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Abbreviations

GIC – Government Information Center

DS – Divisional Secretariat

ICTA – Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

WPDMT - Western Province Department of Motor Traffic

SLIDA – Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration

eGovernment Policy

Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy is a major factor that can lead to reduce the digital divide of a country. Those policies bring in the common approaches for decreasing the digital division and realizing the development objectives. Similarly eGovernment policies introduce the basic actions and procedures for achieving the objectives of eGovernment which signifies the effective use of ICT by the government for carrying out its main functions.

The ICT Policies and Procedures for Government which is also referred to as the eGovernment Policy is a result of the hard work of “eGovernment Policy Group” which worked for over 5 years to produce this policy document. The committee which was represented by ICT experts from the public sector, private sector and academia conducted meetings, workshops and conferences since 2004 for drafting the eGovernment Policy. After many rounds of amendments the policy document was submitted for the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers which was granted on 2009-12-22.

This booklet contains two parts. The first section provides a brief introduction to the concepts of eGovernment. The second part covers the eGovernment Policy .

The most of Sri Lankan government organizations are still in primitive stages of eGovernment. The top management and Chief Innovations Officers of those organizations are inexperienced in eGovernment activities. Hence the first part of the booklet is compiled to provide those officers a basic understanding on eGovernment.

The eGovernment Policy which is given in the second part has been approved by the Cabinet of Ministers to be implemented by all ministries, departments, government corporations and statutory boards. The valid period of this policy is 3 years. This policy which has been drafted considering the current status of Sri Lankan government sector, provides guidance for starting eGovernment activities. Though the policy contains the directions for building high level eGovernment systems, those guidelines are not comprehensive. Therefore this policy needs to be amended to meet the requirements of today and updated at least annually.

Approval of the policy alone would not help to achieve its objectives. Hence it is necessary to implement the eGovernment Policy across the government and ensure the full compliance for achieving the objectives of the policy. Therefore it is intended to conduct awareness conferences for building the awareness on eGovernment Policy, assist government organizations to be compliant to the eGovernment Policy, review the policy compliance of each organization (every 6 months) and publish the results as the eGovernment Policy readiness index of those organizations. Accordingly we should strive to increase the effectiveness of the public sector and provide more citizen centric services through the compliance to the eGovernment Policy before the end of the eGovernment Policy implementation period which ends by December 2012.

Part One

1. Introduction to eGovernment

eGovernment is the methodology for using ICT for carrying out the main functions of the government such as providing products and services to the citizens, maintaining law and order, foreign affairs, defense, and welfare more effectively.

eGovernment helps mainly to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector and provide the citizen services in a more citizen friendly and convenient manner. In order to implement eGovernment successfully, the officers who are in charge of implementing eGovernment should possess the knowledge and capabilities in a number of areas. Some of such key areas are ICT, management of ICT, concepts of eGovernment, the knowledge and experience in the public sector. Since at least a minimum level of knowledge in eGovernment is necessary for implementing eGovernment policies, this section attempts to provide an introduction to eGovernment.

2. Definitions of eGovernment

Three definitions which are mainly being used for eGovernment are given below.

- A. eGovernment is about a process of reform in the way governments work, share information and deliver services to external and internal clients - Subash Batnagar, eGovernment, From visions to Implementation – 2004
- B. eGovernment refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government - World Bank 2008
- C. eGovernment as the continuous optimization of service delivery, constituency participation, and governance by transforming internal and external relationships through technology, the Internet, and new media - Gartner Group 3008

Accordingly eGovernment can be summarized as

- 1) use of ICT and new social media
- 2) for increasing the participation of clients (citizens and business)
- 3) to provide better services to clients
- 4) to create good governance and
- 5) to create a better relationship with clients

3. Objectives of eGovernment

The objectives of eGovernment are described by examining the real life examples as given below.

- (1). Provide more convenient and better services to citizens

Example:- eMotor Revenue License Project (Sri Lanka)

Few years back, it was a daunting task for a vehicle owner to obtain the annual vehicle revenue license. In order to obtain the vehicle revenue license, the citizens should have to go to the particular Divisional Secretariat (DS) where the vehicle is registered at, fill in 2 application forms and wait for 3-4 hours until license is issued. The eGovernment Unit of SLIDA introduced an excellent eGovernment solution in 2005 which removed the necessity of filling application forms and made it possible to obtain the license in 2-3 minutes. The Western Provincial Department of Motor Traffic (WPDMT) improved this service by providing a drive-in service where citizens can obtain the license while sitting in their vehicles. This service was further improved by WPDMT together with Information and Communication Technology Agency where the online solution was enabled to apply for the license online, pay the license fees online and receive the license by post. It has also been made possible to obtain the license from any DS in the Western Province. Moreover, this system which alerts the citizens about the expiry date of the license through email and SMS and delivers the license to citizens' door step has been able to provide a very user friendly and efficient service to the citizens.

(2). Participation of clients

Example:- Informing the shortcomings of the services provided by local government authorities and submission of grievances (United Kingdom and Sri Lanka)

The citizens of United Kingdom can inform the relevant local government authorities about the shortcomings of street lighting, delivery of mail, water supply through www.neighbourhoodfixit.com and get those issues addressed. Similar solutions deployed in many countries not only allow citizens to inform the shortfalls but also provide a platform to submit their proposals to improve the services.

Sri Lankans also can submit their grievances with regards to government services through the website of the Government Information Center (www.gic.gov.lk) submission. The grievances submitted through this website are attended to by the relevant officers appointed by each organization.

(3). Use of Social Media for providing better services

Example:- Use of social media for improving the services and the relationship with clients (Fairfax County of USA)

Fairfax County office of USA provides many ways for its constituents to submit their complaints and receive information by using its own website and social media. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/complaints) The citizens can submit all grievances and complaints to the twitter account of Fairfax county. (<http://twitter.com/fairfaxcounty>) The county office has assigned dedicated officers to monitor the activities of its twitter account, to attend to and respond to the complaints through twitter. The Fairfax county also uses You Tube (<http://www.youtube.com/fairfaxcountygov>) and facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty>) also for the same purpose.

ICTA also has started using the social media for improving the relationship with its clients. It uses social media such as facebook <http://www.facebook.com/ictasrilanka>, You Tube and twitter https://twitter.com/icta_lk for this purpose.

(4). Better relationships with clients

The above example on how Fairfax county office is working through many social media channels to improve the relationship with its clients is a very good example for this category.

The Government Information Center-1919 which has been established to provide information on government services has been able to build a very healthy relationship with its clients. GIC which is providing its services in all 3 languages on 7 days x 12 hour basis has managed to build a healthy relationship with citizens and business through its courteous approach and understanding on its service levels. GIC whose 98% clients are satisfied with its service levels and

quality of service has extended its services through its website (www.gic.gov.lk) and it has won international awards such as Government Technology Awards 2007 and World Summit Awards 2009 for its excellent service.

(5). Good governance

(A) Efficiency and Effectiveness

Example: 1. Birth, Marriage and Death Certificate Digitalization (BMD) Project (Sri Lanka)

The objectives of Good Governance which can be achieved through eGovernment are efficiency and effectiveness. The BMD project which was implemented in Colombo District is an excellent example for this. Though it used to take days, weeks and months to obtain a copy of above mentioned certificates, now it only takes less than an hour for obtaining such copies for residence in Colombo District. (The average time taken for obtaining a copy of the certificate is 20 minutes). Moreover Thimbirigasyaya DS which could only issue maximum 500 copies of certificates a day can now issue over 1,000 copies conveniently by using the same human resources.

Example: 2. eHuman Resource Management (eHRM) Project (Sri Lanka)

The Combined Services Division of the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs manages over 40,000 cadre who are annually transferred. On average 8,000 transfer applications are received annually and in order to finalize the transfers, the ministry used a team of 30 members of staff including 10 human resource managers for a period of 4 months. 80 packets of stationary were used to print the transfer results. Once the new eHRM solution was introduced, the transfer activities were completed in 2 weeks and the stationary requirement was reduced to 2 packets of paper. This is an excellent solution which helped to increase the efficiency by 90%. This solution has also been very effective as it managed to achieve the targets accurately in a very short time.

(B) Transparency

Example:- CRISTAL – providing information to citizens on public funds (Argentina)

The objective of this project was to provide information with regards to public funds through Internet. This reveals how funds are allocated for each programme project and how funds are spent. CRISTAL project was initiated to fulfill a legal requirement. Legally the Argentinian government is required to provide information to any citizen or organization on how public funds are utilized. The information should be provided in detail as described below.

- The government budget information at granular level
- Government purchase orders and contracts
- Financial and employment information on permanent and contractual employees
- Public debt (including guarantee, conditions, interest rates etc) information
- Arrears in tax and customs in relation to Argentinian companies and citizens
- Regulations relevant to provision of government services
- Any other information which is required for reviewing the financial aspects of government by the community

One of the main objectives of CRISTAL is to create a community who are knowledgeable in public finance aspects and who can pressurize the members of parliament for good governance. Though this website has been developed for the use of general public, the journalists who are giving a wider publicity for the information published in CRISTAL have become a special user group by contributing to create a high transparency in public finance.

(C) Transparency and responsibility

Example:- Increased openness in local governance (South Korea)

The top management of Seoul Municipality were worried in late 1990s that the applications for permits are taking long time to process and the corruption rate was going up. In order to address this situation the Municipal Government of Seoul, South Korea, crafted the OPEN system (On line Procedures Enhancement for Civil Applications) to target corruption. The system publishes a variety of information related to the services, permits and licenses issued by the local government. The status of an application can be tracked by the applicant on a web site. The system was recognized as a "Good Practice" at the 9th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Durban, South Africa in 1999. A total of 83 corrupt practices by civil servants were reported by the investigation organizations in 1998. OPEN system issues a corruption index for each activity of the Municipality. A survey by the Audit and Inspection Division of those seeking services from the city government showed that favorable opinions about the kindness of civil servants increased significantly from 54.8% in December 1998 to 71.2% in June 1999.

(D) Inclusion and participation

Example:- Neighbourhood empowerment through inclusion and participation (United Kingdom)

Harringay On line (<http://www.harringayonline.com/>) is a neighborhood network working to strengthen the neighborhood of Harringay in the north London Borough of Harringay through e-inclusion and e-participation. Through social networking technology Harringay On line provides a virtual high street cafe-cum-village hall, which blends web-based and real world neighborhood interactions to build stronger more empowered communities.

Harringay On line is focused on achieving four main outcomes:

- Building a sense of place in a neighborhood by creating a forum where participation of all sections of the community are ensured – an understanding and appreciation of the neighborhood to encourage a feeling of belonging and regarding a place as home.
- Building social capital in the neighborhood – building networks, norms and trust that enable people to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives
- Empowering local people to take actions to shape their neighborhood – working to improve local people's ability to influence local decisions and affect local circumstances
- Engaging people in local democratic processes.

Ultimately the goal of the project is to increase the well-being levels of people in neighborhood through participation and inclusion. This project has been able to bring in local groups to work for the betterment of the community. Cohesiveness of the community has been increased to an great extent through this proect.

4. Stakeholder groups of eGovernment and benefits to them

There are four types of eGovernment services based on the categories of stakeholders.

(1). Government to Citizen services (G2C)

The majority of eGovernment services fall in to this category.

Examples:- On line checking of account balance of Employee Provident Fund, Checking Train schedules and Booking train seats, Obtaining vehicle revenue license online

Benefits to citizens;

- Better life standards
- Convenient access to government services and information
- Multiple service channels
- Less time spent for obtaining services
- High transparency in public finance and decision making
- Less corruption
- Ability for citizens to plan and professionally carry out their work due to assurance and certainty of obtaining government services timely and accurately

(2). Government to Business services (G2B)

Examples:- eProcurement, eCompany Registry, Tax On line and GIC

The benefits to Business

- Ability to carry out business fast with government
- Convenience in dealing with government
- Government contribution to develop ICT sector

(3). Government to Employees services (G2E)

Example:- Employee Provident Fund services, eHuman Resource Mangement, e-Pensions

Benefits to employees:

- Transparency in internal activities of government organizations
- Convenience due to automated pay roll, attendance
- Convenience in workplace
- Higher acceptance

(4). Government to Government services– (G2G)

Examples:-

1. email and video conference for convenient communication
2. Integrated financial management systems
3. Integrated human resource management systems

Benefits to government organizations:

- Better regulation for government organizations
- Higher transparency
- Higher efficiency and effectiveness
- Less corruption
- Speedy communication facilities
- Use of government information for betterment of the government

5. Evolution of eGovernment

During last 20 years the work related to automation of public sector has evolved as eGovernment. Various eGovernment projects exist in different eGovernment maturity stages. eGovernment projects and generally all countries have been categorized by various maturity models based on the eGovernment maturity level of those countries. “eGovernment Readiness Index” prepared by United Nations and “Network Readiness Index” compiled by the World Economic Forum are two main indices which provide clues on the eGovernment maturity level of each country.

Sweden (index 0.9157), Denmark (index 0.9134) and Norway (index 0.8644) have claimed the first 3 places of the “eGovernment Readiness Index 2008 ”. Sri Lanka is in 101st place. South Korea, Singapore and Malaysia are respectively in 6th, 23rd and 34th places.

South Asian countries are in the positions shown in the table below.

Country	Position	Index
Maldives	95	0.45
Sri Lanka	101	0.42
Iran	108	0.41
India	113	0.38
Pakistan	133	0.32
Bhutan	137	0.31
Bangladesh	143	0.29
Nepal	150	0.27
Afghanistan	166	0.20

eGovernment Maturity levels

Out of the various eGovernment maturity models which are used to describe the evolution of eGovernment, the UN eGovernment maturity model which has 5 maturity levels is more comprehensive.

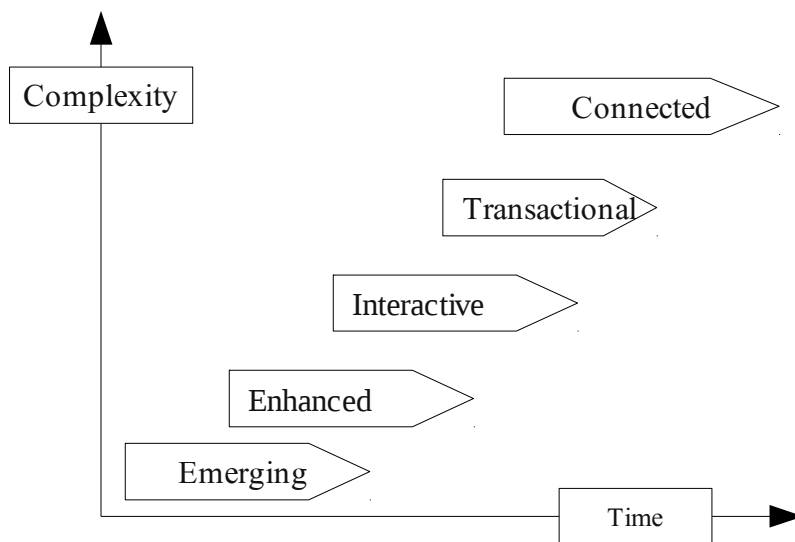


Figure 1 – Different stages in evolution of eGovernment

The different stages are described below with the services that could be provided at each stage and the relevant readiness details of the government organizations.

First Stage - “Emerging”

The web presence of the organization is limited to a static website or a web page of the website of a line ministry or line department. No interaction with clients through the website.

Use of ICT for official work is minimum. No dedicated cadre for ICT related work.

Second Stage - “Enhanced”

Government organizations maintain their own websites and provide government policies and information related to governance of the organization over the web. The website provides application forms, reports, government Acts, regulations and newsletters and make it easy for citizens to access those.

The organizations at this maturity level develop ICT systems to carry out the basic functions. There could be dedicated personnel for data entry and operating the system.

Third Stage - “Interactive”

Government websites at this level provide circulars, legal enactments etc. Moreover application forms are provide for interactive submission for functions such as tax payments and license renewal. Furthermore the website provides complex ineractive services such as train journey planning and booking train seats, ineractive dictionaries and glossariesand booking government holiday bungalows.

Government organizations of this maturity level use ICT systems that handle the main functional activities. An ICT Unit has been set up and ICT staff and a Chief Innovation Officer have been appointed for managing ICT activities. ICT Unit is mainly engaged in developing in-house solutions and managing the ICT infrastructure.

Fourth Stage - “Transactional”

The government organizations initiate a drastic change by introducing two-way interaction. Online services are provided for tax payments, submission of ID applications, obtaining copies of birth certificates, obtaining passports on 27x7 basis. These services are complete with the facilities for making online payments.

At this stage government organizations use complex ICT systems for administrative as well as functional requirements. Government organizations have ICT units which are comprised of ICT professionals, CIOs directly reports to the head of the organization, ICT plan and a considerable ICT budget. Complex computer networks are maintained.

The government organizations of this stage use social media for providing services as well as building better relationships with clients. The main focus of the ICT unit is on ICT project management, outsource management, contract management, ICT security and ICT audits. All activities of the organization conform to eGovernment Policy.

Fifth Stage - “Connected”

At this stage, all government organizations use a common ICT infrastructure (government network). The government organizations who are involved in providing citizen services virtually re-engineer their business processes and connect those for creating a common virtual back office. Hence citizens can obtain the services at “one stop shop” without going to numerous government organizations. These one -stop-shops are national web portals such as Lanka Gate (www.lk)

Administration functions of the entire government are carried out by using connected, common systems such as human resource management system, financial management system and audit system.

The ICT unit and CIO work through the inter organizational committees that have been set up for governing citizen service delivery systems. The ICT plan of the organization is an integral part of the national ICT plan.

The organization has its own eGovernment policy and and ICT Security policy which conform to the national policies.

6. Success and failure factors of eGovernment

www.egov4dev.org theorizes that the majority of eGovernment projects implemented around the world are failures.

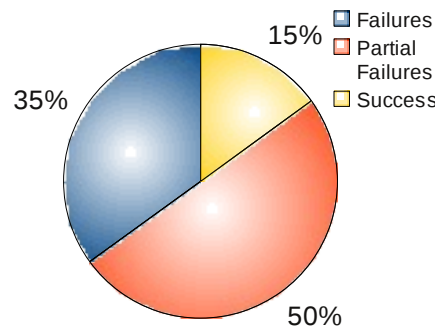


Figure 2 – Success/failure rates of eGovernment projects

The above figures show that the success rate of eGovernment is very low. Hence the review of the factors which affect the success and failure would be useful for achieving the success.

eGovernment success factors

1. Leadership

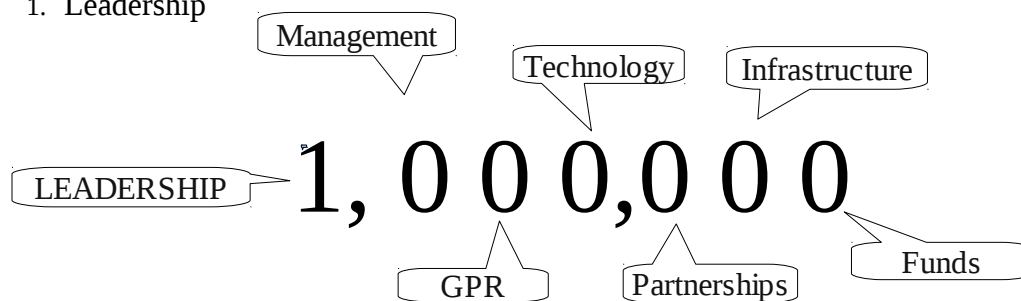


Figure 3 – Value of the leadership (Source: e-Government – The Science of the Impossible – J Satyanarayana)

The leadership for eGovernment projects is provided by the head of the organization. The success or failure of the project depends on the extent that the leader owns the vision of the project, leader's commitment for the project, leader's understanding on the project methodology, owns and how he/she leads the project.

As interpreted by the figure 3, value of all other factors for eGovernment will be null if the correct leadership is not

provided to the project. Only the leadership can make the eGovernment projects “work” and add value to it by providing the directions at the policy and operational level.

2. Project Governance for active participation of stakeholders

The active participation of all stakeholders and line managers in activities involved in steering the project and making policy decisions is a critical success factor for eGovernment projects. This should be carried out through project steering committee and project management committee.

3. Internal business need – How essential is the project for top management to carry out official functions? If the project is crucial for their official functions they would ensure that the project will be implemented successfully

4. Effective Project management

eGovernment projects impact and involve many areas of government organizations. The activities involved in eGovernment project implementation are numerous. Resources in many types are needed at different stages of implementation. Therefore eGovernment project management is a highly specialized and complex responsibility. Effective project management is a highly critical factor for the success of eGovernment.

5. Change Management

eGovernment projects introduce comprehensive changes to the government organizations. All aspects including the layout of the building, internal structural arrangements, hierarchy, processes, procedures, technologies, HR allocation, performance appraisal are changed by eGovernment projects. In order to facilitate the changes it is necessary to manage the changes pro-actively. The good change management is a crucial factor for a successful eGovernment project.

6. Requisite competencies

eGovernment project team requires a wide range of competencies and experience. Competencies in ICT as well as ICT management is a critical success factor for eGovernment.

eGovernment failure factors

The absence of eGovernment success factors lead to failure of eGovernment. However there are few more critical factors which lead to the failure of eGovernment projects.

1. “Big bang” eGovernment projects

Since eGovernment projects are complex those projects confront with various obstacles and challenges. Moreover national level eGovernment projects are huge in size and take a very long time to complete. Attempts to implement such projects as a single turn-key projects would definitely lead to failure. Therefore it is essential to implement the project as a pilot project for testing the hypothesis, fine tune the implementation approach and overcome the challenges. Therefore the appropriate eGovernment methodology is described as “think big, start small, roll out fast”.

2. Implementation of eGovernment projects by following the “waterfall” development methodology

The waterfall software development methodology which follows unidirectional software development approach is not suitable for eGovernment projects. Since it is impossible to capture the government business requirements in one attempt, it is required to adopt a flexible and agile software development methodology to re-assess and re-validate the government business requirements iteratively. Therefore the waterfall software development methodology is a critical eGovernment failure factor.

3. Implementation of eGovernment projects without or prior to completing a Government Business Process re-engineering study

it is essential to re-engineer the government processes in order to make them more efficient as well as making them suitable for an automated process. Implementation of eGovernment projects without re-engineering the business processes is an eGovernment failure factor.

4. Scope creep – The widening of the scope of an eGovernment project is a very common experience. However the expansion of the scope by adding various aspects of the project is a failure factor as it finally becomes unmanageable.
5. Lack of funds for cleansing and migration of data – In general, funds are not allocated for cleansing and migration of data. The total estimate for data cleaning and migration would be between 20% to 40% of the project cost. Even the project team identifies this requirement at latter stage of the project when funds are not available for making data available for the project to run. Since the funds are exhausted by the time this is realized the lack of data could lead to a total failure of the project.

7. New trends in eGovernment: eGov 2.0

Various government organizations have used novel means to achieve the objectives of eGovernment i.e. to provide quality citizen services in a more citizen friendly manner. New concepts and new technologies have been utilized for achieving the goals. Web 2.0 is one such concept which was introduced in 2004 for transforming the the web experience. Various governments also started to use the features of web 2.0 for enriching the citizen services and this concept was later termed as eGov 2.0. many countries now use eGov 2.0 concepts in eGovernment implementation.

Main the features of eGov 2.0 are

- A) Provision of eServices through web portals which can be customized to meet the individual needs
- B) High level of citizen participation through social media
- C) Two-way interactions
- D) use of mobile platforms for service delivery
- E) citizen service delivery through collaboration between government and private organizations
- F) Open Government; opening the government data sets to citizens, business and employees for higher transparency and for providing more innovative services by third parties who could use government data free

Examples for eGov 2.0

- 1) Customization of web based service provision to meet individual needs
This feature provides citizens the ability of customization of web service delivery portals to meet individual needs. Citizens can select the services that they need and create a personalized web portal. This service has been provided through Lanka Gate (www.lk) to select the services that citizens desire and make it his/her own web portal.
- 2) Provision of services through collaboration between government and private sector organizations
This feature uses the concept called “Mash up and Collaboration” for providing complete citizen services.

One of the best local example for this feature is the eRevenue License service provided by WPDMT. This service mashes up the web services provided by DMT, WPDMT, insurance companies, vehicle emission testing companies and banking organizations collaboratively and offers a complete service for citizens to obtain the revenue license at their convenience.

3) eDemocracy through extensive user engagement and participation

This involves maintaining a close relationship with citizens through social media such as blogs, forums, and social networking sites such as facebook, twitter and You Tube. Facilitation for citizens to participate in governance, policy and law making activities through such forums is referred to as eDemocracy. The forums provided through www.icta.lk and www.srilanka.lk can be identified as instances which are leading to such initiatives. Lanka Gate has a facebook account (<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/lankagate?ref=ts>) which aims to gather user requirements and build a closer relationship with citizens. Harringay Online is a good example which uses this feature.

4) Mobile services (mGovernment)

Use of mobile platform for public service delivery is referred as mGovernment. Provision of web and text based services through the mobile devices which are more proliferated and fast spreading comes under mGovernment. Accordingly all citizen services including payment facilities should be provided through mobile service portals.

So far no complete public service has been provided through the mobile platform in Sri Lanka. However Lanka Gate is equipped with a mobile service platform. As a precursor to mobile services, Lanka Gate has initiated a government SMS service called GovSMS which uses the common short telephone code 1919 (http://www.gic.gov.lk/gic/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3&Itemid=22&lang=en).

5) Open Government and Open Data

The main concept of “Open Government” is to make government data (which is non-privacy based data) open and available to all for using it for the benefit of public. Accordingly USA (www.data.gov) and UK (www.govdata.co.uk) have opened up huge data archives for public use. This has increased the government transparency and introduced many new eServices which have been developed by third parties by using government data.

Examples;

1. Seeclickfix (www.seeclickfix.com) and DC 311 (www.dc311.org) – These solutions have been developed by private organizations on voluntary basis by using open data.

Seeclickfix allows citizens to capture images of their neighborhood by using their mobile phones to report about graffiti, broken pavements, broken street lamps etc, integrate it with the map to show the location and send it to the relevant local authority. The local authority should take immediate actions to resolve the issues and publish it in their website. This facilitates a high level monitoring by citizens on the work of their local authorities which lead to better and quality services.

2. Are You Safe (www.areyousafeatlanta.com)

This solution uses the crime data that the government has made public to indicate the safety and security level of each locality. For example, citizens, by using the mobile phone to connect to this website, can check whether a particular location is safe enough to leave his/her vehicle.

3. Applications for Democracy (www.appsfordemocracy.org)

All government data and web services related to the city of Washington have been made publicly available through www.data.gov . The government conducted a competition, by inviting ICT companies to develop ICT systems to provide more citizen services by using the government open data. The best solutions were awarded prizes and the list of ICT systems developed under this initiative which is known as “Applications for Democracy” is available at

www.appsfordemocracy.org/application-directory.

Wasantha Deshapriya

Director

Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka

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