

Challenges in Developing Citizen Centric e-Governance in India

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Abstract- e-Governance offers an opportunity to serve the citizens in a better way. Improving governance and administration has become the at-most priority in today's world for getting transparency and to make India corruption free. The internet has been a popular medium for communication and is now changing the way the Government used to interact with citizens. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) promises a better world in governance but at the same time requires efforts for changing process, building infrastructures, capacity enhancement etc. It has changed the ways of information delivery of government to various sections of the society. In this paper we discuss the challenges and some concepts for the effective implementation of e-governance in India. This paper would give an insight to researchers involved with the government to make e-governance successful in India.

Keywords-e-Governance, e-Government, governance, development, ICT.

I. INTRODUCTION

The term governance comes from the Greek word 'Kebernon' which means 'to steer'. In usage to govern means to control and to influence from a position of authority. The e-Government field emerged in the late 1990s as a context to share experiences amongst practitioners. The word electronic in the term e-Governance implies technology driven governance. E-Governance is the application of information and communication technology for delivering government services, exchange of information, integration of various standalone systems and services between government to citizens, government to business and government to government. Through e-governance the government services will be made available to the citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner. The 3 main target groups are government, citizens and business groups. E-Governance involves new styles of debating, new ways of leadership, new ways of organising and delivering information. Today, information plays a vital role in our lives and technology has become the mode for storage, processing and sharing information. The transactions involved in e-government between government business and citizens are shown in Fig. 1 below.

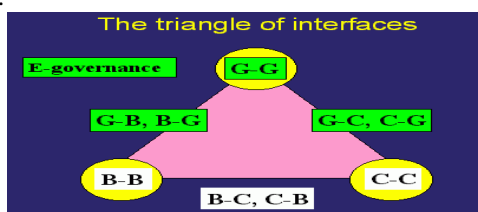


Fig. 1: E-Governance: G-C, G-G and G-B model

II. E-GOVERNANCE: CHALLENGES FACED IN INDIA

In India, e-Governance faces major challenges which have been known to cause hindrance towards the effective implementation of citizen centric e-governance. Some of the major challenges being faced are:

[1] Poverty:- Poverty, as we know, is a major cause of concern for India as it poses a threat towards the development of countries which are still in their developing phase. As a result of poverty, the provision of access to the Internet in some cities and rural areas at large remains out of reach. The internet plays a major role in e-Governance and it is therefore important to have a well-established network which is unaffordable by the people living in the rural areas. Fig. 2 shows the poverty levels in India and Fig. 3 shows a comparison of poverty levels amongst a few countries.

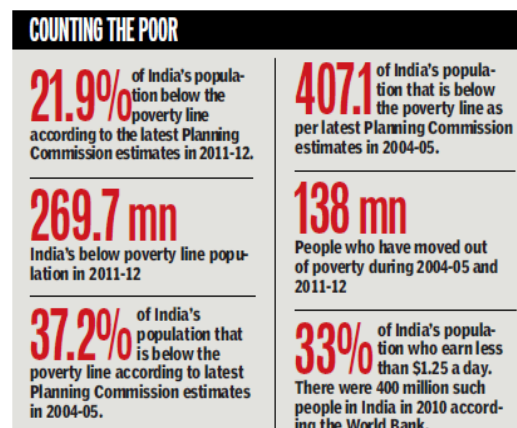


Fig.2: Poverty Stats in India

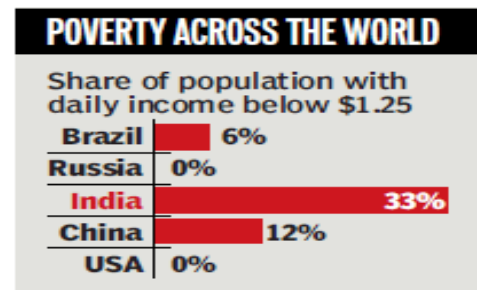


Fig. 3: A comparison

[2] Infrastructure: - A direct consequence of poverty is the inability to provide the infrastructure required for the effective implementation of e-Governance. In order to establish an effective e-Governance system in India a well-established infrastructure like electricity, the internet and other important networks.

[3] Lack of Technical Knowledge:- e-Governance requires a certain level of technical competence from the end user. However, technical literacy remains a major area of concern in India due to the poor levels of literacy in the country. Fig. 4 below depict the literacy rate across the different states in India.

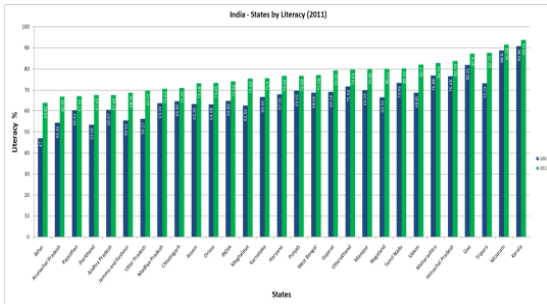


Fig. 4: Literacy Rate Census 2001 (Blue) 2011 (Green)

[4] Unawareness about the benefits of e-Governance:- Majority of the Indian citizens still remain unaware regarding the benefits of e-Governance as a result of which not all the citizens are able to make use of the electronic services provided by the government. As shown in Fig 1, the G-C, G-G and G-B projects can only be implanted successfully and to their full potential once the Indian citizens are well aware regarding its benefits. The above mentioned are only some of the many challenges faced in the effective implementation of e-Governance. These challenges further branch out into various sub-problems which further complicate the process of e-Governance in India.

III. NeGP- NATIONAL e-GOVERNANCE PLAN

The National e-Governance Plan is an initiative by the Government of India which strives towards delivering e-Governance to all states of India. The National e-Governance Plan was approved by the Government of India on May 18, 2006. It comprised of 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 components. Projects such as Health, Education, PDS and Post were introduced in the year 2011 and this increased the Mission Mode Projects from 27 to 31.

The core projects of the NeGP are:

- State Data Centres (SDCs)
- State Wide Area Networks (S.W.A.N)
- Common Services Centres (CSCs)
- National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG)
- State e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG)
- Mobile e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (MSDG)

Fig. 5 below shows an implementation of the NeGP e-Panchayat Mission Mode Projects.

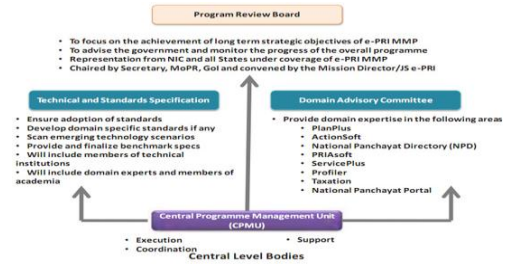


Fig. 5: NeGP e-Panchayat MMP implementation

IV. CONCLUSION

The Government of India has taken the initiative to popularise e-Governance and by establishing the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) the process has become systematic. It would certainly take time to overcome challenges such as literacy and poverty but by constantly striving to achieve better standards of e-Governance, we will be able to successfully implement e-Governance in India. Once e-Governance is well established, the services provided by the government to the citizens will be accessed easily as well as the processing will be faster. As a result, there would be no wastage of time in retrieving such services as well as a transparency will be maintained so that the services are provided equally to all.

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