



## **G.S. PAPER II – CONSTITUTION & POLITY**

### **IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY, CITIZEN'S CHARTER AND E-GOVERNANCE**

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<b>1</b>	<b>WHAT IS MEANT BY GOVERNANCE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>CITIZEN'S CHARTER.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Salient Features of a Citizen's Charter .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Developing and Implementing the Citizen's Charter.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.2.1	How to develop the Charter .....	5
3.2.2	Identifying and engaging with stakeholders .....	6
3.2.3	Establishing service standards .....	6
3.2.4	Establishing a helpful institutional structure for the Charter .....	6
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Implementing the Citizen's Charter .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Key Lessons.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>E-GOVERNANCE .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Applications of e-Governance .....</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1.1	Government To Citizen (G2C) .....	11
5.1.2	Consumer To Government (C2G) .....	12
5.1.3	Government To Government (G2G).....	12
5.1.4	Government To Business (G2B).....	14
5.1.5	Government To NGO (G2N).....	14
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Priorities and Objectives .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Models and Successes.....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.3.1	Customs and Excise (Government of India) .....	15
5.3.2	Indian Railways (Government of India) .....	15
5.3.3	Postal Department (Government of India).....	15
5.3.4	Passport / Visa (Government of India) .....	15
5.3.5	AP Online (State Government of Andhra Pradesh) .....	15
5.3.6	Bhoomi – Automation of Land Records (State Government of Karnataka).....	15
5.3.7	CARD – Registration Project (State Government of Andhra Pradesh) .....	15
5.3.8	Gyandoot: Intranet in Tribal District of Dhar (State Government of Madhya Pradesh).....	16
5.3.9	LOKMITRA (State Government of Himachal Pradesh) .....	16
5.3.10	e-Mitra - Integrated Citizen Services Center/ e-Kiosks (State Government of Rajasthan) .....	16
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Challenges and Limitations .....</b>	<b>16</b>
5.4.1	Funding .....	16
5.4.2	Management of Change .....	17
5.4.3	Privacy .....	17
5.4.4	Authentication .....	17
5.4.5	Interoperability .....	17
5.4.6	Delivery of services .....	17
5.4.7	Standardization .....	17
5.4.8	Technology Issues .....	17
5.4.9	Use of local language.....	18

# 1 What is meant by Governance

There is no single universally acceptable way to define governance. A considerable literature exists on how it may be defined (See [Box 1](#)). For our purposes, however, we will confine ourselves to governance in so far as it **serves the citizens** by **safeguarding territorial integrity of the State** and **ensuring individual security, rule of law** and the **delivery of services**. Thus we can say that governance includes the following:

- The **processes** by which governments are chosen, monitored, and changed.
- The **systems of interaction** between the administration, the legislature, and the judiciary.
- The **ability** of government to **create** and to **implement** public policy.
- The **mechanisms** by which citizens and groups define their interests and interact with institutions of authority and with each other.

## *Box 1: Some definitions of Governance*

"GOVERNANCE is the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs. It is the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and obligations, and mediate their differences." (UNDP)

"GOVERNANCE is the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's social and economic resources for development. Governance means the way those with power use that power." (ADB)

GOVERNANCE is "... the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised for the common good. This includes (i) the process by which those in authority are selected, monitored and replaced, (ii) the capacity of the government to effectively manage its resources and implement sound policies, and (iii) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them." (World Bank)

Considering these issues in the context of India it can be said that though we are still a functioning democracy, but increasingly we are not being governed well. The evidence of **eroding political order** is everywhere. **Personal rule** has replaced **party rule** at all levels – national, state and district. Below the rulers, the entrenched civil and police forces have been **politicized**. Various social groups have pressed new and ever more diverse political demands in demonstrations that have often led to **violence**. The omnipresent but feeble state, in turn, has vacillated; its responses have varied over a wide range: indifference, sporadic concessions and repression. Such vacillation has fueled further opposition. The ineffectiveness of repression, moreover, has highlighted the **breakdown of the civil machinery** intended to enforce the law and maintain order. In order to protect themselves, citizens in some parts of the country have begun organizing **private armies**. The growing political violence has periodically brought the armed forces into India's political arena, whereas the armed forces once were considered apolitical. Was this outcome inevitable? India had long been considered something of a political exception. What happened? Something somewhere has definitely gone wrong.

## 2 Important Aspects of Governance

The **quality of governance** is an issue of increasing concern in countries around the world, both developed and developing. The UN Secretary-General had stated, "**Good governance** is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development." However, a lack of systematic data, both over time within countries as well as between countries around the world, ensures that fundamental questions remain to be answered adequately. How can we best measure governance? How does governance performance differ across time and space? Which are the most critical issues of governance?

In India, at the broadest levels of governance, many major issues still remain unsettled. We have an especially daunting array of **key issues** which, one way or another, have not been properly addressed since Independence in 1947. What are these issues?

Since such a list can become endless, we include the following:

- The role of the state, and the government in India, vis-à-vis the people.
- The capacity of (i.e., the resources available to) the government in India.
- The separation of powers between the executive, legislature, and judiciary, and the way that the constituent parts of these three arms of government operate internally.
- The way the political system operates.
- The state and markets in India.
- The role of selected institutions in the Indian intellectual community in contributing to governance in India.
- The management of economy, fiscal imbalances and deficits.
- Regional disparities within and across states.
- Poverty and unemployment.
- Denial of basic needs of food, water, shelter and clothing to a substantial proportion of the population.
- Environmental degradation and climate change.
- Internal Security issues viz. naxalism and home grown terrorism.
- Exclusion and marginalization of people on the basis of parochial identities.
- Lack of transparency and accountability in the working of the State and its agencies.

How important are these matters? The answer is that while day to day life continues despite the fact that issues of this kind remain unsettled, they are very important indeed. It is very difficult -- perhaps impossible -- to have satisfactory processes of governance at other levels across the nation when so many key high level issues remain unsettled. It is notable that the comment that "we don't have the rule of law in this country" is often heard in India, and that many Indians comment about the confused state of the Indian society. It would seem clear that it will be necessary to make considerable progress on some of the main questions of governance in India before more orderly processes of public life can be firmly established.

### 3 Citizen's Charter

As public services are funded by citizens, either directly or indirectly, they have the right to expect a particular quality of service that is responsive to their needs and which is provided efficiently at a reasonable cost. The Citizen's Charter is a **written, voluntary declaration** by service providers that highlights the standards of service delivery that they must subscribe to, availability of choice for consumers, avenues for grievance redressal and other related information. It is a useful way of defining, with stakeholder involvement, the nature and quality of service delivery. In other words, a Citizen's Charter is an **expression of understanding** between the citizen and the service provider about the nature of services that the latter is obliged to provide.

The Citizen's Charter programme was first launched in 1991 in the U.K. as part of a series of initiatives aimed at **enhancing standards of service delivery** and **making governance more transparent and accountable**. This influenced several countries such as Belgium, France, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Spain, Portugal, India etc. to adopt similar measures.

The process of adopting Citizen's Charters in India began with a '**Conference of Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories**' held in 1996 on "**Effective and Responsive Administration**". This conference gave high priority to Citizen's Charters and was followed by the development of an "**Action Plan for Effective and Responsive Government**" at the similar conference in 1997. One of the major decisions taken at this forum was to introduce Citizen's Charters in the Departments of the Central and State Governments, especially those that had a large public interface such as the Railways, Telecom, and Public Distribution. Subsequently, many states have initiated citizen's charters as tools for enhancing standards of service delivery and fostering greater public accountability.

### 3.1 Salient Features of a Citizen's Charter

The salient features of a Citizen's Charter are:

1. Agreed and published standards for service delivery;
  2. Openness and information about service delivery;
  3. 'Choice' and Consultation with users;
  4. Courtesy and helpfulness in service delivery; and
  5. Provision of redressal of grievances.
- **Standards:** The Charter should lay out explicit standards of service delivery so that users understand what they can reasonably expect from service providers. These standards should be time-bound, relevant, accurate, measurable and specific. The actual performance vis-à-vis the standards adopted must be published and independently validated. The tendency among organizations to develop targets and standards based on their own convenience as opposed to the needs of the citizens must be avoided.
  - **Information and openness:** A key attribute of good service is the availability of relevant and concise information to the users at the right time and at the right place. The Charters should contain, in plain language, full and accurate information about services available, levels and quality of service to be expected, available channels for grievance redressal etc. Handbooks, guides, posters, websites are some of the channels through which information can be provided to citizens.
  - **Choice and consultation:** The Charter should provide choice of services to users wherever practicable. There should be regular and systematic consultation with the users of the service to fix service standards and to ascertain quality of service delivery.
  - **Courtesy and helpfulness:** The Charter can help embed a culture of courteous and helpful service from public servants. In addition, small initiatives such as 'name badges', 'May I help you' counters etc. can go a long way in building customer confidence.
  - **Grievance redressal and complaints handling:** There is a strong link between the provision of quality service and effective handling of complaints. Firstly, by facilitating and responding to complaints, the causes for complaint can be reduced. Secondly, by identifying 'trends' in complaints, the service provider can resolve systemic and recurring problems.

### 3.2 Developing and Implementing the Citizen's Charter

#### 3.2.1 How to develop the Charter

Before undertaking a Citizen's Charter initiative, an organization must have clarity on why it is developing a charter and how it can establish the prerequisites for implementation.

An organization should start by answering the following questions:

1. Do we need a Charter?
2. What are the objectives and the scope of a Charter for our organization?
3. Are we clear about who our stakeholders are and how to get them engaged in the Charter initiative?
4. How should we involve the staff and take into account their views on what the Charter should provide?
5. How do we establish service standards and how do we relate those standards to existing performance criteria of the organization?
6. What institutional infrastructure and governance arrangements are required to develop the Charter and are they in place?
7. What are the resource implications of developing a Charter – in terms of time and money (including payment of compensation to citizens for delivery failures)?

### 3.2.2 Identifying and engaging with stakeholders

This is one of the most important aspects of developing and implementing a Charter. Without it the Charter is just a statement of intent rather than a live, meaningful – if voluntary – contract between the state and the citizen. This is a time consuming and costly exercise and should be carefully planned.

A **stakeholder** is someone who has a stake or interest – direct or indirect in the service being delivered. There is likely to be a wide range of stakeholders:

1. **Users** – the citizen representatives of the users, user groups, citizen advocacy groups, consumer organisations, parents (in the case of schools), politicians, users themselves and past and potential users;
2. **Employees and employee representatives** – who are involved in delivering services set out in the Charter; and
3. **Suppliers** – those involved in providing parts of the service, e.g., suppliers for the stamped paper for certificates, software vendors who design an IT application etc.

Once the stakeholders are identified, the next step is to engage them in meaningful discussion. If there is a Nodal Officer in the organisation in charge of the Charter, that individual should be responsible for devising a '**stakeholder engagement plan**'. The stakeholders should be met at least twice during the period of developing the Charter, firstly to ask their views on what should be included, and secondly to show them the charter that has been developed as a result of their views. They should be engaged periodically thereafter, especially at the time of review of the charter, which should take place annually.

### 3.2.3 Establishing service standards

Service standards are effectively the backbone of the Charter. It is, therefore, extremely important that they are developed according to the following guidelines.

1. They must be developed in **consultation with citizens**. Otherwise the standards set may not relate to aspects of service that citizens prioritize, or as per expected levels;
2. They must be developed in collaboration with planning and performance departments so that other performance indicators are aligned with service standards published in the Charter; and
3. Standards must conform to TRAMS i.e. they must be **Time bound, Realistic, Achievable, Measurable and Specific**. For example, the standards should not say that officers will 'do their utmost,' a statement that is neither specific nor measurable.

### 3.2.4 Establishing a helpful institutional structure for the Charter

It is important to have a recognized focal point of responsibility within a department for the Charter. The evaluation of the Citizen's Charter initiative recommended the establishment of a **Nodal Officer** with clear reporting lines to senior management and with a brief to attend a government wide Advisory Group on the Charter. Similarly, better public relations efforts will help raise awareness of the Charter as well as enable customer satisfaction.

## 3.3 Implementing the Citizen's Charter

There are five broad areas involved in implementing the Charter. They are:

1. Generating awareness of the Charter;
2. Establishing citizen friendly devices to bring the Charter to life;
3. Establishing a complaint handling system;
4. Establishing feedback mechanisms; and
5. Evaluating and reviewing the Charter.

#### 1. How to generate awareness of the Charter?

Generating awareness of the Charter is, to a large extent, dependent on engaging with citizens to ascertain their needs and expectations. Regular dialogue with citizens' advocacy groups, community-based organizations (such as user groups) and citizens can generate quick awareness of the Charter. Wide availability of the Charter and their



prominent display can enhance awareness among citizens and users. The use of other forms of publicity such as audiovisual medium, print, open house meetings, internet etc. can be made based on the profile of the users.

A formal process of review of the level of awareness should be undertaken through occasional surveys about the Charter. This should lead to a review of strategies used to raise awareness of the Charters.

## **2. How to establish Citizen friendly devices to bring the Charter to life?**

If the development stage of the Charter has been carefully executed, the implementation phase can be easier. Some practical means that can accompany the implementation of Charters are:

- 'May I help you' counters;
- Biannual customer needs analysis in collaboration with user groups;
- Citizen Information Centre;
- Direct Helpline;
- Publication of Handbooks and Guides on the service provided;
- One-stop-shops where citizens can do all their transactions in one place; and
- Direct engagement with the customer, for example, telephoning or writing to them to seek their suggestions

## **3. How to introduce effective complaint management?**

- Designate a location in the office to receive complaints and make it accessible and visible to customers;
- Acknowledge complaints:
  - i. Personalise the response;
  - ii. Talk to customer, if possible;
  - iii. Use letters.
- Develop a system for record-keeping;
- Process, record, investigate and analyse complaints;
- Keep the customer informed of the progress; and
- Periodically analyse the complaints to identify trends.

## **4. How to get feedback?**

One of the most important prerequisites for getting feedback is to make it easy for the citizen to provide it. This includes, among other things, ensuring that officials are available to see the citizens at the times specified. The different routes for feedback should include a combination of the following:

- Over the counter at the service outlets;
- By toll free telephone number;
- Through regular post, e mail, fax and telephone;
- Via community and consumer organisations;
- Consultative committees; and
- Through periodic surveys.

## **5. How to Evaluate, monitor and review?**

It is critically important that the system for evaluating performance against Charter standards is congruent with the department's performance management system. That is, the standards in the charter should not be different from those of individual officials as per their job description or as set out in their departmental indicators. Other forms of evaluation, such as exit polls for user groups and use of surveys and feedback forms give a good indication of the quality of services.

Evaluation should take place regularly. This should be IT enabled so that data can be analysed in realtime and reports generated automatically on service failures. Self assessment should be practised with staff to assess how well they think they are delivering services. This can be compared against feedback from customers. External feedback can take a variety of forms:

- Face to face feedback with users visiting the office;
- Feedback forms provided to users at the counter;
- Using the services of voluntary organizations (for example, research organizations, consumer activists, universities, colleges, etc.);

- Media reports; and
- Charter Mark system – a formal way for the government to provide feedback through competitive benchmarking of Charters across different departments.

### 3.4 Key Lessons

The following pitfalls need to be avoided:

1. Since Citizen's Charters are likely to raise the aspirations of the users of the service, the departments should guard against the tendency to promise more than they can deliver. A realistic assessment of the capabilities of the service provider must be taken into account in drafting the Charter.
2. A critical review of the current systems and processes in the department should be undertaken to examine whether they are likely to have an adverse impact on the Charter.
3. Implementing the Charters without the staff owning them will defeat the purpose of the Charter. Motivating the staff and involving them in the preparation of the Charter are extremely important;
4. The Charters will remain merely a paper exercise of limited value if there is no consultation with the users. Departments should ensure user involvement at all stages of preparation and implementation of the Charter;
5. Independent audit of results is important after a period of implementation of the Charter.
6. Complex systems for lodging complaints or poor access to officers for redressal of grievances defeat the purpose and the spirit of the Charter;

The critical success factor in the entire Charter initiative is developing close relationships with stakeholders throughout the cycle of the charter, from inception and development of standards to raising awareness, to monitoring and reviewing, and determining appropriate compensation for redressal of grievances. At the same time, administrative commitment to change is imperative for sustaining the Charter initiative and enhancing service delivery standards.

## 4 Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability (T&A) have emerged over the past decade as key ways to address both developmental failures and democratic deficits. In the development and aid context, the argument is that through greater accountability, the leaky pipes of corruption and inefficiency will be repaired, aid and public spending will be channelled more effectively and development initiatives will produce greater and more visible results. For scholars and practitioners of democracy, following the twentieth century wave of democratization it is time for democracy to '**deliver the goods**', especially in terms of material outcomes, and **democratic accountability** can help it do so. For many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social movements, demanding and securing accountability is a path to people's empowerment, or at least to enhanced effectiveness in responding to the needs and voices of those they claim to serve.

Development, democracy and empowerment are obstructed, the argument goes, by a series of accountability failures. The traditional ways of delivering political and bureaucratic accountability, such as intra-government controls or elections, are increasingly found to be limited in scope. Administrative bottlenecks, weak incentives or corruption in state-centered political and bureaucratic accountability mechanisms restrict their effectiveness, particularly from the perspective of the poor and marginalized people who need accountability most, but who lack the means to work round such obstacles (World Bank, 2004).

In response to the inadequacy of traditional political and bureaucratic forms of accountability – also referred to as state-side, supply-side or institutional – an array of mechanisms and approaches has emerged in which citizens can hold states to account in ways other than elections and bureaucratic procedures. Supplanting or supplementing traditional forms, these '**demand-side**' initiatives are led by citizens and social actors who engage with more powerful actors located either within the state or in private sector entities contracted by the state.

Variously termed '**social**', '**citizen-led**' or '**demand-side**' accountability, this emerging field combines initiatives designed to improve transparency and access to information with other ways of holding to account the state and its agents (often, for example, private sector service providers). We refer to them collectively as **TAIs**. They have fast moved into the mainstream of development and aid, to the point where 'accountability' and 'transparency' are at risk of becoming



buzzwords, full of euphemism and normative resonance but emptied of their original meaning. The TAI field has evolved as multiple sub-fields with overlapping principles, origins and methods or approaches.

Defining accountability, Tisé states:

Broadly speaking, accountability refers to the process of holding actors responsible for their actions. More specifically, it is the concept that individuals, agencies and organisations (public, private and civil society) are held responsible for executing their powers according to a certain standard (whether set mutually or not).

By general consensus, accountability ideally involves both **answerability** – the responsibility of duty-bearers to provide information and justification about their actions – and **enforceability** – the possibility of penalties or consequences for failing to answer accountability claims. In fact, much of what we call accountability reflects only the weaker category, answerability. While citizen-led or public initiatives often involve ‘soft’ peer or reputational pressure, they rarely involve strong enforceability.

Conceptual debates on accountability and transparency range far and wide, but our focus here is on the newer and closely-related concepts of ‘citizen-led’ and ‘social’ accountability. Both are subject to some terminological looseness. Malena et al.’s definition of social accountability deliberately avoids too narrow a focus that might eclipse the vital roles that state actors and institutions can play in making citizen-led initiatives work:

Social accountability can be defined as *an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which it is ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability*. Mechanisms of social accountability can be initiated and supported by the state, citizens or both, but very often they are *demand-driven* and operate from the bottom-up.

Social accountability as a means to certain ends can be summarized by the following:

- ***Social accountability improves the quality of governance:*** Citizens’ disillusionment with the quality of governance moves them beyond electoral participation ‘toward engaging with bureaucrats and politicians in a more informed, organized, constructive and systematic manner’ - often referred to often as the ‘**democratic outcomes**’ case.
- ***Social accountability contributes to increased development effectiveness:*** Given the difficulty, inability or unwillingness of governments to deliver essential services, service delivery effectiveness and policy design are improved by citizens’ clearer articulation of their demands and more transparent public decision-making - often referred to as the ‘**developmental outcomes**’ case.
- ***Social accountability initiatives can lead to empowerment:*** By providing information on rights and soliciting feedback from poor people, ‘social accountability mechanisms provide a means to increase and aggregate the *voice* of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups’ - sometimes referred to as the ‘**empowerment case**’.

Other claims focus on **transparency**. **Access to information via transparency initiatives** is seen as a right, an end in itself and also a ‘**leverage right**’ capable of delivering further ends. Increased transparency in state decision-making can facilitate greater accountability to citizens. However, the right to information is not accountability in itself but is instrumental to it, and transparency does not automatically produce accountability but is a necessary but insufficient condition for it; certain types of transparency can generate certain types of accountability under certain conditions.

Finally, some of the claims made for TAIs focus on the relationships between **transparency, accountability and participation**. Some work suggests that these connections between transparency, accountability and participation might be correlations rather than solid causal links. A recent study of the outcomes of citizen engagement shows that participation does have an impact - usually but not always a positive one - on the measurable democratic and developmental outcomes arising from citizen engagement.

## 5 e-Governance

India is a nation that has a significant number of people who are below the minimal socio-economic benchmarks. This includes rural and urban poor, women in rural areas, street children, people belonging to historically disadvantaged castes and people living in less developed areas. The vulnerability of these sections of society has increased with globalization and this section is prone to become even more marginalized - economically and socially.

Successive governments have committed themselves to addressing these divides, but effective implementation of various economic development programmes aimed at individuals belonging to these sections of society has proved an elusive goal. Government of India (GoI) recognizes that **e-Governance**, in the context of developing countries, provides an excellent opportunity for improving governance. Used imaginatively, it is a trigger for introducing various **administrative reforms**. These changes could not only go a long way in improving the quality of life of these sections of society, but could actually provide them more equitable access to economic opportunities than ever before. In this context, the Government of India views e-Governance as a **strategic tool for transforming Governance and improving the quality of services** provided by the government to its people.

India's experience in **e-Governance / ICT initiatives** has demonstrated significant success in **improving accessibility, cutting down costs, reducing corruption, extending help and increased access to un-served groups**. Improved access to information has provided and social development opportunities, facilitated participation and communication in policy and decision-making processes and empowerment of the weakest groups. This has led to fostering a sense of ownership and building of social capital, which in turn, constitute a basis for **local revitalization**.

e-Governance is now mainly seen as a key element of the country's governance and administrative reform agenda. The Government of India aspires to provide:

- Governance that is easily understood by and accountable to the citizens, open to democratic involvement and scrutiny (an open and transparent government)
- Citizen-centric governance that will cover all of its services and respect everyone as individuals by providing personalized services.
- An effective government that delivers maximum value for taxpayers' money (quick and efficient services)

Hence the Government of India views e-Governance as a vehicle to initiate and sustain reforms by focusing on three broad areas:

### Governance

- Transparency
- People's participation
- Promotion of a democratic society

### Public services

- Efficient, cost-effective and responsive governance
- Convenient services to citizens and businesses
- Greater citizen access to public information
- Accountability in delivery of services to citizens

### Management

- Simplicity, efficiency and accountability
- Managing voluminous information and data effectively
- Information services
- Swift and secure communication

## 5.1 Applications of e-Governance

e-Governance is the use of information and communication technologies to support good governance. It has the following main applications:

### 5.1.1 Government To Citizen (G2C)

G2C will aim at connecting citizens to government by talking to citizens and supporting accountability, by listening to citizens and supporting democracy, and by improving public services. It will involve better services to the citizens through single point delivery mechanism and will involve areas like:

#### 5.1.1.1 E-Citizen

Under e-citizen integrated service centers are created. The purpose of these centers is to provide various customer services. It offers services like issue of Certificates, Ration Cards, Passports, Payment of Bills and taxes etc. These centers will become one-stop Government Shops for delivery of all services.

#### 5.1.1.2 E-Transport

The transport aspects that can be easily e-governed include:

Registration of motor vehicles, Issue of driving licenses, Issue of plying permissions (Permits), Tax and fee collection through Cash and Bank Challans and Control of Pollution.

#### 5.1.1.3 E-Medicine

It involves linking of various hospitals in different parts of the country, thus providing better medical services to the citizen.

#### 5.1.1.4 E-Education

E-Education constitutes various initiatives of educating the citizen and the Government with the various Information technologies.

#### 5.1.1.5 E-Registration

E-Governing the registration and transfer of the properties and stamp duty to be paid thereon brings substantial reduction of paper work and reduces the duplicating of entries. Further the transparency in work increases and the overall time of process registration reduces.

*The spirit behind G2C services encompass all the services that the Government is delivering to its citizens.*

#### Essentials for achievement:

- **Information for All:** Keeping the citizen informed, providing him with details of Government activities. The citizen will act as a watch dog to the Government if information is available to him. Certain interest groups like the journalists, opposition will always keep an eye on the expenditure of the Government, status of which will be available on-line. The same will bring accountability amongst Civil Servants. The rationale is to increase the pressure on staff to perform well and to improve public understanding of the government.
- **Citizen Feedback:** Citizen Feedback is a must for improving the Government Services. Unless the Government listens to its citizens, it will not be able to find out what he wants. Thus it is an effort to make the public sector decision responsive to citizens' view or needs.
- **Improving services:** World's best companies have done it, Indian companies have copied them, Governments abroad have followed the suit, why can't the Indian Government. The aim should be improving the services delivered to

citizens on dimensions such as speed, quality, reliability, convenience and cost. Information Technology will have a big role to play in the same; the services can be delivered from 24-hour one-stop Government shops.

## 5.1.2 Consumer To Government (C2G)

C2G mainly constitutes the areas where the citizen interacts with the Government. It includes areas like election when citizens vote for the Government; Census where he provides information about himself to the Government; taxation where he is paying taxes to the Government.

### 5.1.2.1 E-Democracy

The e-democracy is an effort to change the role of citizen from passive information giving to active citizen involvement. In an e-democracy the Government informs the citizen, represents the citizen, encourages the citizen to vote, consults the citizen and engages the citizen in the Governance. Taking the citizens input about the various government policies by organizing an e-debate will further strengthen the e-democracy. The concept of e-debate is similar to chat over the Internet, wherein not only the citizens but also the political leaders contesting the elections participate. The citizens give their feedback about the various policies of the parties and particularly the manifesto of the party. The initiative will further strengthen the process by *enhancing* the representative role, improving accessibility of citizens to their elected members and developing the capacity of elected representatives to engage in e-government. Elected members will also be provided with access to the local authority's Intranet and e-mail systems so that they become available online for decision making and people can easily access them.

#### Essentials for achievement:

- **Citizen Participation:** For achievement of the above initiative the citizen has to participate in the Government Business and therefore spreading awareness becomes the responsibility of the State. The elections should not be fought on the principle of what one party or other has to offer. But they should be fought on the principle of what the citizens require. Market research programs should be carried out using the Information Systems to determine the needs of the citizens. GIS could be used as a tool to find out potential gaps in the services offered.

## 5.1.3 Government To Government (G2G)

This can also be referred as *e-Administration*. It involves improving government processes by cutting costs, managing performance, making strategic connections within government, and creating empowerment. It involves networking all Government offices so as to produce synergy among them. The major areas are:

### 5.1.3.1 E-Secretariat

Secretariat which is the seat of power has a lot of valuable information regarding the functioning of the State. The cross-linking of various departments and exchange of information amongst various components simplifies the process of Governance.

### 5.1.3.2 E-Police

E-Police will help to built citizen confidence. There will be two databases. One of police personnel and the other of criminals. The database of personnel will have the records of their current and previous postings. This will help to track policemen specialized in certain geographical regions and skills. For example, we want to look for a forensic expert. The database within seconds gives the list of all forensic experts. The same database will keep a track of their details like service record, family background etc which will also be helpful in intelligent posting and promotion of personnel. The second database will be of criminals. This database has to be upgraded to national database for its total utility. By just typing the name of a criminal a police officer will be able to know the details of his past activities, including his modus operandi and the area of operation. Further a database like this will help tap the criminals easily as all the police stations

will have simultaneous access to their record. The module also includes G2C activities like online filing of FIR's, finding the case status of an FIR etc. Creating a database of Lost and Found can assist further lost and found of valuables and individuals.

### 5.1.3.3 E-Court

The pending court cases in India have brought the legal system to a halt. Not only are the consumers asking for changes in the administration, but also the system will collapse if it continues in this manner. IT can transform the system and bring in the court cases to a level of zero dependency. Creating a database of cases can do the same. In fact such a system will help to avoid all the appeals to High Courts and Supreme Court, for the Judges can consider the appeals from an intranet wherein the case remains in the same district court but the Higher Court gives their decision online based on the recorded facts of the case. Such a step will not only help the citizens but will also reduce the backlog of cases. Further the use of IT in the areas like recording of court proceedings, high resolution remote video to identify fraudulent documents, live fingerprints scanning and verification, remote probation monitoring, electronic entry of reports and paper work will further speed up the court proceedings.

### 5.1.3.4 State Wide Networks

This involves linking all the departments of the Government with various district headquarters and the state capital, facilitating the flow of information between the various state departments and its constituents. Here various blocks are linked to district Headquarters, district headquarters to State Headquarters and State Headquarters to the National Capital.

#### Essentials for achievement:

- **Cutting Expenditure:** With proper process control the input output ratio can be improved. The same can be achieved by cutting financial time costs. Cutting Government expenditure will lead to saving and accountability.
- **Organize around outcomes, not tasks.** This principle suggests that a single person should perform all the steps in a process and that the person's job be designed around the outcome or objective rather than a single task. Say, for example, a citizen applies for a permit – it becomes the duty of the receiving authority that the citizen gets the same, rather than moving around to get it done.
- **Managing process performance:** planning, monitoring and controlling the performance of process resources (human, financial and other). Informatisation supports this by providing information about process performance and performance standards. The rationale is to make more efficient or effective use of process resources.
- **Establish a network:** Treat geographically dispersed resources as though they were centralized. Government can use databases, telecommunications networks, and standardized processing systems to get the benefits of scale and coordination, while maintaining the benefits of flexibility and service. Strategic connections in Government should be established like central-to-local, ministry-to-ministry, executive-to-legislature, and decision maker-to-data store.
- **Delegate and Empower:** Put the decision point where the work is performed, and build control into the process. Thus, for overall Government Process Reengineering (GPR) to succeed the decision making should pass on to the people who do the actual work, from the people who are just monitoring it. People engaged in actual activities should be empowered to make decisions at the required focal point and hence to delegate such activities on their own so that the process itself can have built in controls. This will not only speed up the process but will cut cost as well.

## 5.1.4 Government To Business (G2B)

### 5.1.4.1 E-Taxation

This constitutes the various services that a business house needs to get from the Government, which includes getting licenses etc. In a similar scenario, it can also flow from a business house to the Government as in the case of procurements, from such business houses by the Government. This will become a B2G service.

Essentials for achievement:

- **Standards:** Standards for Electronic Transactions or E-Commerce needs to be built. The standards will also include standards on content etc.
- **Payment Mechanism:** A secure payment mechanism needs to be built to enable payments over the electronic medium.
- **PKI:** PKI or Public key Infrastructure is required for secure and authentic transactions.

## 5.1.5 Government To NGO (G2N)

### 5.1.5.1 E-Society

Building interactions beyond the boundaries of government by developing communities, building government partnerships and civil society. It involves building various associations or interest groups that will ensure the betterment of the society. Such initiatives deal particularly with the relationship between government and citizens: either as voters/stakeholders from whom the public sector derives its legitimacy, or as customers who consume public services.

Essentials for Achievement:

- **Publishing:** Delivering data to citizens. This involves open access to Government Information. The citizen has a right over Government information and its activities.
- **Interaction:** Delivering data to citizens and receiving data from citizens. This involves taking feedback from the citizens and interacting with the interest groups.

## 5.2 Priorities and Objectives

For e-governance to succeed in India 'e-readiness' must be built. This means strengthening infrastructural inadequacies, reducing the barriers to e-governance, and strengthening the drivers to e-Governance. The priority is therefore to build e-readiness in seven key areas:

- Infrastructure
- Institutions
- Laws
- Leadership and commitment
- Human capacities
- Technology
- Data systems

The specific objectives are:

- To develop the high-level awareness and commitment that will carry forward e-governance for development.
- To develop the capacities necessary to address e-governance strategically.
- To develop the human and data infrastructure necessary for e-governance.
- To implement pilot projects.



## 5.3 Models and Successes

Recognizing that e-Governance is playing an increasingly important role in modern governance, various agencies of the Government and civil society organizations have taken a large number of initiatives across the country. Indicated below are some of the key models implemented in the country across some of the important citizen/business related departments

### 5.3.1 Customs and Excise (Government of India)

- 98% of export and 90-95% of import documentation computerized.
- Electronic filing through ICEGATE.
- Service Tax returns electronically processed

### 5.3.2 Indian Railways (Government of India)

- Anywhere to Anywhere reservation from Anywhere.
- Electronic Booking of tickets.
- Online Information of Railway reservation on Internet.

### 5.3.3 Postal Department (Government of India)

- Direct e-credit of Monthly Income Scheme returns into the investors accounts
- Dematerialization of Savings Certificate (NSC) and Vikas Patras (KVP), offering full portability

### 5.3.4 Passport / Visa (Government of India)

- 100% passport information computerized.
- All 33 Regional Passport Offices covered.
- Machine readable passports available.

### 5.3.5 AP Online (State Government of Andhra Pradesh)

An Integrated Citizen Services Portal providing citizen centric services such as: Birth/Death Certificates, Property Registration, Driver's License, Govt. Applications & Forms, Payment of taxes / utility bills etc.

### 5.3.6 Bhoomi – Automation of Land Records (State Government of Karnataka)

Bhoomi (meaning land) is the project of on-line delivery and management of land records. It provides computerized Record of Rights Tenancy & Crops (RTC) - needed by farmer to obtain bank loans, settle land disputes etc. It has also ensured increased transparency and reliability, significant reduction in corruption, exploitation and oppression of farmers. This project has benefited more than 20 million rural land records covering 6.7 million farmers.

### 5.3.7 CARD – Registration Project (State Government of Andhra Pradesh)

Computer Aided Administration of Registration Department (CARD) impacting more than 10 million citizens. The system ensures transparency in valuation of property and efficient document management system. The estimated saving of 70 million man-hours of citizen time valued at US\$ 35 mil (investment in CARD - US\$ 6million). Similar initiatives in other states like SARITA (State Government of Maharashtra), STAR (State Government of Tamil Nadu), etc. have further built upon this initiative.

### 5.3.8 Gyandoot: Intranet in Tribal District of Dhar (State Government of Madhya Pradesh)

This project offers e-governance services including online registration of applications, rural e-mail facility, village auction site etc. It also provides services such as Information on Mandi (farm products market) rates, On-line public grievance redressal, caste & income certificates and Rural Market (Gaon ka Bazaar).

### 5.3.9 LOKMITRA (State Government of Himachal Pradesh)

- Offers e-governance services:
  - Online registration of applications,
  - Rural e-mail facility, village auction site etc.
- Key services provided to citizens
  - Information on Mandi (farm products market) rates
  - On-line public grievance redressal
  - Sending and receiving information regarding land records, income certificates, caste certificates and other official documents.
  - Market rates of vegetables, fruits and other items

### 5.3.10 e-Mitra - Integrated Citizen Services Center/ e-Kiosks (State Government of Rajasthan)

- Implemented using a PPP (Public Private Partnership) model
- Private partner paid by the government department / agency
- G2C services like:
  - Payment of electricity, water, telephone bills
  - Payment of taxes
  - Ticket Reservations
  - Filing of Passport applications
  - Registration of birth/death
  - Payment by cash/cheque/ credit card

The above mentioned models of e-Governance are only illustrative. Many of the State Governments have successfully implemented several such initiatives. This has positively impacted the quality of life of citizens. Hence e-Governance affords an excellent opportunity for India to radically improve the quality of governance and thereby:

- Allow for two-way communication between government and citizens not only for service delivery but also to receive opinions of citizens on policies and government performance
- Provide greater access to excluded groups, who have few opportunities to interact with government and benefit from its services and schemes
- Include all sections of the society in the mainstream of development
- Enabling rural and traditionally marginalized segments of the population to gain fast and convenient access to services in their own neighbourhoods.

## 5.4 Challenges and Limitations

### 5.4.1 Funding

Funding is the foremost issue in e-Governance initiatives. The projects that are part of the e-governance initiatives need to be funded either through the Government sector or through the private sector. For the private sector to step into the funding activity their commercial interests needs to be ensured. The projects can be built either on BOO (Built Own Operate) or BOOT (Built Own Operate Transfer) basis. Also the Government interest of Value Addition in services also needs to be taken care of while transferring the services to private sector. Advertising, sharing of Government information etc could be a few revenue generators for the Government.

### **5.4.2 Management of Change**

The delivery of Government services through the electronic media including EDI, Internet and other IT based technologies would necessitate procedural and legal changes in the decision and delivery making processes. It demands fundamental changes in Government decision management. The employees need to be delegated more authority. De-layering of the decision-making levels leads to re-engineering and appropriate sizing of the decision-making machinery. These changes need not only be accepted by the Government and citizens but also be accepted by various interests groups like Employees unions. Under such circumstances bringing in a change will involve changing the mindsets of the people, and a complete Reengineering process needs to be carried out for the same. This will involve training of the personnel at all levels, more so, at the lower rung of Government management organizations. There will also be a loss of vested interests and power amongst the legislature and the executive, which may lead, to resistance to change.

### **5.4.3 Privacy**

The privacy of the citizen also needs to be ensured while addressing the issues. Whenever a citizen gets into any transaction with a Government agency, he shells out lot of personal information, which can be misused by the private sector. Thus, the citizen should be ensured that the information flow would pass through reliable channels and seamless network.

### **5.4.4 Authentication**

Secured ways of transactions for the Government services are another issue of concern. The identity of citizens requesting services needs to be verified before they access or use the services. Here digital signature will play an important role in delivery of such services. But the infrastructure needed to support them is very expensive and requires constant maintenance. Hence a pertinent need still survives, compelling the authorities to ensure the authenticity in their transactions thereby gaining absolute trust and confidence of the citizen.

### **5.4.5 Interoperability**

A major design issue for integrated service delivery sites is, how to capture data in a Web-based form and transfer it to an agency's systems for processing and sharing that information in a common format. Infact the interoperation of various state Governments, the various ministries within a state Government is a critical issue. Further how the various islands of automation will be brought together and built into one is another key issue of e-Governance.

### **5.4.6 Delivery of services**

The ability of citizens to access these services is another major issue. Since the penetration of PCs and Internet is very low in the country, some framework needs to be worked out for delivery of the e-Services that would be accessible to the poorest of the poor. What will be the Government's network to deliver those services? Could we have something like a single stop shop of the Government? A proposed mechanism is delivery of the same through the Government Post Offices, for they already have the brick and mortar support and the most extensive network in the nation.

### **5.4.7 Standardization**

Defining the standards for the various Government services is another issue that needs to be addressed. The standards need to be worked out not only for the technologies involved but also for issues like naming of websites to creating E-Mail addresses.

### **5.4.8 Technology Issues**

A number of organizations, both in the Centre and the States, have taken commendable initiatives to develop hardware and software platforms to address the challenges offered by e-Governance. At the central level in particular, the C-DAC, CMC and a number of others are noteworthy. The e-Governance initiative would have to address these Technology Issues/Objectives by identifying the appropriate hardware platforms and software application packages for cost-effective delivery of public services. This knowledge repository should be widely available through appropriate

Demo- Mechanisms. Offering a basket of these models to the State departments, both in the Center and the State, could be suitably customized as per location and work specific requirements.

#### 5.4.9 Use of local language

The access of information must be permitted in the language most comfortable to the public user, generally the local language. There do already exist technologies such as GIST and language software by which transliteration from English into other languages can be made.

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