

## e-Governance Solutions and its importance

This white paper provides an overview of e-Governance. Broadlyne has executed several e-Governance projects for various organisations in various geographical locations and hence presents an outlook on the subject.

### What is e-Governance?

In simple terms Electronic Governance can be defined as giving citizens the choice of when and where they access government information and services. While e-Governance entails the processes used to provide services to the public, e-Government is the tool to accomplish e-Governance.

Putting the citizen at the center of government means taking a delivery channel view. This would mean using more and more of Electronics & Information Technology in many of the government functions.

There are three aspects to the e-Governance –

- a) IT enabling the government functions - something similar to back-office automation,
- b) Web-enabling the government functions so that the citizens will have a direct access, and
- c) Improving Government processes so that openness, accountability, accuracy, speed of operations, effectiveness and efficiency may be achieved.

Typically, this would mean web-enabled applications, but e-Governance would also cater to automated applications for the government sector, which helps in achieving SMART governance which some define as:

- Speed
- Moral
- Accountable/Accurate
- Responsive and
- Transparent Governance

According to one school of thought, e-Governance is not just about government web site and e-mail. It is not just about service delivery over the Internet. It is not just about digital access to government information or electronic payments. It will change how citizens relate to governments as much as it changes how citizens relate to each other. It will bring forth, new concepts of citizenship, both in terms of needs and responsibilities.

### Why e-Governance?

Government cannot exist or function in isolation. For a government to operate effectively, a government-community-citizen infrastructure should be in place. This would result in a sturdy and meaningful information flow between the government and citizens of a nation. A close-knit infrastructure would yield two fold benefits, which would save time and money for all concerned:

- First, citizens can enjoy faster, effective and timely government services. This would also evolve a culture of self-service wherein citizens can help themselves wherever and whenever required.
- Secondly, government can become more integrated into the community itself. Also government can focus its resources where they are needed the most.

Also, mankind has taken a big leap with the advent of Information Technology and Information Highways. Both Information Technology and Information Highways are here to stay and impact our lives in the years to come. So, Government has taken into account these facts and gear itself to create **Simple Moral Accountable Responsive Transparent** governance.

Governments across developing nations worldwide have more challenges and responsibilities to bring their nations at par with the developed nations. To face such challenges, government can bring in e-Governance reforms. e-Governance offers a new way forward, helping improve government processes, connect citizens, and build interactions with and within civil society.

What reform has e-Governance has in store? According to one school of thought, at root it provides three basic change potentials for good governance for development:

- **Automation:** replacing current human-executed processes, which involve accepting, storing, processing, outputting or transmitting information. For example, the automation of existing clerical functions.
- **Informatisation:** supporting current human-executed information processes. For example, supporting current processes of decision-making, communication, and decision implementation.
- **Transformation:** supporting new human-executed information processes. For example, creating new methods of public service delivery.

These change potentials, in turn, can bring – singly or in combination – five main benefits to governance for development:

**Efficiency gains:**

- *Governance that is cheaper:* producing the same outputs at lower total cost.
- *Governance that does more:* producing more outputs at the same total cost.
- *Governance that is quicker:* producing the same outputs at the same total cost in less time.

**Effectiveness gains:**

- *Governance that works better:* producing the same outputs at the same total cost in the same time, but to a higher quality standard.
- *Governance that is innovative:* producing new outputs.

Hence, with e-Governance, a reinvigorated, digital-era government is at hand. When governments, citizens, and private sector partners redefine and reengage their roles, better government—better governance—will be the result.

**Emerging e-Governance models**

**Government-Citizen conjoined model:** With the advent of Information technology, there is a probability of adoption of government community conjoined model, which will inherit its traits from the culture of each government and society. Further, Information Technology and Information Highway will together remove the boundaries between various sub-functions of government. Not only this, it will also remove the precincts between governments worldwide because service delivery will now be centralized around the needs of citizens and not on political structures. Thus, the new model aims at ushering a new government-citizen network by collapsing the boundaries created by political and historical structures and the focus is on who can best add and build value.

**Service delivery Model:** In the service delivery model, citizens will also participate in decision making processes, replacing the top-down process that characterizes too many governments. The ultimate focus

will be on effective and efficient delivery of government services. Such a citizen centric and citizen focused model will create new roles for citizens thereby replacing "broadcast" democracy to a more intimate and immediate model. For this to happen, partnership must become a customary mode of operation, which would primarily mean, that there would be a real shift in traditional notions of accountability and governance. This would involve lots of challenges as sharing power, decision-making, and responsibilities are inherently counter-cultural to many government organizations.

### **Challenges in e-Governance:**

While initiatives for e-Governance have been emanating from various directions, they are often at cross-purposes and so repetitive and wasteful. The National Task Force has also made several recommendations in this regard. The fundamental strategic challenge faced is **e-Readiness for e-Governance**. This is a multi-fold challenge posing basic questions such as

- i. Is the Data Systems Infrastructure Ready?
- ii. Is the Legal Infrastructure Ready?
- iii. Is the Institutional Infrastructure Ready?
- iv. Is the Human Infrastructure Ready?
- v. Is the Technological Infrastructure Ready?
- vi. Is the Leadership and Strategic Thinking Ready?

These fundamental issues may be clubbed together in following three categories:

### **Technology Issues**

- Hardware related
- Software related

As the various bodies of Governments function autonomously, it is likely that they might go in for heterogeneous hardware/software platforms. Integration of the data and integration of subsets of these applications from all of these on a common platform may pose a problem in the near future.

### **Management of Change related Issues**

Quite often e-Governance initiatives would lead to mandatory organizational and institutional changes effecting both people and methods at all interfaces of the Delivery Chain · For this, acceptance of this Changed Processes would have to be properly understood, accepted, internalised, adopted and improved to enable full advantages of the technology being adopted in the first part of Smart Governance.

- Delegation of the decision-making leading to re-engineering and appropriate sizing of the decision making machinery.
- Training and acclimatization of the personnel at all levels more so at the lower rung of Government management organizations.
- Loss of vested interests and assumed power as well as authority both amongst the legislature and the executive.

### **Funding issues**

While e-Governance could have very laudable objectives and ambitious Work Plans, these have to be weighed in terms of available resources both in the Plan sector and outside it. It is here that leveraging of

ongoing projects can be made more cost and value effective with the use of IT in a modulated fashion without any critical incremental costs.

**Broadlyne's Capabilities in e-Governance projects:**

Over the years Broadlyne has implemented/customized many e-Governance projects for different Government bodies. Broadlyne, an application solutions and IT Services company operating in the US, UAE and India, has matured as an organization to understand the way various Government organisations function, and has been able to suggest improvements in Government processes and also automate these processes so that the dream of SMART Governance is realized. From among the many e-Governance projects undertaken by Broadlyne, noteworthy among them are the ones implemented for the Indian Railways, the Securities Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited and Central Institute of Fisheries Education (a deemed university under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research)

Broadlyne has also entered into an MoU with CIFE for development of ready-to-implement solutions for the Government and the Government-funded organisations. The solution is a modularly architected ERP Solution which can be easily implemented.