# Public Sector Transformation and Innovation

How the Roadmap came to be

With the growing certainty that COVID-19 is here to stay, the ICT Division of the Government of Bangladesh in collaboration with the Aspire to Innovate (a2i) Programme, DataSense @ iSocial, Innovision, and Light Castle Partners] has developed a roadmap to fight the pandemic and ensuing crisis and to find innovative ways to flourish in the 'new normal'. Public sector transformation and innovation is one of key agenda of this roadmap.

Why Public Sector Transformation

The Eighth Five Year Plan [8FYP] emphasizes on strengthening public administration, public institutions and governance and first chapter of the plan is on this issue. However, the most prominent cross-country comparison of progress in institutional performance and governance is "World Governance Indicators". Figure1 shows that Bangladesh's relative position has only moderately improved in three indicators – namely, 'Control of Corruption', 'Rule of Law' and 'Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism' – while remaining less than par in other key areas such as 'Voice and Accountability', 'Government Effectiveness' and 'Regulatory Quality'.

Figure 1. Bangladesh in The Worldwide Governance Indicators
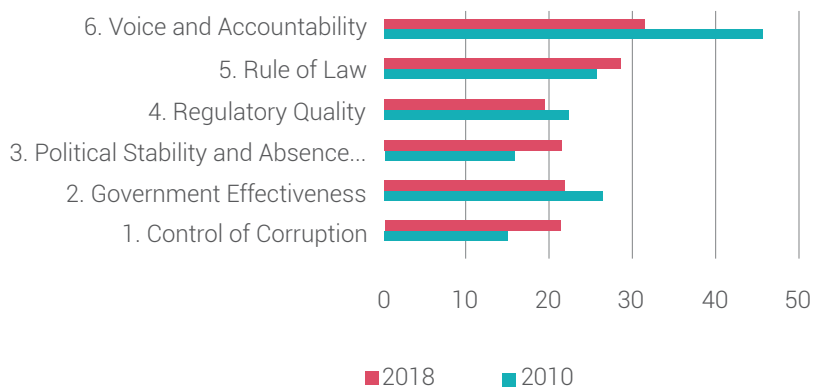
Source: WGI, World Bank, 2019 in GED [2020]]
The government understands that the governance and the institutional structures of UMIC and HIC are vastly different from those found in low income and LMIC countries [GED, 2020, pg. 4].

What is Already Achieved

Since the launch of 'Digital Bangladesh' in 2009, Bangladesh has become a global example of digital transformation of public services. The Government has made all necessary information of the Ministries and other relevant notifications available for public through various websites. In addition, the Government has trained more than 50,000 public officials to maintain these websites and update data and information regularly. The Government also introduced a 'national portal' containing information from all the Ministries, while e-Service centres were introduced at the District level enabling the Districts to share information online. Moreover, a National Data Centre facilitating the dissemination of citizens' National Identification (NID) Cards and voter lists has been established and made operational.

The Government has also established the National ICT Infra-Network for Bangladesh Government Phase II, which implemented 800 video conferencing systems at different Ministries, Departments and Upazila offices with the aim to ensure 10Gbps capacity network at the Upazila levels and 100 Gbps capacity networks at the District levels. The key public institutions such as the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) has introduced the system of online registration and work permits for foreign nationals and investors, while the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has introduced a system allowing the filing of tax returns online, using an online tax calculator. The Government has also launched "Shebakunjo" – a single access point that will provide about 400 services from 36 directories

The government's e-governance initiative comprises 5 components i.e., Service Process Simplification (SPS), 'less paper office,' government services portal, land information services, and government forms portal. The SPS aims to simplify processes involved in public service delivery and reduce the time required to deliver them. A total of 424 public services were included in this programme till early 2020. The government is committed to strengthening e-governance further by including more services under SPS.

Constraints

The transformative aspiration articulated in perspective plan 2041 (PP2041) has become more challenging due to the Covid-19 global pandemic [GED,2020]. The challenges, inter alia, Bangladesh is going to face are: improving administrative capacity of public institutions, ensuring participation, accountability and transparency in decision-making, commitment to transparency and Participation of citizens, and addressing Corruption and grievance of citizens. However, the issue of 'Data Availability' requires special mention. There is serious scarcity of data; data is not also made available in a timely fashion, websites are not regularly updated and not user friendly.

Action Agenda

Taking learnings from national and global best practices and to make the government more resource-efficient and responsive to citizens' need, the following top five action agenda have been identified.

Title	Effective and Scaled up 2000+ citizen centred services	Paperless Government	Institutionalization of innovation culture	Citizen's participation in governance	Data-driven policy framework:
Why (To address :)	Basic driver for digital innovation of government was reducing time, cost and hassle of accessing government services. COVID-19 also reinforced the needs for digitization of services as it disrupted access to government services.	Reduction of time in decision making cycle thus accelerating implementation of development plans. Reduction of corruption. Increase transparency and accountability. Efficient management of government documents and data. Facilitating data-driven governance.	Modernization of government for embracing challenges of becoming middle income country. Promotion of indigenous solution for unique challenges of Bangladesh governance system.	Realization of principle of inclusion. Public accountability to citizen. Implementation of citizen-centered design of the government.	Ensuring participation of citizens/civil society/think tanks in policy support. Ensuring efficient and corruption-free utilization of scarce resources. Identification of right solution for each problem.
What	Digital service platform will be developed for connecting individual service for interoperability. All services will be integrated with digital payment system. One-ticket platform and digital government tracker will be created. Web-based services, mobile app-based services, digital centers and helpline 333 will be brought under one framework. Number of digital centres will be increased to 9,000.	Expansion of e-Nothi across all government offices by 2021. Introduction of advanced digital literacy of all government officials. Universal access to mobile digital device for the government. officials. Launching of KPI for each institution and official. Integration of national planning documents, APA and KPI. Completion of digital infrastructure.	Appointment of Innovation team in each line ministry, division and department. Institutionalization of system of recognition of innovation. Introduction of system of reward and reprimand. Allocation of adequate financial resource.	Development of national grievance redressal platform Ensuring Citizen's access to government data. Decentralization of government and budget system. District level planning and budgeting.	Strengthening open government data initiative with retrievable format. Intelligent Creation of Analytics Dashboards for specific category of issues to build a culture of using data in government decision making process
Lead Agency	Cabinet Division	Cabinet Division	Cabinet Division	Cabinet Division	MOP
Actors	MOPA and all line ministries, division, departments, local government institutions	MOPA/All line ministries and agencies.	MOPA/All line ministries and agencies.	MOPA/MOP/All line ministries and agencies.	Cabinet Division/BBS/ MOF/All line ministries
Coordinator	ICT Division	ICT Division	ICT Division	ICT Division	ICT Division
Facilitator	a2i	a2i	a2i	a2i	a2i
Partners	MFS/DFS partners (e.g.Nogod, bKash), BTRC, AMOTOB/Mobile operators/e-CAB/BoP	UNDP/Government of Estonia/World Bank	ICT Industry/UNDP/Innovation fostering institutions	ICT Industry/UNDP	Development partners/ Academia/ Think Tanks
Financing and modality	Line Ministries/PPP	MOF/World Bank	MOF/UNDP	MOF/World Bank/ DFID/EU	MOF/World Bank/EU