion, which was supported by Bangladesh. The government highlighted its SICT project as a move to ensure citizens' access to information. Bangladesh also pledged to use ICT for economic development, e-Governance, e-Commerce, banking, and citizen services to rapidly build an information society in Bangladesh.

In July 2004, another project was launched at the Prime Minister's Office with technical assistance from the UNDP. This initiative developed a comprehensive e-Governance roadmap aimed at restructuring government processes and implementing technology-driven administrative reforms. That year, 50 frequently used government forms were made available online, marking one of the first major e-Governance efforts in Bangladesh.

The second phase of WSIS in Tunis in 2005 discussed internet governance and technology transfer for developing nations. As a follow-up, under the UNDP-funded "Strengthening the ICT Capacity of the Prime Minister's Office" project, a Bangladeshi delegation visited Malaysia, Singapore, and South Korea in 2006 to observe e-Governance systems. The delegation gained firsthand experience of E-Government and E-Citizen initiatives in these countries.

The government highlighted its SICT project as a move to ensure citizens' access to information. Bangladesh also pledged to use ICT for economic development, e-Governance, e-Commerce, banking, and citizen services to rapidly build an information society in Bangladesh.

On July 6, 2006,
approval was
granted to set up
an E-Governance
Cell in the PMO
and to introduce
the a2i (Access
to Information)
Program to support
the cell's operations.

Based on their recommendations, the foundation for e-Governance in Bangladesh was laid. According to the recommendations made, a sub-committee comprising the ICT Focal officers was formed to create an E-Government Plan of Actions, which proposed:

A. Establishing an E-Government Cell within the Prime Minister's Office.

B. Accelerating the implementation of high-priority E-Government projects.

C. Launching a technical support program to assist the E-Government Cell.

On July 6, 2006, approval was granted to set up an e-Governance Cell in the PMO and to introduce the a2i (Access to Information) Program to support the cell's operations. UNDP developed a Program Initiation Document (PID) for a2i, which was finalized in August the same year.

At the same time, the World Bank-supported "Economic Management Technical Assistance Project (EMTAP)" offered several ICT recommendations. However, the largest ICT initiative in Bangladesh's history was implemented in 2007-2008 — the creation of the updated electoral roll (voters' list) with photos of the voters.

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E-Governance can be defined as the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) to transform government operations, improve service delivery, and enhance citizen participation.

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Review Phase

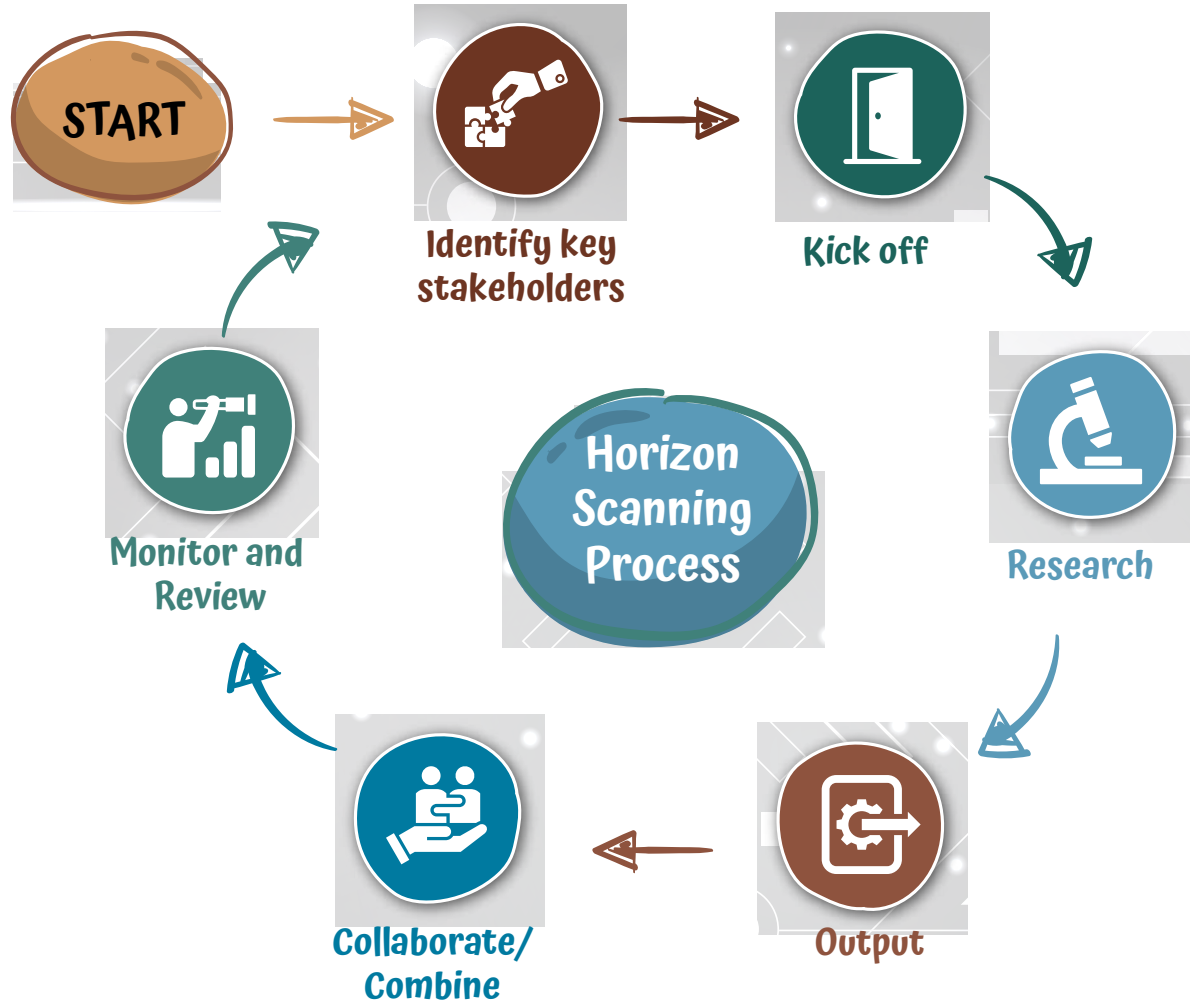
After the launch of Bangladesh's e-Governance Cell, meetings were held with various stakeholders during 2007-2008 to expand its operational scope. An initiative was taken to prepare an e-Governance Horizon Scan Report.

Horizon Scan Report is a research-based document on future challenges and innovative solutions. It provides a documented overview of the country's E-Governance activities.



Scan and read the
e-Governance Horizon
Scanning Report for 2007

For this, data was collected from ministries/departments, research papers were reviewed, multiple consultation sessions were held with ICT officials from various ministries/departments, and workshops and focus group discussions were conducted with stakeholders. As per the plan for the Horizon Scan Report, citizens' surveys were conducted in 22 Upazilas across 11 districts. The report was published in 2007.



Reference: Horizon scanning, UN Trade and Development.

Quick Win is an initiative that can be implemented quickly, at low cost, and easily, producing visible positive results. Typically, it addresses urgent issues that play a crucial role in the country's overall development.



Scan to learn about
the Quick Wins

Following this, a Vision Document was prepared as part of the National e-Governance Vision Setting initiative. Then came the Quick Win Projects. In simple terms, a Quick Win is an initiative that can be implemented quickly, at low cost, and easily, producing visible positive results. Typically, it addresses urgent issues that play a crucial role in the country's overall development.

Initially, around 700 of these Quick Win Projects were selected from the best citizen-friendly services identified across all ministries. Some of these projects were piloted jointly by various ministries and the a2i. At that time, no 'ecosystem' had yet been established as it was just the beginning. Meanwhile, discussions were ongoing to provide services to marginalized communities and in 2007, Community E-Centers were piloted at Madhainagar Union Parishad in Tarash Upazila, Sirajganj, and Murshidhat Union Parishad in Setabganj Upazila, Dinajpur. It was observed that the Union Parishad was the most community hub. Thus, a service framework based on Union Parishads was developed and named Union Information and Service Centers (UISC). By 2010, these centers were launched in 4,500 Union Parishads, also establishing an entrepreneurial model.





After transitioning from a union to the same model as municipalities and city corporations, it was designated as a Digital Center. This idea was also implemented abroad, such as in Saudi Arabia, to serve expatriates. Later, Digital Centers were launched for garment workers in Gazipur and fishermen in Khulna. An experimental E-Service Center was set up at the Jashore District Administration Office, aiming to provide tech-based services to citizens traveling from distant areas. Due to its success, District E-Service Centers were established in every district commissioner's office.

Alongside making in-person information services easier, online services were streamlined through web-based platforms. 64 district portals were created. The idea was then extended to ministries and departments, leading to the development of the National Information Portal — a unified platform for all government offices which allows government institutions deliver public information services directly to citizens.

After transitioning from a union to the same model as municipalities and city corporations, it was designated as a Digital Center.

Considering feature phone users and those without internet access, the National Helpline 333 was launched in 2018, providing non-emergency services.

To bridge the digital divide, those unable to visit service centers or use websites needed to be included in this ecosystem as well. Considering feature phone users and those without internet access, the National Helpline 333 was launched in 2018, providing non-emergency services. Initially, it offered information from the National Information Portal, but during the Covid-19 pandemic, additional services were integrated. Meanwhile, the 999 hotline was introduced for emergency services (police, fire service, and ambulance) in 2017.

An initiative to create a digital roadmap for the Quick Win services was launched. Government offices began offering these services online, but multiple platforms emerged offering the same services already emerged. To simplify, services were consolidated into a single platform, making it easier for citizens to avail themselves of public amenities. The MyGov platform launched in 2020 integrated all government services into one place.





After the Quick Win projects, the Empathy Training Program was introduced in 2014 to enhance government officials' skills in online service delivery and foster an innovative culture. This helped officials understand citizens' needs and simplify services accordingly.

The program put government employees in the shoes of citizens. This helped them spot flaws in their service delivery and brainstorm improvements. It went beyond training. It was the first step toward a culture of innovation. Employees with promising ideas joined a five-day project design and documentation workshop. There, mentors helped them refine their concepts. Innovation teams across government institutions then aided in putting these plans into action. After piloting, successful innovations were later shown at ministry exhibitions, aiming for large-scale adoption.

a2i, providing technical support, acted as a catalyst in this cruise of innovation.

One example of such innovation is the "Krishoker Janala" mobile app, developed by an agricultural department official in Mymensingh. After attending the 2014 Empathy Training, he designed the app to help farmers diagnose crop diseases via mobile images. Launched in 2018, the app, supported by the Department of Agricultural Extension, serves hundreds of thousands of farmers.



Similarly, two fisheries officers in Kaliganj, Gazipur, created the "Dr. Fish" app in 2018 to diagnose fish diseases and manage ponds. The app's popularity has spread beyond Bangladesh. They too participated in the 2014 Empathy Training.

Another notable innovation is the "Health Card" introduced in 2018 by a Upazila Health Officer in Wazirpur, Barishal. To ensure hassle-free hospital services for low-income citizens, health workers collected data door-to-door. They cross-checked it with VGF cards and social safety net lists and then issued Health Cards. This allowed priority treatment, saving time and diagnostic costs while simplifying medical history tracking for doctors.



The Journey: Bangladesh's E-Governance

Over the past two decades, Bangladesh has used e-Governance to change how public services are delivered. One early example: helping sugarcane farmers in the southwest region.

In 2009, the government introduced 'E-Purji' to stop harassment and ensure fair sugarcane prices. Earlier, farmers struggled when trying to receive payments through paper-based 'Purji' (supply permits). Sugarcane must be processed quickly, or the quality spoils.

Under E-Purji, a digital database was created of all sugarcane farmers for each sugar mill. The system stored farmers' names, addresses, and cellphone numbers. Farmers then received automated SMS updates for their supply schedules.

Another key example is digitizing land-related services in 2011. This included the Digital Record Room, E-Mutation, and E-Porcha (land record certificates). The government also launched online land development tax payments. This reduced hassles and minimized citizens' exploitation. Gradually, all land-related services are transitioning to online fully.

These continuous initiatives have played a transformative role in saving people's time, money, and effort. The success of digital services proves that innovation is not intangible — it is a key driver of progress in citizens' lives.

TCV Saved till 2023



Time 82%



Cost 78%



Visit 85%

19.1
DAYS
BILLION
SAVED

21.8
USD
BILLION
SAVED

12.9
VISIT
BILLION
SAVED

5.9
BILLION
SERVICES
DISSEMINATED





Vision of Transformation

The implementation of e-Governance in Bangladesh has significantly reduced the time, cost, and mobility-related hassles for citizens in accessing services. Services such as E-Passports, E-Mutation, E-Tax Returns, and online verification of educational certificates are now easily accessible online. The MyGov platform consolidates various government services in one place, making it highly convenient for citizens. The D-Nothi system has introduced paperless operations in government offices, enhancing efficiency and transparency. The National Information Portal has simplified access to administrative information and services.

Through national helpline 333, marginalized communities can also get government information and services. Digital Centers are delivering services to people's doorsteps while fostering local entrepreneurs. In the land services sector, E-Porcha and E-Mutation have minimized harassment and increased transparency. To facilitate secure and easy digital payments for government services (such as utility bills and fees), the EkPay payment aggregator has been introduced. The Judicial Portal has made legislative services more accessible. Additionally, digital social security programs and digital healthcare services have improved the quality of life.

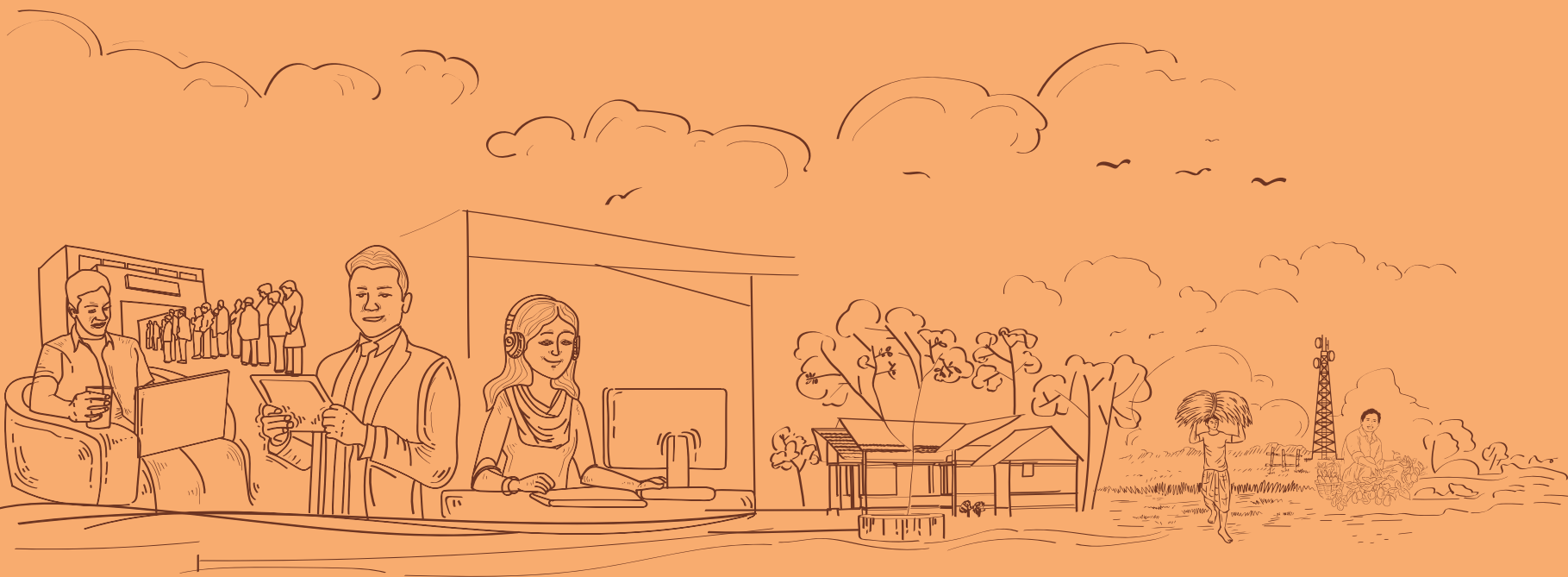
E-Mutation, introduced in 2018, has significantly reduced the processing time for land registration. Earlier, this process took five to six months, but now it is completed within a meagre week to two through an online system, eliminating the need for repeated visits to the offices.

The implementation of e-Governance in Bangladesh has allowed citizens to access government services more efficiently. For instance, the E-Passport service, launched in 2020, has streamlined the passport issuance process. Previously, obtaining a regular passport took at least a month, but now, after applying online, it can be received within 2 to 15 days.

In the land-related services sector, E-Mutation, introduced in 2018, has significantly reduced the processing time for land registration. Earlier, this process took five to six months, but now it is completed within a meagre week to two through an online system, eliminating the need for repeated visits to the offices.

In terms of tax filings, the E-Tax Return system has recently been introduced. Previously, taxpayers had to spend long hours at tax offices to file their returns. Now, they can submit taxes online, completing the process simply within one to two hours.

The service for verifying educational certificates has drastically reduced processing time. Earlier, certificate verification could take months and required multiple office visits, but now, it can be done online in a short while.



**a2i also underwent
several transformations
playing a key role
in Bangladesh's
transformation over
the past two decades,
aligning with the
country's progress
toward achieving
the United Nations
Sustainable Development
Goals by 2030.**

There are numerous other examples of how tech-driven innovations have reduced citizen hardships. Moreover, all government services are being assessed based on time, cost, and mobility considerations to further simplify processes. Efforts are ongoing to ensure that these services remain accessible to marginalized communities.

In the global journey toward e-Governance, the UN alongside various other development partners are encouraging governments worldwide. While the goal is the same, the paths taken by different countries vary based on their situation, geographical location, and economic factors, are leading to different levels of transformation. a2i also underwent several transformations playing a key role in Bangladesh's transformation over the past two decades, aligning with the country's progress toward achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The progress of the country's e-Governance initiatives can be illustrated through the following photo feature, showcasing various digital transformation efforts.

“

E-Governance has the potential to create a more efficient, transparent, and accountable government. Its implementation ensures better public services and greater citizens' satisfaction.

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MyGov: All Government Services in One Place

Previously, citizens faced multiple challenges in accessing government services, such as obtaining service-related information, collecting and filling out forms, submitting applications and fees, filing complaints, seeking redress, and providing feedback. These processes were often complex, time-consuming, and exhausting. With the implementation of e-Governance, government offices gradually started offering tech-based services.

The MyGov platform brings various government services together in one place for citizens. The integration of all departments' services into MyGov is ongoing. Citizens can register once on the platform and complete the entire process — from application submission to service delivery — all in one place.

In the future, as service quality improves, there is potential to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into MyGov. However, the key challenge remains ensuring end-to-end digitalization of government services and encouraging ministries to actively participate in this transformation.



Please scan to visit
the myGov website





D-Nothi: Speeding Up Administration and Decisions

Even at the beginning of this century, obtaining even a simple piece of information, a form, or an official document from a government office took months. Chasing a single document for years was not uncommon at all. Paperwork would often get lost, become unreadable due to wear, or even be deliberately misplaced. Government employees had to put in significant effort to locate disorganized documents, while some unscrupulous individuals took advantage of the system to harass citizens. Dealing with government offices meant long preparations and even longer waiting.

The office management system evolved from E-Filing to E-Nothi, eventually transforming into D-Nothi. This digital document management system enables paperless, interconnected, transparent, and fast file processing from any location at any time. As a result, government operations have become more efficient, reducing time, costs, and bureaucratic hassles.

In future, cloud storage, artificial intelligence, and data analytics may be integrated into the system. Efforts are ongoing to connect all government offices with it, enhancing administrative efficiency and decision-making processes.



National Information Portal: Single Destination for All Information

Citizens often struggled to access accurate information about government services and their procedures. Previously, they had to visit offices after offices just to gather simple information. Even after the digital transformation, many citizens were unaware of where to find specific information relevant to their needs.

The National Information Portal serves as a central database, providing updated information, news, and service guidelines from government offices and agencies. Its primary goal is to make information and services easily accessible. Through the platform, individual government offices can update their information and organize their websites efficiently.

The biggest challenge remains ensuring that the ministries and departments regularly update their information, maintaining accuracy and relevance.



Please scan to visit the
National Information Portal

Citizen-Centric Service System
Central Information Access Point
Extensive Information
Increased Transparency and Accountability
Ease of Information Access
Facilitation of E-Governance

Passport

Health Service Health Service

Visa and Immigration

Income Tax Income Tax

Income Tax Online Registration Health Service

Agriculture Related Data

Online Registration

Health Service

Health Service

Income Tax

Income Tax Visa and Immigration

Income Tax

Income Tax

Health Service

Agriculture Related Data

Online Registration

Income Tax Health Service

Ticket Booking

Online Registration





National Helpline 333: Information and Services at Anytime

At the end of the last decade, marginalized communities without access to internet faced significant challenges in obtaining information and services. Many had no idea how to access government services digitally while others lacked access to smart devices. This created a digital divide, introducing a new form of inequality despite the implementation of E-Governance.

To bridge this gap and ensure broader access to government services, the National Helpline 333 was launched. By calling this number, citizens can avail themselves of information on government services, assistance, file complaints regarding social issues, and get contact details of government officials.

In future, there is scope to integrate AI, improve service quality, and incorporate local languages and dialects. To make the helpline more citizen-friendly, all relevant government bodies must remain proactive in ensuring service delivery and resolving complaints efficiently while maintaining accountability.



Digital Centers: Bringing Services to Doorsteps

Rural and marginalized citizens previously faced long wait times and made frequent trips to government offices to access services. Additionally, many lacked the devices, internet connectivity, and digital literacy required to get services online. To address this, Union Information and Service Centers were established at the union level as 'Community Hubs' bringing government services closer to the people. Later, similar one-stop service centers were introduced at the upazilas, municipality, and city corporation ward levels, rebranded as Digital Centers.

At the union level, these centers operate under local government division and field administration supervision, ensuring that both public and private digital services reach marginalized communities while fostering local entrepreneurship. They also provide agent banking and various financial services.

Digital Centers support Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) by offering loans, investment opportunities, training, and other services. As many aspiring migrant workers come from rural areas and lack access to proper information and technology, the Expatriate Help Desks were introduced in Digital Centers to assist them. Additionally, these centers also work to enhance IT and trade-based skills among rural youth and create employment opportunities.





Expatriate Help Desk: All services for
migrant workers at one place

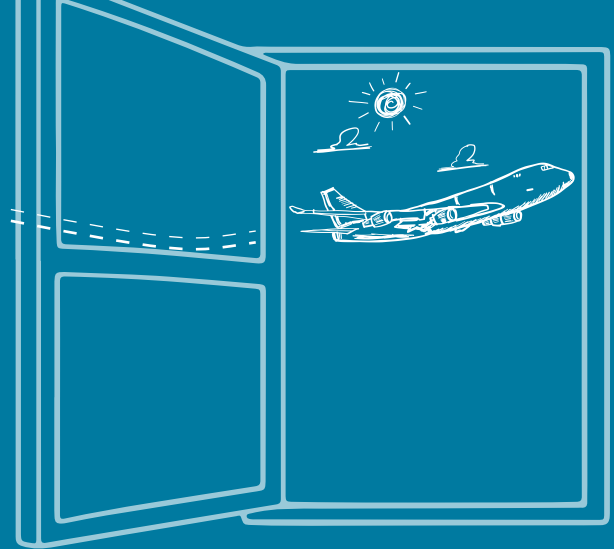


One stop service
for migrants

Guidance on laws, regulations, and
procedures of destination countries

Assistance in resolving issues with
government or other agencies

Support in communication and
mediation during disputes



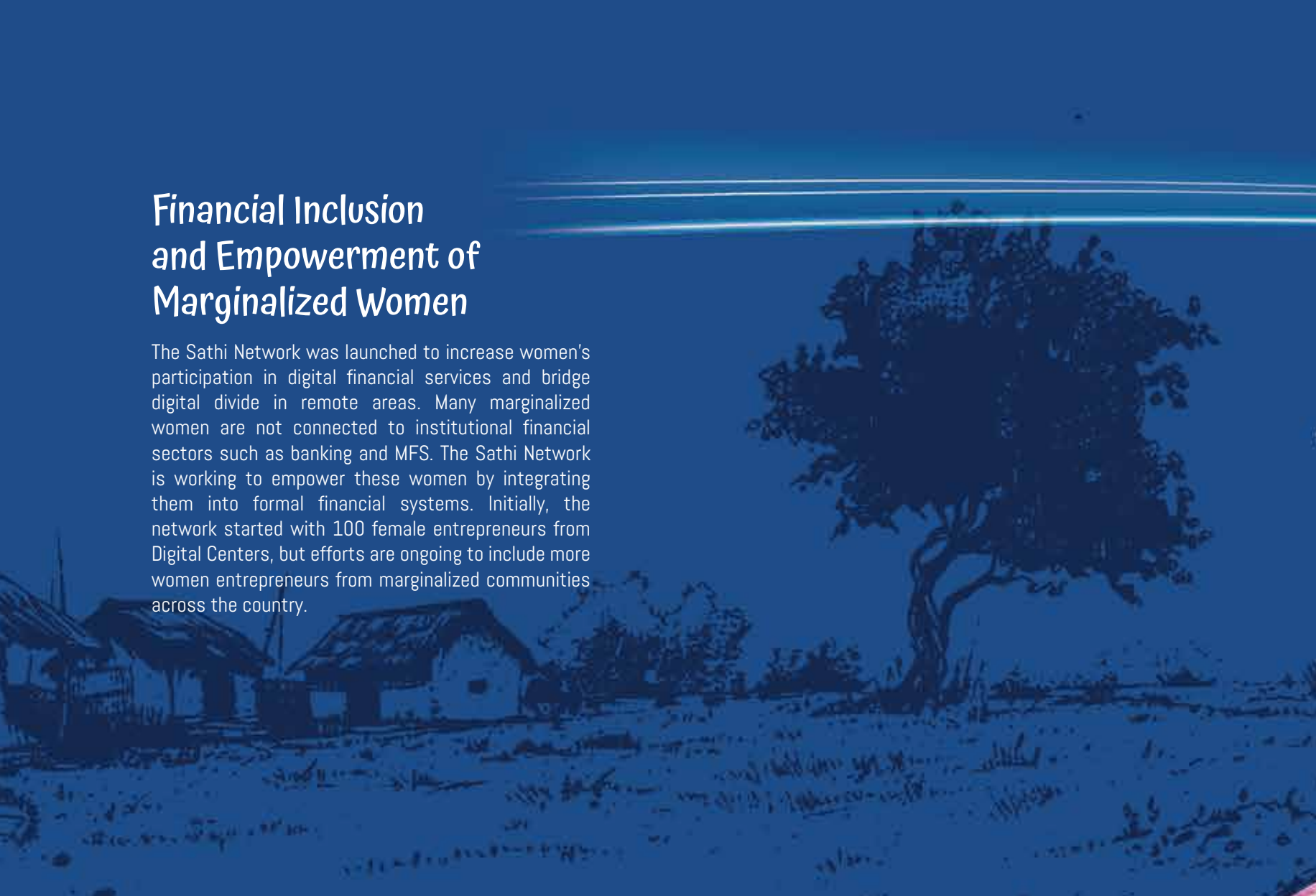
Help in emergencies, including accidents,
illness, or legal issues

Assistance with airport arrival
and departure

Support in dealing with police-
related issues

Financial Inclusion and Empowerment of Marginalized Women

The Sathi Network was launched to increase women's participation in digital financial services and bridge digital divide in remote areas. Many marginalized women are not connected to institutional financial sectors such as banking and MFS. The Sathi Network is working to empower these women by integrating them into formal financial systems. Initially, the network started with 100 female entrepreneurs from Digital Centers, but efforts are ongoing to include more women entrepreneurs from marginalized communities across the country.



- ◆ Banking and Mobile Financial Services
- ◆ Enhancing rural women's digital and financial literacy
- ◆ Basic financial education
- ◆ Improving women's online skills
- ◆ Creating opportunities in E-Commerce



E-Naming

Simplified Land Services and Secure Ownership

A land record or Khatiyani is an official document that contains details of surveyed land, including the owner's name, father's name, address, ownership description, land details, plot number, boundaries, and more. A certified copy of Khatiyani is known as a Porcha, which is required for land transactions, maintenance, and possession. Previously, citizens faced much harassment, financial loss, and delays in obtaining it.

Now, E-Porcha can be obtained through an online application, eliminating the need to make several trips to local land offices. Initially, online Khatiyani services were launched, later upgraded to the Electronic Land Record Service (ELRS), allowing applications and issuance of Porcha through Union's digital centers. Following its success, the Digital Land Record Room Service was introduced to fully digitize land records. To ensure faster, cost-effective, hassle-free, and transparent land ownership registration, the E-Mutation system was developed.

In line with E-Porcha and E-Mutation, the Land Information Portal has also been launched, enabling citizens to access mutation services, land development tax, land records and maps, land acquisition, leasing, administration, revenue cases, and a land information bank.

In future, banking, income tax integration, blockchain, and artificial intelligence can be incorporated to enhance these services.



Please scan to receive
land-related services

d Zoning E-Naming Online Land Development
For Heritage Listing Online Application
k E-Naming Land Information Bank
Digital Land Records (E-Porcha)

E-Naming Online Land Development
Land Information Bank
Heritage Listing Online Application
Digital Land Records (E-Porcha)



EkPay: Inclusive Financial Services

Citizens often face difficulties in paying fees for government services and utility bills, as they have to use different methods — physically visiting offices, online platforms, banking channels, or agent points. This fragmented process created inconvenience, requiring the use of multiple banking or mobile financial service (MFS) platforms.

To solve this issue and promote financial inclusion, the government introduced EkPay, the country's first bill and service aggregator platform. EkPay allows banks and financial institutions to offer a unified digital payment system for bill and fee collection, making transactions simpler and more efficient.

EkPay reduces time and costs for banks, fintech companies, and financial institutions by providing technical integration for bill collection. It also facilitates seamless inter-organizational transactions, making settlements between government and service providers hassle-free.

In addition to bill and service aggregation, EkPay's payment gateway supports multiple payment channels, including credit and debit cards, internet banking, mobile banking, and digital wallets, offering citizens a convenient and efficient digital payment solution.





A Transparent, Accountable, Innovative, and People-Oriented Judiciary

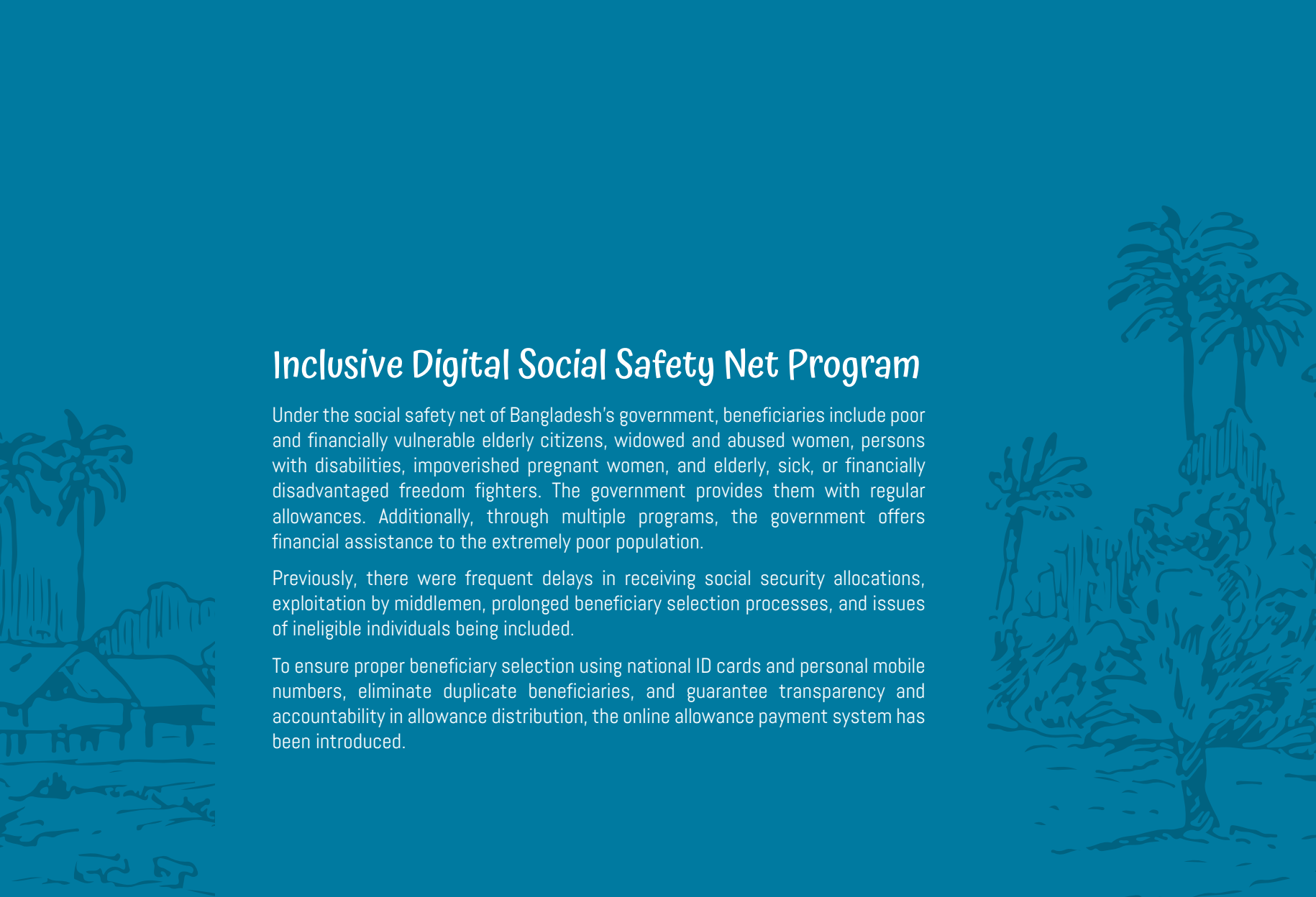
The complaint regarding various types of harassment faced by citizens seeking case-related information is quite longstanding. Often, due to lack of proper information, there are delays in filing cases or inability to file cases in the appropriate courts. Most litigants come to court from faraway places for justice. As a result, their harassment reaches extreme levels.

In a bid to deliver all judicial services at the fingertips of the citizens and build an efficient judiciary, the 'Judiciary Portal' was created. To boost Bangladesh's judicial activities through digitization, e-Cause List (Online Cause List), Judicial Monitoring Dashboard, and MyCourt, Inheritance Calculator mobile apps have been launched. On a particular working day, people or anyone related to the judiciary can check the cause list online and MyCourt mobile app to get the latest information about their cases. Through the Judicial Monitoring Dashboard, all types of data related to pending and disposed cases in subordinate courts are collected and stored.

People from all walks of life including litigants, judges, and lawyers can use the MyCourt app as per their respective needs. Through this app, users can avail all digital services prepared for subordinate courts.

There is an opportunity to establish the rule of law, justice, and democracy through the use of these innovations, along with improving judicial administration and gaining citizens' trust in the judicial system.





Inclusive Digital Social Safety Net Program

Under the social safety net of Bangladesh's government, beneficiaries include poor and financially vulnerable elderly citizens, widowed and abused women, persons with disabilities, impoverished pregnant women, and elderly, sick, or financially disadvantaged freedom fighters. The government provides them with regular allowances. Additionally, through multiple programs, the government offers financial assistance to the extremely poor population.

Previously, there were frequent delays in receiving social security allocations, exploitation by middlemen, prolonged beneficiary selection processes, and issues of ineligible individuals being included.

To ensure proper beneficiary selection using national ID cards and personal mobile numbers, eliminate duplicate beneficiaries, and guarantee transparency and accountability in allowance distribution, the online allowance payment system has been introduced.







Digital Healthcare Service and Covid-19 Pandemic Response

Until the Covid-19 infection spread worldwide, maintaining physical distancing was beyond imagination. This highly contagious disease proved deadly not only for patients but also for their caregivers and healthcare providers. During this critical period, the Bangladesh government swiftly launched online services such as Corona Tracer, Corona Info Platform, and online training for doctors, successfully bringing the situation under control.

Following the coronavirus vaccine development, a mass vaccination program through registration on the Surokkha app marked another significant achievement. These accomplishments were made possible by the government's two-decade-long E-Governance journey prior to the pandemic, which had already created the necessary platforms. The National Helpline 333 was also expanded to include healthcare services during this time.

Currently, the government is strengthening HPV vaccination through online registration. Millions continue to benefit from public and private sector telemedicine services introduced during Covid-19, with the model undergoing further modernization. Additionally, the government is working on piloting E-Appointment and referral systems in public hospitals. Initiatives are also underway to establish online networks for tracking maternal, neonatal, and under-five mortality rates, as well as monitoring communicable and non-communicable diseases to help doctors in decision-making.





Inclusive Development and Progress

The core objective of e-Governance in Bangladesh is to foster inclusive development that ensures equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and marginalized communities - a principle aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Technological solutions have been implemented including accessible dictionaries, multimedia tools, and digital talking books for citizens with disabilities. The Disability Innovation Lab works to enhance quality of life for people with disabilities, while Digital Centers offer tailored services for this demographic.

In an effort to promote financial inclusion, initiatives like agent banking and digital financial inclusion programs have been introduced. The SDG Tracker monitors national development progress against global benchmarks. However, digital disparity remains a significant challenge as many citizens still lack access to the internet, creating obstacles in delivering government services.



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Bridging the digital divide is imperative for achieving comprehensive socio-economic inclusion.

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Reference

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Case Studies

Visually impaired Imran applied for a credit card at a local bank. Despite fulfilling all requirements, his application was rejected. Later, he filed a complaint with the Bangladesh Bank, which the central bank took cognizance of. Accessibility features were created in mobile banking and conventional banking services for people with disabilities. As a result, the problem was promptly resolved and through the process, Imran got a credit card.

Jamila Khatun (pseudonym), a widow from Debangar Union in Tentulia Upazila of Panchagarh district, owns only a house as her property. Her children have moved to the city. Jamila manages all by herself, but due to old age, she cannot properly handle tasks which require physical movement, especially paying land taxes, utility bills, etc. To alleviate the suffering of many unnamed citizens like Jamila Khatun, the Panchagarh district administration launched a Cashless UP Service System, through which citizens can pay various government service fees via mobile banking and online payments. Thanks to this initiative by the district administration, Jamila Khatun no longer has to endure the hassle of withdrawing money from banks and make trips to offices. She does not need to rely on middlemen either. Now she can complete all her tasks from home using her mobile phone.

**The need for
inclusive technology
for persons
with disabilities
in Bangladesh
is imperative.
According to the
National Survey
on Persons with
Disabilities (NSPD)
2021, about 2.8
percent, or 4.742
million citizens of
the country, suffer
from some form of
disability.**

Bangladesh, like many other countries in the world, faces the challenge of ensuring government services for marginalized communities, especially people with disabilities, through continuous innovation. The UN also emphasizes creating a discrimination-free and inclusive society through the implementation of e-Governance in the SDGs.

The need for inclusive technology for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh is imperative. According to the National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2021, about 2.8 percent, or 4.742 million citizens of the country, suffer from some form of disability. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates it could be between 10 to 15 percent.

In line with the SDGs, the government's e-Governance implementation considered not only people with disabilities but also the ultra-poor and backward populations. With this goal, several technologies and platforms have been launched through innovative initiatives to empower people with disabilities and include them in digital services. For instance, we can refer to the 'Accessible Dictionary' to enhance linguistic skills. Through this, people with disabilities can learn necessary words, correct pronunciation and meaning of sentences. Additionally, 'Multimedia' and 'Digital Talking Books' have been launched for the visually impaired, which have further expanded their educational opportunities.

Disability Innovation Lab (DIL) is another major initiative that develops technology-based innovations to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. Special services have been introduced at Digital Centers to ensure they can easily access government services.

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The digital divide
is a dynamic
phenomenon that
continues to evolve
with technological
advancements.”



Referance

Hargittai, E. (2008). Digital Divide and Its Remedies. *Daedalus*, 137(2), 97-105.

Additionally, to provide financial security and promote social self-reliance for people with disabilities and underprivileged communities, initiatives like Agent Banking and Digital Financial Inclusion have been implemented on digital platforms to ensure financial inclusion.

The MDGs, adopted in 2000, included eight main objectives, with the final one being 'Global Partnership for Development'— expanding international development cooperation. As part of it, initiatives such as expanding internet access in developing countries, improving telecommunications infrastructure, and facilitating technology transfer were included.

In 2015, the United Nations' SDGs outlined 17 key targets. Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) explicitly highlight the role of IT and e-Governance. Moreover, e-Governance implementation is implicitly identified as a driving force in achieving SDGs 3 to 6, 10, 15, and 17.

SDG Tracker

To visualize data for understanding Bangladesh's progress in SDG implementation, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and the General Economics Division (GED) have jointly engaged all relevant ministries to ensure SDG implementation and use of the SDG Tracker. The role of a2i under the ICT Division as a catalyst in launching the SDG Tracker has later been applauded on a global scale.

In the global context, 17 broad goals have been set for the SDGs. Within each goal, there are specific and detailed targets. These are measured by a total of 231 core indices.

Each country has its own priority list of SDG indices based on its determined targets, national priorities and needs, and financial and institutional capacities. This is the national prioritization strategy considering global priorities.

'SDG Localization' refers to aligning global needs, demands, and rights with local needs and demands.

In the global context, 17 broad goals have been set for the SDGs. Within each goal, there are specific and detailed targets. These are measured by a total of 231 core indices.



The Government of Bangladesh adopted SDG localization in 2017 and identified priority indicators. For SDG localization, adopting the '39 + 1 Model' (also known as the Bangladesh Model) was implemented with participation from various ministries/divisions/agencies at national, district, and upazila levels, considering upazilas as the final unit.

Through the 'SDG Tracker', government, policymakers, researchers, and citizens can learn about Bangladesh's status, progress, and challenges against various global or local SDG targets. This initiative ensures transparency and accountability and encourages collective efforts from all stakeholders in achieving the SDGs. It also presents Bangladesh's SDG implementation status to the international community.



Scan to learn about
the targets of the
United Nations SDGs



Scan to learn about
the SDG Tracker

Through the
'SDG Tracker',
government,
policymakers,
researchers, and
citizens can learn
about Bangladesh's
status, progress, and
challenges against
various global or
local SDG targets.



Digital Divide

In the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Bangladesh is also trying to keep pace with the global technological transformation. However, caution is necessary. Because even if technological progress is achieved, if the marginalized citizens of the country are unable to access services using it, the risk of increasing digital inequality outweighs the chances of reducing it.

Due to the lack of access to the internet, nearly one-third of the global population is deprived of the experience of using quality technology. While technological infrastructure is expanding, making it inclusive has become a major challenge for many countries.

According to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), as of November 2024, there were 132.8 million internet users in the country.

**If a large portion
of the population
is deprived of
internet access,
then delivering
government services
to their doorstep
through digital
means becomes quite
complex indeed.**

Among them, a little over 119 million people used mobile phones to access the internet. Additionally, about 13.7 million people used broadband and PSTN.

But these numbers do not reflect reality. That is because the same person may use different devices to access the internet and may also connect to the internet using different types of connections on the same device.

The World Bank's 'Digital Progress and Trends Report 2023', released in March 2024, states that 39 out of every 100 people in Bangladesh use the internet. According to the World Bank, Bangladesh is a lower-mid-income country. On average, 56 percent of the population in countries of this category use the internet. In South Asia, the average rate of internet users is 42 percent.

If a large portion of the population is deprived of internet access, then delivering government services to their doorstep through digital means becomes quite complex indeed.

“

Digital divide is not just limited to accessing technological services. It may also arise from the lack of necessary skills and capabilities to use that technology.

”

Reference

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On the Global Stage

According to the United Nations E-Government Development Index (EGDI), Global Innovation Index (GII), and World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index (GTMI), Bangladesh continues striving to deliver government services to citizens' doorsteps through information technology. While not yet reaching top positions overnight, Bangladesh has shown consistent progress in these indices.

Due to advancements in online services and telecommunications infrastructure, Bangladesh improved its position in EGDI 2024. The GII indicates Bangladesh is prioritizing IT for transformation through research, startup growth, and new technology adoption. The GTMI ranks Bangladesh at an advanced level in digital governance, praising its digital service transformation, online payments, social protection platforms, and ICT infrastructure.

However, all three indices recommend strengthening human resource development, research investment, cybersecurity, and policy support to maintain progress.

**In 2024, Bangladesh
ranked 100th,
showing steady
improvement from
119 (2020) and 111
(2022) in the EGDl.**



Please scan to read
the EGDl report

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs' EGDl evaluates 193 countries across three pillars: online services, telecommunications infrastructure, and human capital. In 2024, Bangladesh ranked 100th, showing steady improvement from 119 (2020) and 111 (2022) in the EGDl. Its telecommunications infrastructure score rose from 0.4469 (2022) to 0.6501 (2024), while online services improved from 0.6521 to 0.7374, reflecting expanded digital service delivery.

The GII, comprising 80 sub-indicators by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), assesses institutions, human capital, research infrastructure, business sophistication, and knowledge/creative outputs. Bangladesh ranked 106th in 2024.

The World Bank's GTMI index measures how effectively governments use technology for service delivery, evaluating cloud infrastructure, interoperability, human resource management, operational efficiency, online service quality, e-payment systems, and social protection platforms.





“

Digital divide is a complex and multifaceted issue encompassing disparities in access to technology, affordability, digital literacy, and the skills necessary to effectively utilize digital tools

”

Referance

Van Dijk, J.A.G.M. (2006). Digital Divide Research, Achievements and Shortcomings. *Poetics*, 34(4-5), 221-235.

In GTMI 2022, Bangladesh entered Group A (top tier) among 198 economies, with a maturity score of 0.552 compared to Group A's 0.75-1.00 range.

Alongside reporting progress, all three indicators highlight the need for further improvements in Bangladesh's digital transformation and innovation. In addition to expanding technological infrastructure, there is a call for more training and educational programs to enhance human resource capabilities.

All three indices identify areas needing improvement: expanding technical infrastructure alongside enhanced training/education programs, accelerating private-sector innovation through better policies/funding, strengthening citizen engagement via user-friendly platforms with feedback mechanisms, and reinforcing cybersecurity frameworks.

Alongside reporting progress, all three indicators highlight the need for further improvements in Bangladesh's digital transformation and innovation.



Please scan to read
the GI report



Please scan to read
the GTMI report

Comparable or Groundless

When discussing e-Governance utilizing modern information technology, a few countries come to mind, among which Estonia in Europe and Singapore in Asia are prominent. Comparing Bangladesh to the nations that consistently rank at the top of the e-Government Index may seem inappropriate. But by observing the stages of e-Governance transformation in Estonia and Singapore, one might understand whether such a comparison is comparable or groundless in case of Bangladesh.





Declaring internet access as a fundamental right, the Estonian government ensured internet connectivity in all educational institutions by 2002. Exactly a decade later, the country digitized nearly 90 percent of government operations.

Estonia

When Estonia gained independence in the 1990s, it lagged far behind other European countries in every aspect. In 1997, Estonia embarked on its journey toward building an information technology-based society by introducing online government services.

Declaring internet access as a fundamental right, the Estonian government ensured internet connectivity in all educational institutions by 2002. Exactly a decade later, the country digitized nearly 90 percent of government operations. This move reduced bureaucratic delays in government offices while increasing efficiency for citizens. Today, every Estonian over the age of 15 has an electronic ID card, which they can use for everything, from banking transactions to tax payments and other economic activities.

The backbone of Estonia's e-Governance is an open-source platform called X-Road, which enables secure data exchange between various government and private institutions. This system ensures the safety of citizens' digital identities, I-Voting, E-Tax, and E-Business services.

In 2012, Estonia became the first country to implement blockchain technology in governance. This system now ensures data accuracy, transparency, and protection against cyber threats. Estonia uses KSI blockchain for this purpose. To safeguard data, Estonia introduced the concept of data embassies.

In 2014, the Estonian government launched E-Residency, allowing individuals from anywhere in the world to obtain digital citizenship in Estonia by meeting the necessary requirements.





Singapore

Singapore emerged as an independent republic in 1965 after separating from Malaysia. Struggling with unemployment and a housing crisis, the Singaporean government launched a modernization program in the 1980s, choosing technology as its key strategy.

By the mid-1990s, the country established its first nationwide broadband infrastructure, called Singapore ONE, covering 99 percent of the island nation. This laid the foundation for broadband connectivity in schools, businesses, homes, libraries, and community centers.

By June 1996, over 60 government agencies had launched websites to provide information and services. However, these services were fragmented across different departments with no centralized platform. To offer citizens a single access point for all government services, Singapore implemented the One-Stop e-Citizen initiative in 1999.

Alongside infrastructure development, the government took continuous steps to enhance citizens' digital literacy. To bridge the digital divide, Singapore government partnered with private companies to distribute second-hand PCs to marginalized and low-income communities.

The Singaporean government also fosters a culture of technology and innovation by organizing regular meetings and training sessions for public servants. These initiatives facilitate the exchange of best practices and innovative solutions among government agencies.

Alongside infrastructure development, the government took continuous steps to enhance citizens' digital literacy. To bridge the digital divide, Singapore government partnered with private companies to distribute second-hand PCs to marginalized and low-income communities.

Following Estonia's pioneering X-Road infrastructure and Singapore's integrated One-Stop e-Citizen portal, Bangladesh has embarked on consolidating all government services through its MyGov platform

Parallels in E-Governance: Estonia, Singapore, and Bangladesh

Following Estonia's pioneering X-Road infrastructure and Singapore's integrated One-Stop e-Citizen portal, Bangladesh has embarked on consolidating all government services through its MyGov platform - a unified digital gateway mirroring these global benchmarks.

The digital health ecosystems reveal striking similarities. While Estonia maintains fully digitized medical records with universal citizen access, Bangladesh has operationalized telemedicine services and is progressively implementing an E-Health Card system to ensure comprehensive digital healthcare access.

Bangladesh's transformation journey echoes Singapore's early challenges in cultivating digital governance culture. Where Singapore overcame institutional resistance through its E-Citizen initiative, Bangladeshi ministries are now breaking silos that once hindered inter-departmental coordination. A decade ago, agencies operated in isolation with minimal digital service delivery; today they are demonstrating growing confidence in citizen-centric digital solutions.

Bangladesh's Challenge in Competing with the Developed World

The examples of Estonia and Singapore have been cited primarily to contextualize Bangladesh's journey of digital transformation. With a population of something between just 1.3 and 14 million, Estonia is geographically 3.5 times smaller than Bangladesh. While Bangladesh's has over 3,500 people per square kilometer, Estonia has merely 40 inhabitants, making Bangladesh's population density 75 times higher. Singapore, too, has only 6 million residents in a 700-square-mile territory (equivalent to Bangladesh's smallest district, Meherpur), and being an island nation, internet infrastructure deployment was much easier.

Both Estonia and Singapore began their e-Governance journeys nearly three decades ago, whereas Bangladesh started only two decades ago.

So, is Bangladesh actually lagging far behind?

Remarkably, within these two decades, Bangladesh has built a digital infrastructure from scratch for its massive population. Millions have been brought into the fold of digital literacy, with over 90 percent of remote areas now accessing e-Governance services. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government efficiently verified and vaccinated approximately 135 million citizens using national ID checks – a feat underscoring its digital capabilities.

However, in an innovative culture, complacency has no place. Hence, the journey continues!

While Bangladesh's has over 3,500 people per square kilometer, Estonia has merely 40 inhabitants, making Bangladesh's population density 75 times higher.

**Now, documents
authenticated by
Bangladesh's foreign
ministry no
longer require
re-verification
abroad, which will
save estimated
BDT 50–60
billion annually.**

A Testament to Capability: Joining the Apostille Convention

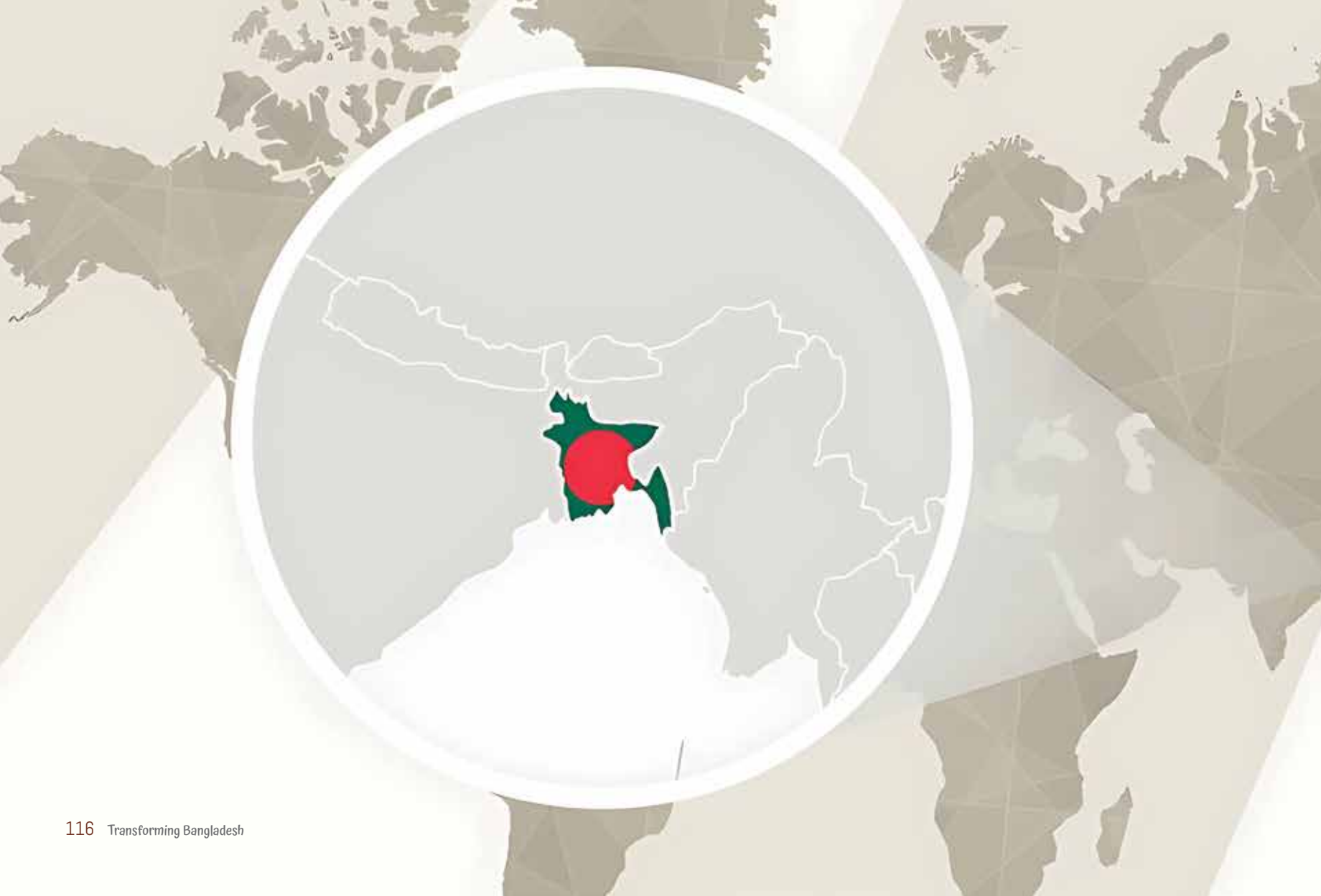
In 2024, Bangladesh became a signatory to The Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents, commonly known as the Apostille Convention 1961 or the Hague Convention. Adopted on October 5, 1961, this international treaty simplifies the authentication process of official documents (such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, academic records, and court papers) for use abroad. Under this convention, a designated authority issues an Apostille certificate upon request, verifying the authenticity of signatures, seals, or stamps on documents. Once apostilled, these documents are legally recognized in all member states without further certification.

Previously, as a non-member state, Bangladeshis had to endure a tedious, multi-step legalization process—first through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then via the consulate of the destination country. This often caused delays and bureaucratic hurdles.

a2i played a pivotal role in facilitating Bangladesh's accession to the convention. It streamlined policy formulation, inter-ministerial coordination, and the development of a digital platform for online applications and document tracking. Now, documents authenticated by Bangladesh's foreign ministry no longer require re-verification abroad, which will save estimated BDT 50–60 billion annually.

Remarkably, within just three months of joining the convention, Bangladesh successfully integrated the Apostille system across government offices — a feat showcasing its digital agility and institutional adaptability. This milestone underscores how strategic tech-driven governance can dismantle legacy barriers and deliver tangible benefits to citizens.







Global Achievement for Innovation

Among the least-developed countries, Bangladesh has shown consistent progress in e-Governance implementation. The nation's trajectory on the EGD Index reveals remarkable advancement – climbing 50 positions from 150th in 2012 to 100th in 2022, with near-uninterrupted annual improvements, earning global acclaim.

A standout achievement came in 2018 when Bangladesh's Online Service Index (a core EGD sub-index) scored 0.51, in par with developed nations like Estonia, USA, Canada, Austria, and Australia in this critical dimension.

At Bangladesh's initiative, the International ICT Innovation (i-3) Matching Fund has been launched, assisting five countries in replicating Bangladesh's ICT-based best practices.

South-South Co-operation

The South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) was established to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience, and skills among countries in the Global South. Currently, this network includes 37 member countries and over 30 international organizations, working together on joint initiatives.

At Bangladesh's initiative, the International ICT Innovation (i-3) Matching Fund has been launched, assisting five countries in replicating Bangladesh's ICT-based best practices.

Guided by the principle of “leaving no one behind,” the Government of Bangladesh has been working to establish Union Digital Centers, develop foundational software and technological infrastructure, provide policy support, strengthen ecosystems, and foster public-private partnerships. As a result, entrepreneurial mindsets and skill development have grown among the youth, women, marginalized communities, and people with disabilities across the society.

Continuing this progress, the government, with support from international development partners, has taken several initiatives to simplify and reform public service delivery, promote a culture of innovation in administration, and effectively address digital divides.

The South South Network

NORTH AMERICA
3 COUNTRIES

EUROPE
6 COUNTRIES

ASIA PACIFIC
21 COUNTRIES

LATIN AMERICA AND
THE CARIBBEAN
2 COUNTRIES

AFRICA
1 COUNTRIES



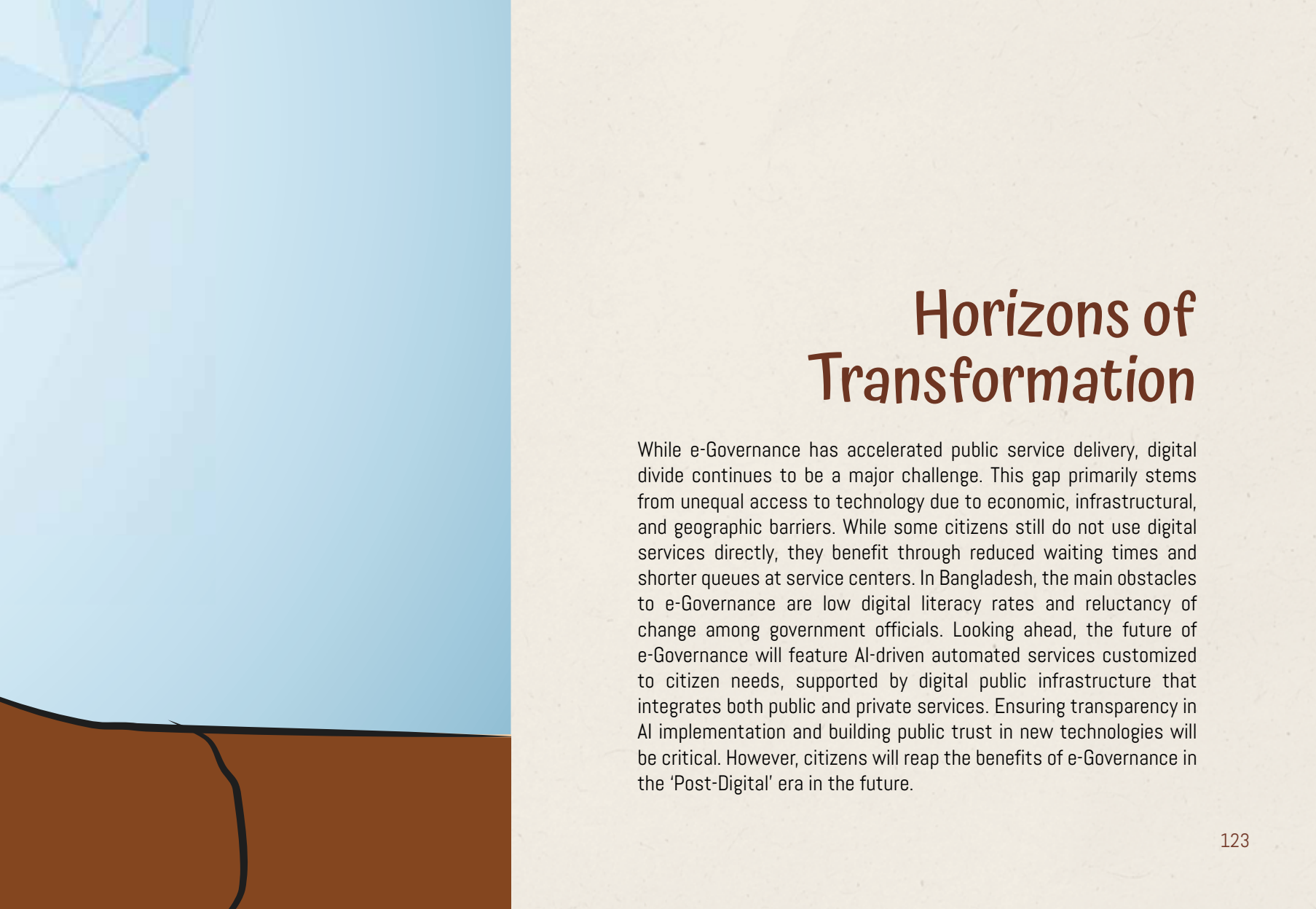
Replication and Awards

Several innovative initiatives of Bangladesh are being replicated in seven countries, including the Philippines, Fiji, The Gambia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Turkey. Additionally, a2i, serving as a vehicle for the government, is providing technical assistance to five least-developed countries in Africa to foster innovation and simplify service delivery.

In recognition of its work both at home and abroad, a2i has been honored with 78 prestigious awards, including the WSIS Prize, Asia-Pacific ICT Alliance Award, and the UN-ITU SDG Game Changer Award.







Horizons of Transformation

While e-Governance has accelerated public service delivery, digital divide continues to be a major challenge. This gap primarily stems from unequal access to technology due to economic, infrastructural, and geographic barriers. While some citizens still do not use digital services directly, they benefit through reduced waiting times and shorter queues at service centers. In Bangladesh, the main obstacles to e-Governance are low digital literacy rates and reluctance of change among government officials. Looking ahead, the future of e-Governance will feature AI-driven automated services customized to citizen needs, supported by digital public infrastructure that integrates both public and private services. Ensuring transparency in AI implementation and building public trust in new technologies will be critical. However, citizens will reap the benefits of e-Governance in the 'Post-Digital' era in the future.

Where people once waited for hours to pay utility bills, many can now complete transactions from home, easing congestion for both digital and non-digital users.

After the leap of e-Governance in countries, there is strong criticism that despite increased transparency and speed in government operations, digital divides or technological inequalities are emerging and leaving some behind. And this global concern and crisis is undeniable. As previously discussed, digital divide refers to the disparity or gap among individuals, groups, or geographic regions in terms of access to and benefit from information and communication technology. This gap can arise for several reasons — such as lack of access to the internet and devices, insufficient skills to use devices and the internet, and a lack of opportunities to apply the information obtained online.

However, even those excluded from digital services still benefit indirectly. For instance, online bill payments and digital service portals have significantly reduced queues, making processes faster for all. Where people once waited for hours to pay utility bills, many can now complete transactions from home, easing congestion for both digital and non-digital users.



Bangladesh: What are the Challenges in Implementing E-Governance?

Introducing any new technology into society requires time. To deliver government services equitably to all citizens, it is imperative to cultivate not only service recipients' acceptance but also the right mindset among service providers.

In Bangladesh, even digital weighing scales have yet to gain full public acceptance in many marketplaces where traditional scales remain prevalent. This illustrates how challenging it has been to build familiarity with technology in public services.

With support from development partners in recent years, the government has been working relentlessly to foster inclusive digital literacy and nurture a culture of innovation. However, much work remains in policy formulation and instilling innovation-friendly mindset among public servants to deliver citizen-centric services.

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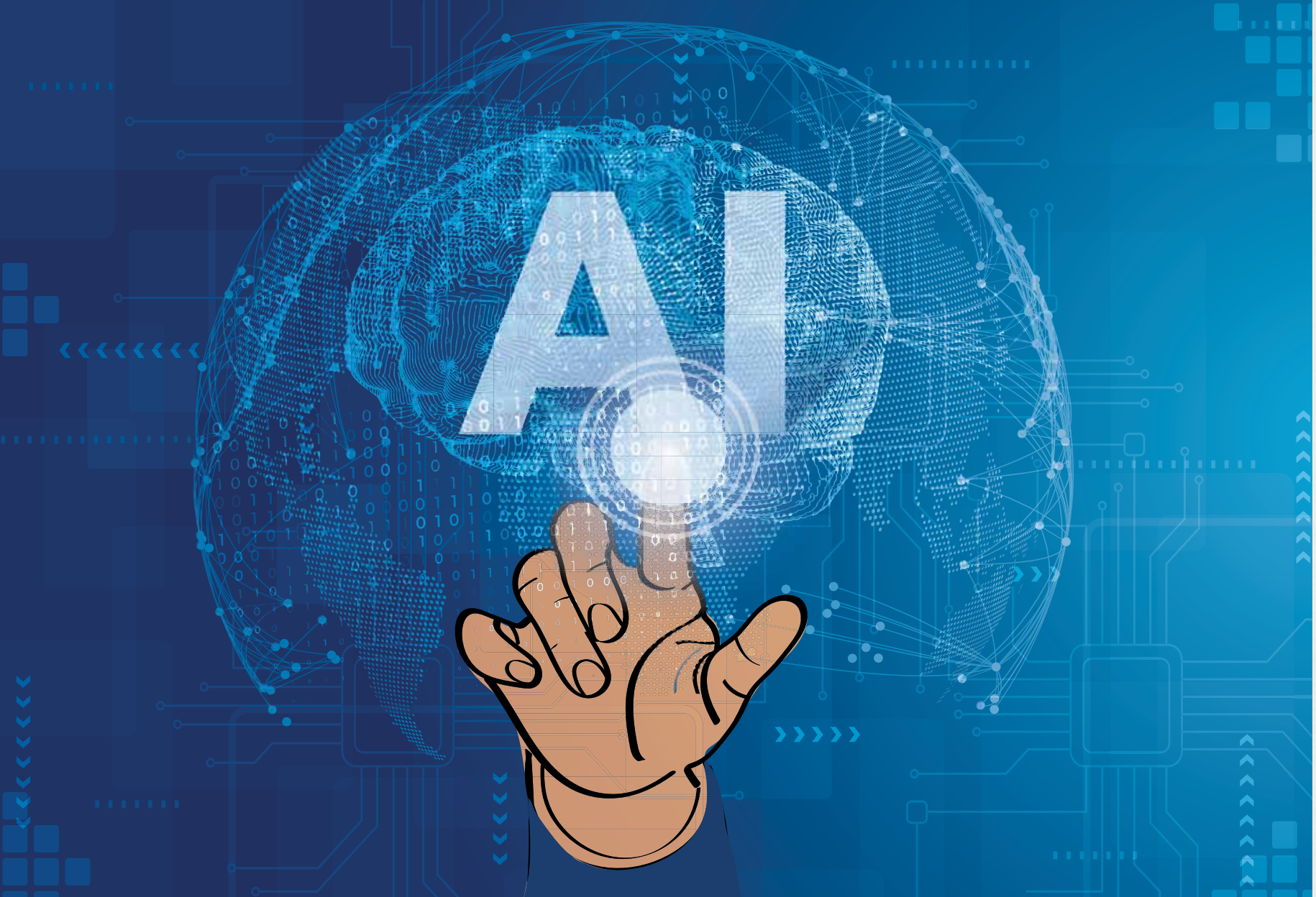
The digital divide is not just a problem for developing nations — it also affects marginalized communities in developed countries.

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Reference

Norris, P. (2001). *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide*. Cambridge University Press.





E-Governance and the Future

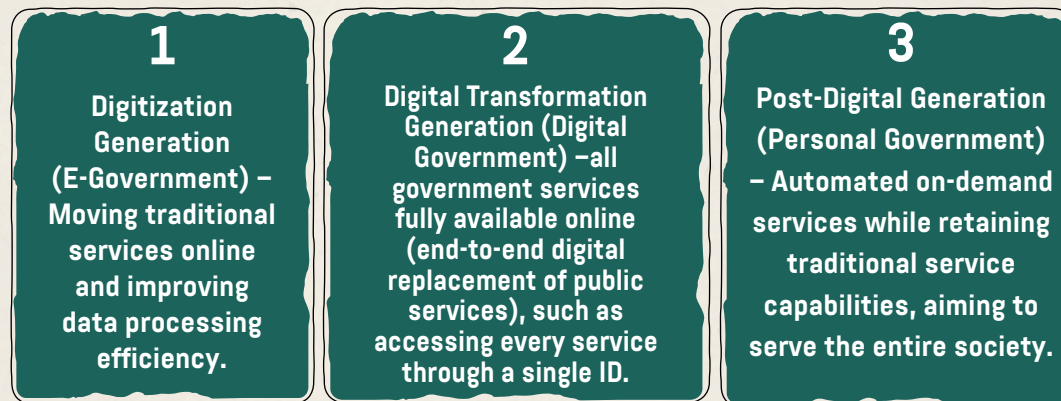
The way we expect government services today largely depends on the type of digital services we experience from the private sector. For instance, when we think of email services, we are likely to consider Gmail or Yahoo Mail as benchmarks. In Bangladesh, social media usage is widespread, and the readership of online news portals is growing each day. Naturally, citizens will compare government services to these examples.

Why should accessing government services require multiple steps when platforms like Facebook allow login with just a password or fingerprint? Why can't we use a single password for all government services, just like Google provides access to Mail, Drive, YouTube, and more with one login? Major tech companies use AI and algorithms to personalize content—can e-governance offer similar conveniences?

Countries leading in e-Governance have already implemented unified IDs to deliver all government services seamlessly. Bangladesh is moving in this direction but must go further.

However, the future of e-governance will eliminate the need for citizens to request services. AI-driven 'life events-based service models' will proactively deliver services

This progression can be divided into three phases:



Currently, e-governance requires citizens' active participation or, in less advanced models, treats citizens as passive recipients. However, the future of e-governance will eliminate the need for citizens to request services. AI-driven 'life events-based service models' will proactively deliver services—ushering in the post-digital era. Bangladesh is currently in the second phase: digital transformation.

In the post-digital generation, the government will act as a platform where citizens automatically receive transparent, credible services related to life events (birth, marriage, death, education, employment etc.). Citizens will not be just passive recipients anymore but will have control over services, with the government providing proactive solutions tailored to their needs.

“

E-governance initiatives must prioritize citizen demands, ensuring their inclusion in planning and implementation to guarantee effectiveness.

”

Reference

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Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

The concept of Digital Public Infrastructure is closely linked with the post-digital generation. DPI is a unified system that interconnects several other systems, based on an open standard - meaning it is built on rules and standards that everyone can use and are somewhat familiar to most people.

DPI is a secure and modern digital system designed to make different government and private services easily accessible. It is built in a way that ensures equal opportunities for all citizens and enables easy connections between them.

DPI's core components - identity verification, payments, and data exchange - collectively accelerate inclusive service delivery and innovation across sectors. When established in developing countries through private sector collaboration, these systems can make significant progress in inclusive digital transformation and play a crucial role in achieving SDGs.



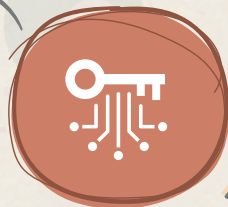
There are plans to fully integrate AI into DPI by 2030. Several studies suggest that while AI will contribute trillions to the global economy by then, generative AI will also significantly expand inclusion possibilities.

A study by the Harvard Business Review says that digital ID (a fundamental component of DPI) alone can create economic growth equivalent to 3-13 percent of GDP, with an average improvement of 6 percent, particularly in emerging economies. This impact is important for both citizens and governments as it encourages innovation, reduces digital divides, and ensures access to essential services and economic opportunities for marginalized populations, helping reduce overall social inequality.

There are plans to fully integrate AI into DPI by 2030. Several studies suggest that while AI will contribute trillions to the global economy by then, generative AI will also significantly expand inclusion possibilities. In this context, governments, corporations and organizations worldwide have focused on developing AI strategies.

However, how AI works often remains a secret. The rules and logics behind it - who creates them and how they operate - are typically not disclosed by service providers. This creates concerns about transparency. Such secrecy and ambiguity pose major challenges for information security and knowledge sharing.

It creates opportunities for people at all levels of society, especially for marginalized populations, to easily use digital services.



Access

This will speed up and streamline government service delivery processes.



Efficiency

It creates the foundation for new business and increased family income.



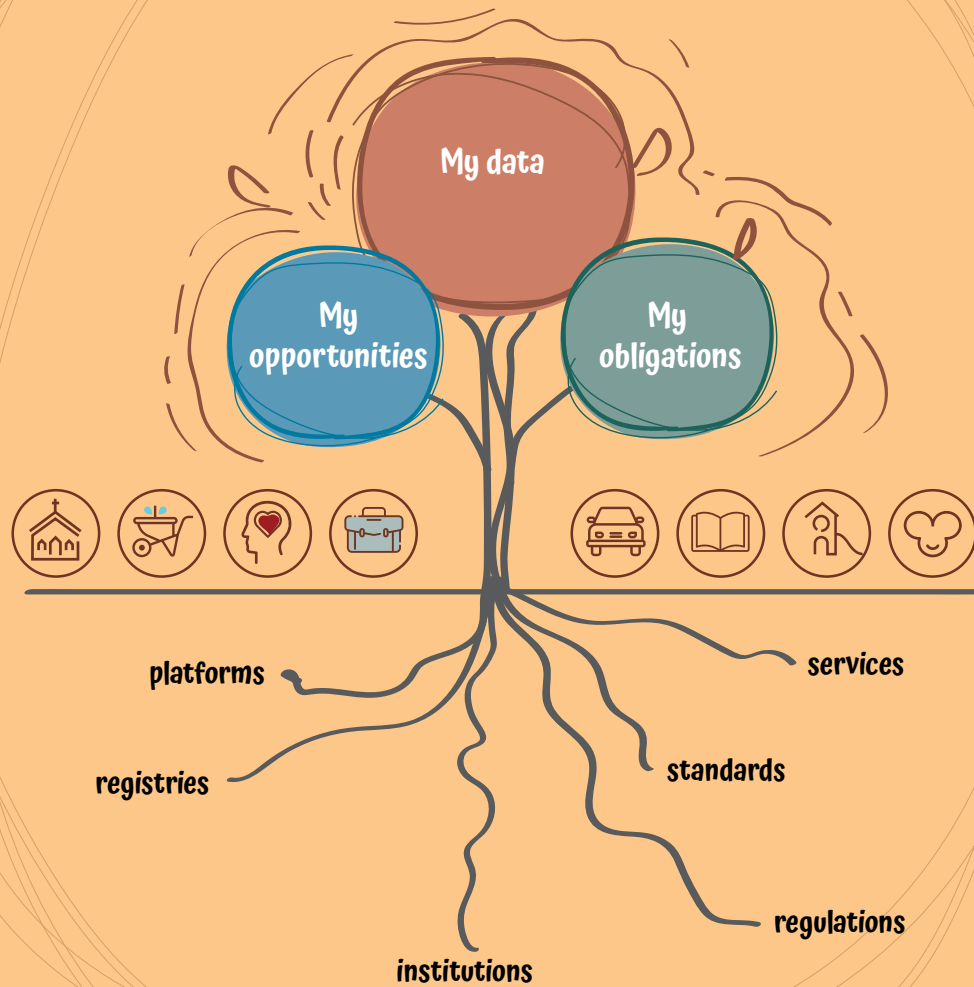
Innovation

This accelerates the digital economy and contributes to evolution.



Economic growth

DPI



Reference: Personal Government ecosystem, www.personalgovernment.com

When ridesharing services first emerged, many compared it to taxi services, saying “taxis already exist and don’t work properly, how will this work?” Within just half a decade, the ridesharing system became one of Bangladesh’s most widely used public services.

When online banking was launched many believed only “fools” would use “digital money.” Some even suspected banks would make money disappear.

The key point is that innovation has always created unfamiliar fears in people’s minds. But these can be overcome through trust.

The 'Personal Government' concept in E-Governance and the post-digital era are so newfound that it might sound like a science fiction movie. But governments worldwide are moving in that direction within the next five years through big data analysis and artificial intelligence. And Bangladesh will not lag behind – the work has already begun.

Fiction, Yet Fact

It's a resort with just some 10 to 12 cottages. Not far away, the river meets the sea. Though it was a farmhouse, alongside farming, there were arrangements for other activities like swimming, sports and other entertainment options.

Rina and Sumon had planned that after their wedding, both their families would spend some time together at a resort. Rina had already booked everyone's transportation tickets online well in advance. Some family members arrived in the morning, some after noon, and others in the evening - all checking in automatically upon arrival at the resort.

Rina and Sumon were the first to arrive with Sumon's mother. Rina's parents came with her elder sister Bina, a public servant, and her banker husband.

Sumon's only sister and her husband came directly from the airport with their 10-year-old son. The last to arrive was Rina's younger brother, who worked as a sales manager for a company in the Hill Tracts.

To make their days at the resort memorable, special arrangements were made for each day. A detailed itinerary had already been shared online beforehand.

On the first day, everyone entered their cottages to rest and freshen up until about 7 pm. That evening, a barbecue was arranged in the open area outside the resort, where there was also some light musical entertainment. However, in the middle of the event, Rina had to excuse herself for an online meeting.

Rina works in a business process outsourcing. Her job involved coordinating with programmers across the country developing customized software for international clients based on their



requirements. This time, she had received a request to develop a 'Responsive Tax Software' for a foreign government. During the meeting, she also processed some pending payments, transferring them in real-time to the different bank accounts of the software programmers.

Rina's banker brother-in-law had settled all his bank client accounts and transactions online. In this digital era, he teased Rina for still needing separate meetings in another room for her work. Sumon, who worked in agriculture, agreed - while traveling to the resort, he had identified a new rice virus through phone photos, consulted an entomologist, and arranged vaccine deliveries to small farms, all while receiving payments digitally.

An annoyed Rina said, "You all live so comfortably only because we develop the software with exclusive times like this!"

Rina's father stopped their banter. Knowing in advance, he planned to make the first night of the gathering memorable for the new couple. He decided to gift them some land, which he quickly registered in the names of Rina and Sumon using the internet in just 15 minutes.

The next few days included plans to visit the nearby sea beach and other tourist attractions. Rina's elder sister Bina, a government official, managed her official files while strolling along the shore.

Sumon's sister and her husband had come from Europe, where she worked at a university. Between sightseeing, she conducted online exams for international applicants and progressed on a research paper with colleagues. Her husband, whose Bangladeshi firm supplied eco-friendly bags to European brands, reviewed product quality and gave feedback online.



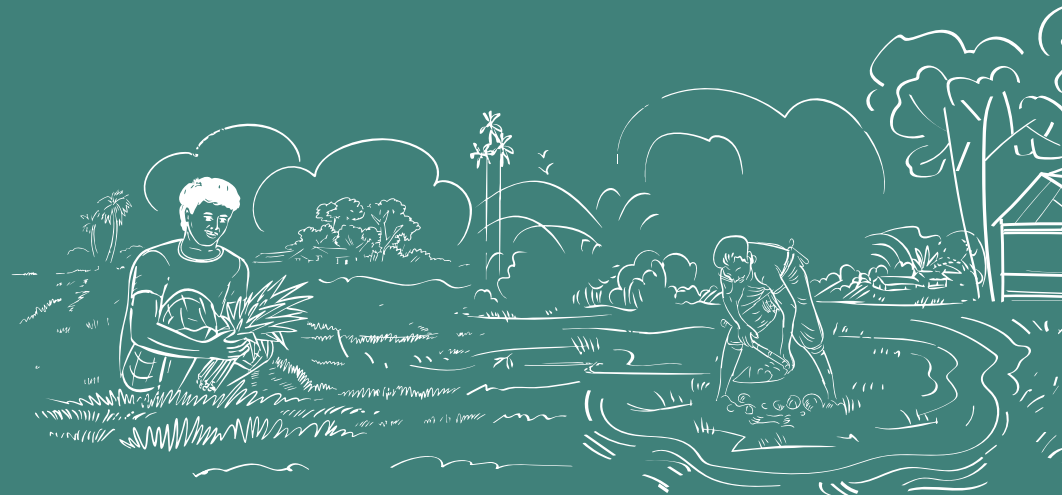
Though it was winter, rain was forecasted. Checking the weather apps, Rina's brother Minto rescheduled the deployment of his sales force, all between conversations with the family and sightseeing. Even Sumon's 10-year-old nephew took online violin lessons from his teacher based in Germany!

On their final afternoon by the sea, Sumon's mother, who retired from a development agency, suddenly stood behind Rina as everyone snacked. A band appeared mysteriously, and from an ornate box, she brought out a gold necklace for Rina. When asked how all this was arranged, she said she'd ordered the necklace online and got it delivered to the resort. And all of it was done by some online clicks. Just a click on the 'yes' button and it all happened through her bank account.

A minor accident occurred when Rina's mother cut her foot on coral. The resort connected online with a local hospital. The doctor reviewed Rina's mother's previous prescriptions before treating her. Within 10 minutes, a volunteer arrived with medicine and bandages, while the cost of treatment was automatically deducted from the company which provides health insurance to Rina's mother.

Thus, ended Rina and Sumon's post-wedding family gathering - days filled with rare, joyful moments preserved in memory.

Though this story seems fictional now, it will be reality within ten years.



What's clearly visible to us here are:

Rina can hold meetings with foreign clients. She can make her own payments and instantly pay the entrepreneurs.

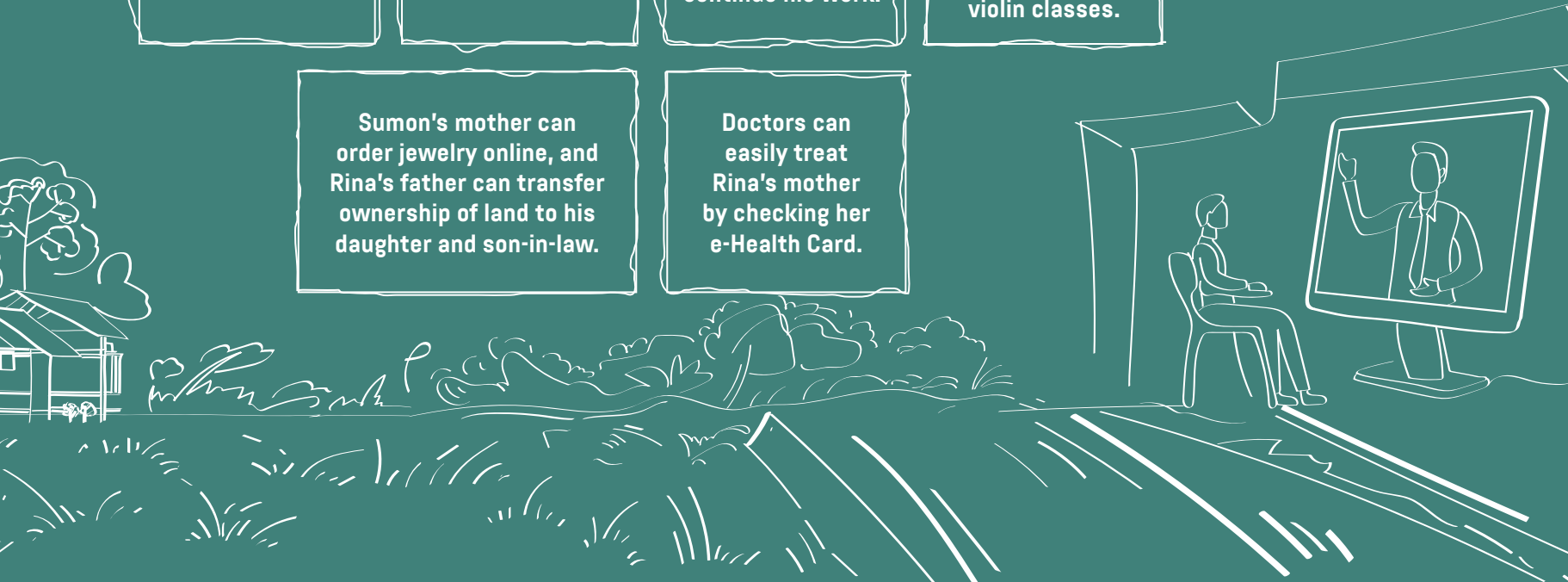
Sumon can identify crop viruses online and deliver his farm's services to small agricultural farms.

Sumon's expatriate brother-in-law can work for his office while staying in Bangladesh. Even Rina's banker brother-in-law can continue his work.

Sumon's sister can conduct exams for international university applicants right from the resort. Sumon's nephew can also take violin classes.

Sumon's mother can order jewelry online, and Rina's father can transfer ownership of land to his daughter and son-in-law.

Doctors can easily treat Rina's mother by checking her e-Health Card.



What cannot be seen but is there are

A nationwide robust e-governance ecosystem. People can now access several services online or utilize government services to complete their tasks from anywhere.

A payment gateway enabling quick and easy transactions.

Simplified agricultural services; farmers can identify crop diseases remotely and arrange vaccine deliveries online. This required digital integration of all agriculture-related department services.

Registered citizens can easily receive healthcare online. To achieve this, all public and private hospitals had to be brought under a unified digital healthcare system.

A comprehensive database has been developed. Direct communication channels have been established between insurance companies and financial institutions.



Citizens can now easily complete land-related tasks—such as ownership transfers, name registrations, and E-Porcha — directly from their devices. Instead of visiting several offices, everything can be done through a single platform in minimal time.

Accurate weather forecasting infrastructure and government-backed ecosystems have been set up across different regions. Citizens can access and utilize this weather data online for their needs.

To ensure seamless ticket booking and transportation services, an integrated ecosystem has been created by merging schedules, traffic updates, and services from both government and private transport providers into a unified system.

Final Words

What may seem like a science fiction movie today is on track to become tomorrow's reality through e-Governance. The expectation is that the Government of Bangladesh will continue to lead this transformation with confidence and determination.



Technology is the language of transformation. And Bangladesh has significantly progressed in this journey of adopting technologies to transform. There have been ups and downs but also a sheer joy of unlocking the immense potential of using technology for the welfare of people. And a2i has been on this journey with the government constantly.

But it does not end here, we have miles to go. Technology will abolish all inequalities someday. The government's vision and policies focusing on people's welfare as well as technologies like AI and blockchain will create a Bangladesh of innovation in the future. And a2i will continue to remain a partner in this journey.

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Horizons of Transformation

The Personal Government Ecosystem. The Personal Government Dot-com.

Publisher & Distributor

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Division, & Supported by the UNDP Bangladesh)

Disclaimer

The book contains some surprising examples, images, and descriptions of e-governance, information technology, and innovation. However, it certainly does not present a complete picture, nor does it reflect the entire situation of Bangladesh or the world. Several topics have been included in the book from readily available sources or resources. There may be some issues within it that are not easily understandable or are unknown, which can be considered as limitations of the editorial board.



Aspire to Innovate (a2i)

📍 ICT Tower (Level 13), Agargaon, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

☎ +88 02 55006931-34 🌐 www.a2i.gov.bd

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