Minutes

**Workshop on National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA)
held on 24th August 2018 at
Dr Ambedkar International Centre, Janpath, New Delhi- A Report**

A workshop on National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) was organized by Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances in association with NASSCOM and KPMG with the objective to deliberate on the strategic overview, approach and methodology of the assessment study with State Governments/UTs Administrations. List of participating States/ UTs is attached. (**Annexure-1).**

2.   Opening the deliberations, Shri K.V. Eapen, Secretary, DARPG welcomed the delegates and outlined the objectives of the workshop. He mentioned that a large number of e-Governance initiatives are being undertaken across the country, both at the Centre as well as in States/UTs, facilitating ease in electronic delivery of Government services. Many of them have also been awarded with National e-Governance Awards and Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration. The objective of the present study is to assess the States, UTs and Central Ministries on the depth and efficiency in e-Governance service delivery. The present National eGovernance Service Delivery Assessment framework will be used to assess and benchmark the adoption of e-Governance services. The study would cover all the three segments viz. G2G, G2B (especially to small businesses) and G2C, in six identified sectors of Finance, Health, Social Welfare, Labour & Employment, Education and Environment. In addition, this exercise is also expected to drive more innovation. While some of the elements of the study would be universal across all States/UTs, due care is being taken to take into account their specific conditions and requirements.

3.   Ms. Sangita Gupta, NASSCOM expressed happiness in being associated with this prestigious project which has the potential to accelerate digital transformation in governance for citizen services. The objective of the project is also to ensure that the impact of e-Governance initiatives should trickle down to all levels of administration throughout the country, she averred. She also mentioned that full potential of our IT strength as a nation is still to be realized in governance and service delivery.

4.   Shri Ramendra Verma, Director, KPMG, gave a detailed presentation emphasizing on the objectives of the workshop, key goals to achieve through NeSDA and its overall approach and methodology. (presentation and concept note attached) It was highlighted that the list of mandatory and optional services, to be assessed, is open for amendments and the suggestions for the same can be submitted before 14th September 2018. He clarified the following:-

(i)   The objective of the project is not to rank State/UTs in the area of e-Governance but to encourage them towards easy and efficient service delivery. Secondly, States vary in providing these e-services and there is no aggregation of services across States. Different practices are adopted in different States and, quite often, they are not aware of good practices in a similar field in other States. Thirdly, an important idea behind the project is internal bench-marking of end-to-end services. Fourthly, citizen awareness and satisfaction will also be assessed for gap identification in the service delivery.

(ii)	The focus sectors, primary focus areas, evaluation parameters and steps involved in finalizing NeSDA survey and data to be furnished by States/UTs on the NeSDA Survey portal were elaborated. It broadly includes providing URL of the State portals and identified services websites, filling up online questionnaire for each service being evaluated, citizen contact data, analysis and assessment finding and bench-marking. He explained the basic features of the questionnaire, features for getting citizen feedback, evaluation and scoring method, and related issues.

5.	The following observations, queries and suggestions were made by the participants at the end of the session.

I.	Since services vary from State to State, it would be advisable to have some common denominators applicable to all States/UTs.
II.	Government services are too diverse and it would be difficult to list-out all of them.
III.	It does not have availability of IT infrastructure as one of the parameters and, as such, would not indicate the true picture on e-governance in a particular State.
IV.	Timelines for completion of the study are very strict.
V.	It would be advisable that DARPG rolls out assessment weightages for medium term (3-4 years) so as to make it a medium term and continuous assessment.
VI.	Listing out of proofs for service delivery would be of help.
VII.	Sustainability of e-Governance initiatives should be accounted for in the study.
VIII.	Some Union Territories like Andaman & Nicobar Islands are at a disadvantage because of poor IT infrastructure even though service delivery is quite sufficient in real terms.
IX.	Mobile Governance should also be included in the study so as to make it more holistic.
X.	Often, there are many services within a common service and it would be difficult to measure all of them as one service. Provision should be made in the questionnaire to incorporate this element.
XI.	The study hints at standardization of service delivery across the country.
XII.	Incentivisation of services to be incorporated in the assessment as per the criteria.
XIII.	On what criteria were the districts selected and whether the district selected for the assessment can be changed?
XIV.	Why is downloadable form a criterion? Lot of services are done through web forms as the former is not feasible for security purposes.

6.	Acknowledging the response from participants, Additional Secretary, DARPG explained that most of the above observations have been taken into account while formulating the questionnaire. There are mandatory and optional fields in the questionnaire to take care of common and State specific public services. The aim of the study is provision of e-Governance services irrespective of infrastructure availability. As regards timelines, the study has already been delayed and, therefore, the study needs to be completed within the compressed present timelines. The study is diagnostic in nature and does not aim at providing a common standardized process. It would help the State Governments in further streamlining the services and also to access good practices adopted in other States.

7. Shri Unnikrishnan, KPMG gave a detailed presentation on the features, methodology and tools of the NeSDA portal created for the purpose of obtaining feedback from States/UTs. He explained that data entry, review, evaluation and validation are the four major steps of the exercise and dwelt on the processes involved at length. Last financial year would be the timeline for entering the number of transactions under a service delivery item. He also explained the process of back-end validation and scoring methodology. If a State did not have a common State portal, separate portals can be mentioned. He emphasized the need to get the initial feedback of States/UTs on the present format by 14th September 2018. He also requested each State/UT to nominate a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) person who could be approached for any data/information required during the course of this assessment.

8. After the presentation, the following queries, observations and suggestions were made.

- Ensuring sustainability of e-Governance efforts should be an outcome of the present study.
- Efforts should be made to ensure that services are given in local languages. Text to speech process should be included.
- E-Governance initiatives are presently 'champion' driven. Instead, they should be BPR and 'process' driven, in order to make them more sustainable.
- Efforts should be made to understand and overcome 'stress' areas through provision of incentives and this aspect should be incorporated in the study.

9. Clarifying on the above points, Additional Secretary, DARPG mentioned that the present NeSDA exercise by DARPG is in the nature of administrative reforms and oriented towards diagnosing the hindrances in implementation and sustainability of e-Governance initiatives and not ranking of States on this basis. Also, this exercise focuses on provision of Government services only and does not include financial transactions. Further, this exercise is also an effort to make the e-Governance led service delivery more process driven. Local languages are being given due weightage in the study.

10. The States/UTs represented in the workshop gave the date for sending their feedback and their SPOC (**Annexure-2**).

11. In her closing remarks, Additional secretary reiterated that the timeline for sending the feedback is final and all States/UTs need to send their comments on the questionnaire and their SPOC by 14th September 2018 positively. She also mentioned that Secretary, IT of the States/ UTs would be SPOC by default if the names and contact details are not received in time. She also urged that IT/AR Secretaries should ensure that all portals/ services are uploaded on the portal so that the study becomes comprehensive and more meaningful. In this regard, she also referred to the continuous improvement in India's ranking the International e-Governance Index from 118 (2014) to 107(2016) and 96 in 2018 and hoped that this study could further improve it.

12. Additional Secretary, DARPG thanked Secretary, DARPG, NASSCOM, KPMG participants from States/UTs and colleagues in the Department for their active participation and hoped to get their enthusiastic support in future too.

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Sl.No.	State/UT	Name & Designation of the Officer S/Shri	Department / Organization	Contact Details	Emails
1	Punjab	Gurleen Singh Manager Technical	Department of Governance Reforms	9878529052	gurleen.singh@punjab.gov.in
2	Uttar Pradesh	Chaitanya Sharma Dy. Manager	CeG IT Dept.	7705901008	chaitanya.ceg@gmail.com
3	Gujarat	CS Chaudhary Addl. Secretary		9978440807	cschaudhary_12@yahoo.co.in
	Gujarat	Dhananjay Dwivedi Secretary DST	Dept. of Science & Technology	9978407179	secdst@gujarat.gov.in
4	Haryana	Navdeep Gupta Sr. Consultant SeMT	E & IT Dept.	9971355033	navdeep.gupta@semt.gov.in
5	Assam	Debajyoti Dutta Joint Secretary	Admin, Reforms & Training	9859785196	debajyoti.dutta@mail.gov.in; debolyn@gmail.com
6	Jharkhand	Chandra Bhushan Prasad Dy. Secretary	Personnel Admin Reforms Dept.	8340488876	cbp.jas@gmail.com
7	Jharkhand	Sarvesh Singhal Special Secretary	IT Dept.	9431114145	ss.doit@gmail.com
8	Telangana	P. Srinivas Jt. Secretary (eGov)	ITE &C Dept.	9885246655	jtsecy_egov_itc@telangana.gov.in
9	Telangana	TV Raja Rao Sr. Consultant	ITE &C Dept.	7995016035	srconsultant-esd@telangana.gov.in
10	Telangana	Shalini Principal Secretary	GA Dept.	9441111093	N. A
11	Telangana	T. Shalini Project Manager	ITE&C Dept.	8008051188	pmu.shalini@telangana.gov.in
12	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	S.Rangarajan Head- SeMT	IT Dept.	9869414661	rangarajan.i@semt.gov.in
13	Tripura	Dr. GSG Ayyangar Principal Secretary	IT Dept.	9958867155	dr.gsgayyangar@gmail.com
14	Chandigarh	Arjun Sharma Director IT	IT Dept.	7837365954	arjun.sharma2691@gmail.com
15	Chandigarh	Harish Nayar Special Secretary Finance	Finance	9417251445	ssfdhe@yahoo.com
16	Karnataka	Dr. Sunil Panwar Director	eGovernance	9902239945	dir-edcs@karnataka.gov.in
17	Bihar	Abhay Kumar special Secretary	IT Dept.	9013130138	abhay.kumar71@gov.in
18	Odisha	Jaya Kumar JS Planning & Convergen	GA Dept.	8249003933	jayakumar41030@yahoo.in

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19	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Sandeep Jacques Secretary	AR Dept.	9822104807	sandeepjacques@gmail.com
20	Manipur	Subhasis Chatterjee Head- SeMT	IT Dept.	9820213197	subhasis.c@semt.gov.in
21	Himachal Pradesh	Hemraj Sharma Secretary's Office	RC Office	9810449384	rc_hpnd@yahoo.com
22	Rajasthan	Sharmila Gupta Dy. Director	IT Dept.	9873026669	gsharmila@rediffmail.com
23	Rajasthan	Chetan Ram Deora IAS Director Public Service & Jt. Secretry to Gov.	AR Dept.	8209690262	deora.chetan@yahoo.com
24	Madhya Pradesh	B.Chandrashekhar Secretary GOMP	Public Service Management	9425418548	secycmmp@gmail.com
25	Madhya Pradesh	Tanvi Sundriyal CEO MAPIT	Dept. of Science & Technology	9630897589	sundriyal.tanvi@gmail.com
26	Delhi	GK Gaur Dy. DG	NIC Hqs.	9818563209	gaurgk@nic.in
27	Andhra Pradesh	Praveen Kumar IAS Principal Secretary	GA Dept.	7729012233	praveenkolaventy@yahoo.com
28	Chhattisgarh	Alex Paul Menon Jt. Secretary	IT Dept.	9685330000	ceochips@nic.in

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Details of SPOC

Sl.No.	State	Name	Department	Designation	Mobile	Email ID
1	Chhattisgarh	Pushpendra Kumar Meena	IT Dept.	Chief Operating Officer- CHIPS	8319630000	NA
2	Rajasthan	RK Sharma	DoITC	Addl. Director	9413387309	
3	Madhya Pradesh	Tanvi Sundriyal	Dept. of Science & Technology	CEO MAPIT	9630897589	sundriyal.tanvi@gmail.com; md@mpsedc.com
4	Punjab	Gurleen Singh	Department of Governance Reforms	Manager Technical	9878529052	gurleen.singh@punjab.gov.in
5	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	James Antony	IT Dept.	OSD IT	9933269947	jamespb2003@gmail.com
6	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	S.Rangarajan	IT Dept.	Head- SeMT	9869414661	rangarajan.i@semt.gov.in
7	Daman & Diu	S.Rangarajan	IT Dept.	Head- SeMT	9869414661	dit-silvassa-dnh@nic.in; dit-daman_dd@nic.in

Sl.No.	State	Name	Department	Designation	Mobile	Email ID
8	Karnataka	Dr. Sunil Panwar	eGovernance	Director	9902239945	dir-edcs@karnataka.gov.in
9	Andhra Pradesh	Praveen Kumar	GA Dept.	Principal Secretary	7729012233	praveenkolaventy@yahoo.com; prlsecy-gpmar-gad@ap.gov.in
10	Bihar	Abhay Kumar	IT Dept.	special Secretary	9013130138	abhay.kumar71@gov.in
11	Jharkhand	Chandra Bhushan Prasad	Personnel Admin Reforms Dept.	Dy. Secretary	8340488876	cbp.jas@gmail.com
12	Gujarat	Dhananjay Dwivedi	Dept. of Science & Technology	Secretary DST	9978407179	N.A.
13	Assam	Vinod Seshan	Dept of IT	Secretary IT	9435340685	vinod.seshan@nic.in
14	Odisha	Shri Aditya Mohapatra, Joint Secretary	Dept of IT	Joint Secretary		
15	Telangana	Shri Srinivas Pendyala, Mobile: Email:	ITE&C Department	Joint Secretary	9885246655	jtsecy_egov_itc@telangana.gov.in
16.	Tripura		Director (IT)			
17.	Mizoram	Zothanzauva	Directorate of Information & Communication Technology	Informatics Officer	09612167187	mxaauva@gmail.com
18.	Haryana	Shri Deepak Bansal	Secretariat for Information Technology	State Informatics officer	09417868051	SIO@hry.nic.in, Deepak.bansal@nic.in

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