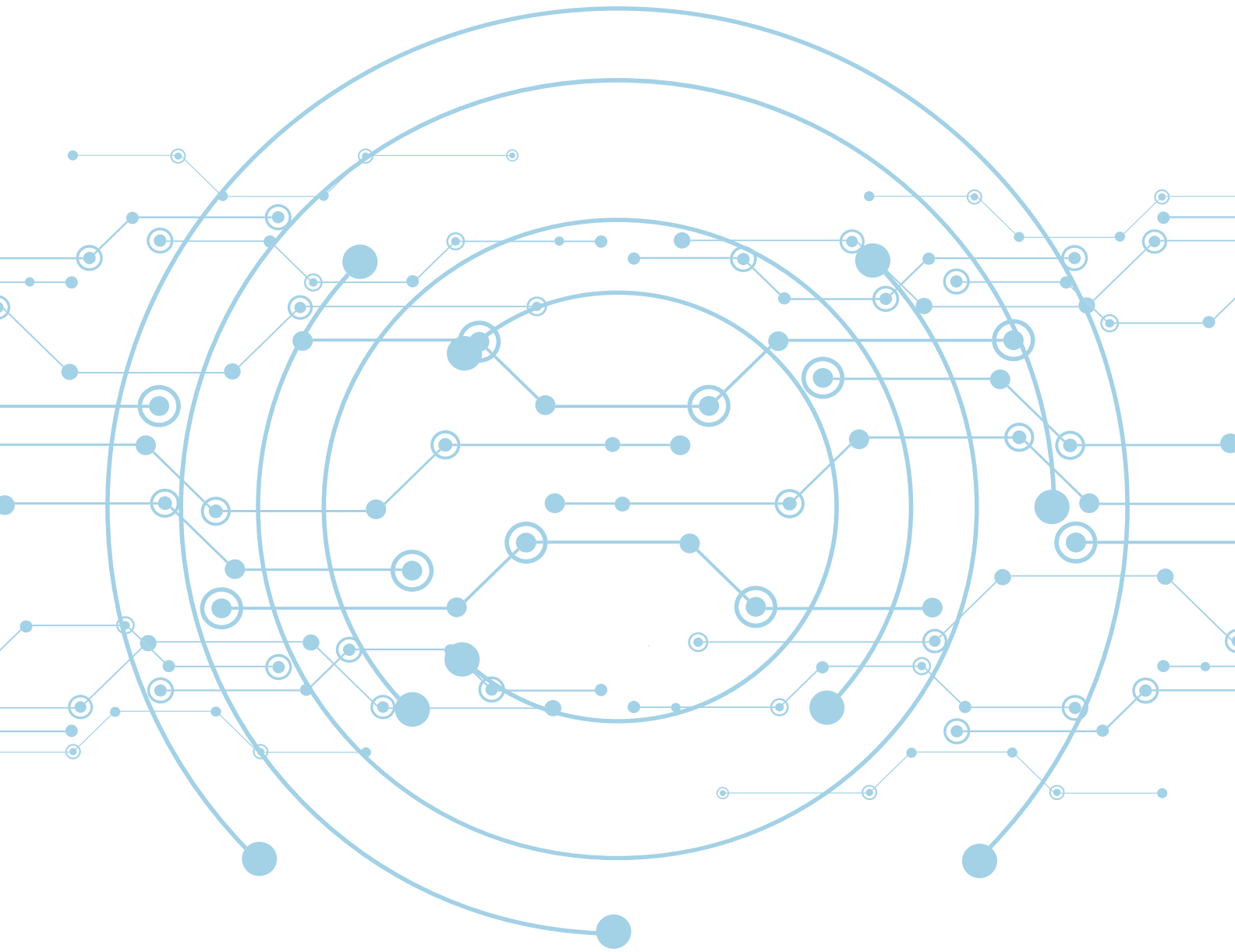




Bangladesh e-Participation Policy Framework

PROPOSED



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The proposed Bangladesh e-Participation policy framework has been developed as a collaboration between the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division under the Ministry of Post, Telecommunications and Information Technology and Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI). We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Nagorikota: Civic Engagement Fund (CEF), managed by GFA Consulting Group and supported by the Embassy of Switzerland and Global Affairs Canada, which enabled the preparation of this proposed policy framework under the project Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development (STID).

The proposed e-Participation policy framework is developed based on divisional consultation meetings with participation of high-level government officials and leaders of civil society organizations from divisional and district levels. A poll was conducted among the participants in the consultations on key aspects of the framework. Moreover, key informant interviews were conducted with high-level government officials and experts from Bangladesh, Denmark and Estonia.

In this proposed policy framework, footnotes (in numbers at the bottom of each page) are used to provide narrative texts of findings, additional explanations, and clarifications, while endnotes (in roman numbers) are used for full bibliographic reference and source citations at the end of the document.

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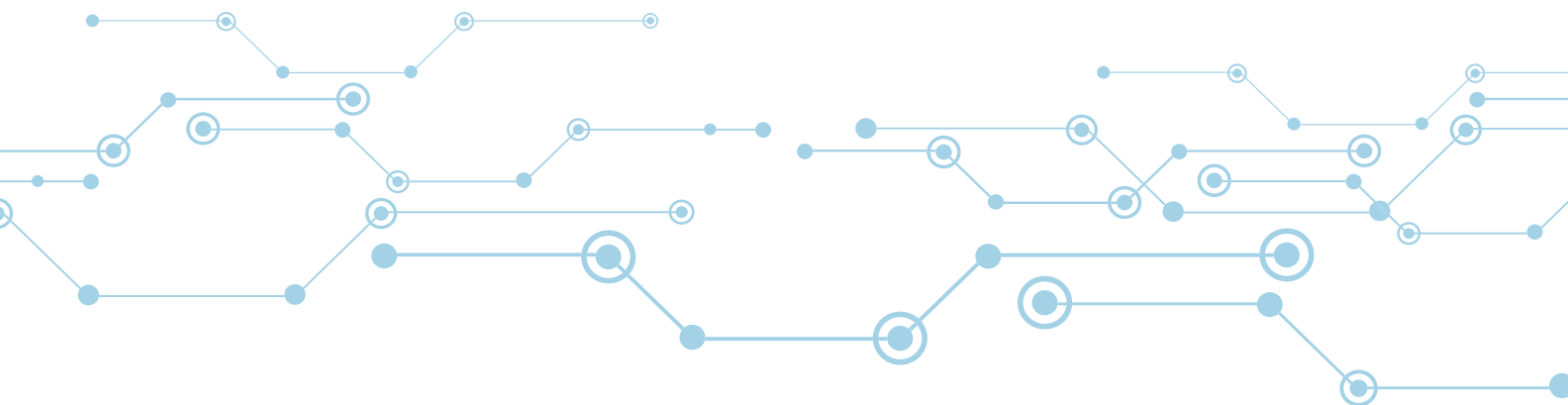
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Acknowledgement

I am delighted to see that the proposed e-Participation Policy Framework is published by Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) in collaboration with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division. ICT Division has been working with the Cabinet Division and other government entities for creating digital public infrastructure, digitalization of public services and improving access to information for citizens. A few shining examples are bangladesh.gov.bd, mygov.bd, grs.gov.bd, which created access to information on the government, access to public services and engagement of citizens in the governance. This first-generation digital development put Bangladesh in a respectable position in the global e-government development index and e-participation index. It also laid the foundation for a comprehensive e-participation framework and moving towards designing second generation e-government. Thus, this proposed e-Participation Policy Framework is going to be a reference document for the government for strategic planning. The government is committed to develop a comprehensive e-Participation Policy based on this document and a comprehensive decade-long action will be developed targeting Bangladesh to be within top 30 countries in the global ranking on e-participation.

I am happy to know that the e-Participation Policy Framework is prepared in partnership with *Nagorikota*: Civic Engagement Fund (CEF), managed by GFA Consulting Group, and supported by the Embassy of Switzerland and Global Affairs Canada. We strongly believe that the collaboration with the development partners will continue in implementation process of the policy and action plan.

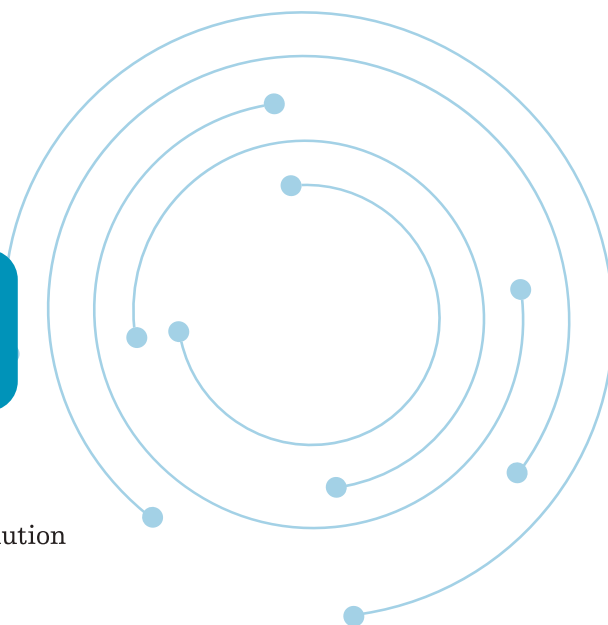
This proposed framework rightly identified the strategy of application of Four-Helix Model collaboration among the state and non-state actors and laid out avenues where the government and CSOs can collaborate to enhance participation of citizens in democratic governance.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the leadership of the Cabinet Division, Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Additional Deputy Commissioners, government officials of relevant agencies from all divisions, leaders of civil societies across the country to join the consultation process for developing this proposed e-Participation Policy Framework. Our sincere thanks go to Honorable Secretary (attached) at the Honorable Chief Advisor's Office, Mr. Md. Mahmudul Hossain Khan, for his deep engagement in the consultation process. I would also like to thank the Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau, Mr. Md. Daud Miah, ndc for his active engagement in divisional consultation meetings. Their insights and engagement played a vital role in shaping the outcomes of the consultations and significantly contributed to the development of the policy framework. I would like to thank my colleagues at the ICT Division for their relentless support in the process of preparation of the policy framework. I would like to thank colleagues from GFA and experts from Denmark and Estonia for providing valuable inputs in developing the document. I would like to thank MRDI colleagues and team for their relentless efforts for making the process of developing the policy framework inclusive and consultative and developing the document.

I am confident that through collaboration and commitment, Bangladesh will march towards an inclusive society with active participation of citizens fostered by all stakeholders, where prosperity of citizens will bolster through digital government.

Shish Haider Chowdhury, ndc
Secretary, ICT Division

Acronyms and Abbreviations



ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AI	Artificial Intelligence
PSP	Public Service Providers
CEF	Civil Engagement Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DFS	Digital Financial Services
DPI	Digital Public Infrastructure
DPS	Digital Public Service
DNCC	Dhaka North City Corporation
e-Government	Electronic Government
ePAP	e-Participation Access Points
EGDI	E-Government Development Index
e-Participation	Electronic Participation
G2B	Government to Business
G2C	Government to Citizen
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
G2G	Government to Government
GRS	Grievance Redressal System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
MAMPU	Modernization and Management Planning Unit
MRDI	Media Resources Development Initiative
MFS	Mobile Financial Services
NID	National Identity Card
NLASO	National Legal Aid Services Organizations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
RTI	Right to Information
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSNP	Social Safety Net Programs
STID	Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development
TFGBV	Technology-facilitated Gender-Based Violence
UAE	The United Arab Emirates
UDC	Union Digital Center
UNDESA	The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Executive Summary

Civic engagement is the cornerstone of any functional democracy, and it goes beyond simple representation of citizens through parliamentary democratic process. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh clearly establishes that all state power is derived from the people, making them the foundation of democracy and governance. It guarantees citizens' fundamental rights such as equality before the law, freedom of speech, assembly, and association, ensuring their active participation in shaping the nation. As technology penetrates all aspects of citizens' life and democratic governance, civic participation is extended to both physical and virtual spaces across the globe as well in Bangladesh. Often civic participation through digital platforms becomes more powerful than through physical forms. e-Participation extends the idea of democracy into the digital age and allows citizens to contribute in a two-way manner by using digital technologies in governmental processes. Bangladesh's digitalization journey has encompassed a few aspects of civic participation through digital platforms and created the foundation for a comprehensive e-Participation framework.

In this context, Bangladesh is in the process of development of an e-Participation policy to leverage the advantages of digital technology. The proposed policy framework is expected to play an important role in formulation of the policy, action plan and a mechanism of monitoring and accountability. The concept of e-Participation and e-government are intertwined, and the definition of United Nations is being used in designing this e-Participation policy framework. A well-designed e-Participation framework can effectively engage citizens in policymaking, service feedback, and grievance redressal. As a multi-dimensional process, e-Participation covers both proactive information disclosure and allows real-time civic engagement.

The vision of the e-Participation policy framework is to have a civic engagement space combining both physical and virtual platforms for effective democratic governance where citizens can access information, participate in shaping space for democratic process, contribute in policy and law making, claim rights and entitlement, participate in co-creation process of public services and their delivery, and express grievances and their redressal in transparent manner, which are to ensure exercising constitutional power vested in citizens.

In 2024, Bangladesh held 70th position among 193 countries in the global e-Participation index while in the e-Government Development Index, Bangladesh was ranked 100th, behind India and Sri Lanka. The rankings show Bangladesh's relative progress, which indicates that Bangladesh may go further up the ranking having the comprehensive e-Participation framework.

Bangladesh's e-Participation framework is to be guided by state of access to digital technology, affordability, digital literacy, democratic culture and institutional preparedness of the government and nongovernment actors. Having majority of the citizens living in rural areas, rural-urban disparity in terms of access to technology is the key determinant in selecting channels for connecting citizens with the government. Quality of Internet and electricity also need to be considered in designing the digital public service design and delivery.

Bangladesh's e-Participation framework is proposed based on progress already made. There are multiple initiatives related to enhancing access to information like Bangladesh.gov.bd, websites of Ministries and their agencies and hotline 333. MyGov (mygov.bd) portal provides links to all public services, like

prottoyon.gov.bd. Union Digital Centers provide access to information and public services with assistance who do not have access to technology or digital literacy. grs.gov.bd offers a grievance redress mechanism for citizens. The government is transitioning to D-Nothi for internal management. Other digital public services are online submissions of tax returns, online government procurement, online registration of pilgrimage, online access to government forms, online publication of results of public examinations, and online admission processing of public educational institutions. Most of the social safety net services are now digitalized. However, there are both supply side and demand side challenges in these digitalization endeavors, which are to be considered for second generation digitalization and development of e-Participation framework. The challenges from citizens' perspective are access to technology, digital divide, political interference and petty corruption, spread of physical access to services, digital literacy and usability, digital security and data protection, language and cultural barriers, misinformation and online safety, and lack of awareness. The challenges from the supply side are lack of system integration, limited verification mechanism, capacity limitations of public offices, partial digitization, incompatibility of services and data (interoperability), misuse of information disclosure, and limited real-time oversight. These challenges require recognition and proper planning to overcome, some can be addressed relatively quickly, others will require sustained long-term efforts.

The proposal of design and development of e-Participation framework is informed of examples of countries, which are relevant for Bangladesh. For example, Denmark has a centralized platform with decentralized content ownership. Despite high access to technology and digital skills, Estonia still makes the public services available both through digital and physical means giving citizens' choice. E-Estonia platform, developed based on its e-Participation policy, offers all services digitally, applying whole of the society approach. Other countries' e-government and e-Participation development consulted are India, Malaysia, Scotland, Sri Lanka and UAE. The country examples may facilitate next generation design and deployment in multiple ways: e-Participation platform architecture; interaction process of the government with citizens, channels to be used, quality assurance and accountability system, and accessibility.

The e-Participation policy framework is proposed to be based on twelve key principles: affordability, citizen-centered transformation, choice, co-creation, data ownership, data security and privacy, ethics, flexibility and continuous improvement, inclusion, partnership, pragmatism and contextual feasibility, sustainability, & transparency and accountability.

The e-Participation policy framework proposes an integrated portal with six segments: access to information, democratic process, policy and law-making, citizens' rights and entitlement, co-creation and delivery of public services & grievances and feedback. This single access point may be named as Citizen Connect [নাগরিক সংযোগ], For each of these segments, multiple digital and physical channels are proposed for ensuring inclusion and participation.

Access to information segment can be based on the national portal bangladesh.gov.bd and websites of Ministries and agencies. The websites can be aligned with the provisions of article 6 and 7 of RTI Act 2009. The website visualization can be further improved and simplified. The information categories require further research and AI-based search engine can be integrated for comprehensive and complete information output. There are multiple interactive channels, which are relevant for accessing information: short-code-based IVR and agentic information services. The phone-based agentic government information service 333 can be revived with revamped knowledge base for complete response with appropriate referral mechanism. A citizen information mobile app can be launched with feature of voice search and option for asking question through voice, as Bangla voice engine is now available. Social media can be a very strong platform for dissemination of information about government services and interaction with citizens on various pertinent issues. A social media strategy

is to be developed and appropriate resources to be deployed. While social media is an important channel, where significant segment of citizens interact, there is a need for filtering 'noise' and a strong mechanism for filtering misinformation and disinformation. Direct messaging (DM) channel like WhatsApp can be deployed for dissemination and responding to queries. The DM channel can be central as well as local (district, upazila and union). Email can be a strong bottom-up channel for seeking information. This channel can be officially recognized for seeking information under the provision of RTI Act 2009.

Given the limitations in accessing information through digital means by a vast segment of citizens, the physical channels are very important. Along with the existing Union Digital Centers, every government office may have an information/facilitation desk, which can be operated by designated officer under RTI Act 2009. Similarly, the NGOs/CSOs/CBOs may launch information and facilitation desk for seeking information. These desks can be used for other segments of the e-Participation framework. As the awareness about RTI Act 2009 is low, the NGOs/CSOs/CBOs can use their court-yard sessions for raising awareness about access to information and their rights and entitlement.

Democratic process: The e-Participation portal may have a segment on participation in Democratic Process. Initially the scope can be limited to running poll on various pertinent issues and voter registration service can be launched online and through mobile app. The poll can be run by Cabinet Division and Ministry of Information. The voter registration and access to information about candidates can be launched by Bangladesh Election Commission. Figure 6.5 mentions other areas of e-Participation in electoral process.

Consultation on policy and law making: The new e-Participation portal may have a centralized system for seeking opinion about new policy and law as well as amendment of existing policies and laws. Each Ministry, responsible for specific policies and laws, can publish the document for consultation to the central portal as well as on their own website.

For consultation with all segments of society only website-based consultation is not adequate, moreover, in most cases the content of the document is technical, which requires simplification and in format easily comprehensible by citizens. Thus, platforms like social media and direct messaging platforms can be used. The provision of sending opinion through email can be adopted across the board. For making citizens aware of any policy and law, which touch their lives, policy dialogues, both online and offline can be organized. NGOs/CSOs/CBOs can mobilize citizens through court-yard sessions for collecting opinion and sending to respective government entities for consideration.

Citizens' rights and entitlement: As for the access to information segment of the new e-Participation portal, this segment may apply to the same digital and physical channels. For this segment, one specific element is important, which is informing citizens and enabling them to enroll for accessing benefit with ease. This channel can elaborate on each of the social safety benefits, their eligibility criteria, application process in multiple formats, including visual [infographics], audio and audio-visual. For this purpose, AI tools can be used for timeliness and cost-effectiveness.

Co-creation and delivery of public services: This segment can be dedicated to only information, about process of accessing each of the services as well as accessing fully digitalized services eliminating human touch-point where applicable. A special taskforce is proposed for revisiting and redesigning public services applying human-centered design approach and considering difficulties citizens face in accessing the services in their current form.

A mobile app can be launched for accessing digital public services with option for voice interactions. Social media needs to be used for promoting digital public services and making citizens aware of how to remain safe from fraudulence. YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok can be used for this purpose.

As citizens rely heavily on intermediaries, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs may act as facilitators to citizens for accessing the services, reducing reliance on purely commercial actors. The concept of 'Authorized Service Provider' can also be explored.

Grievance and feedback: The most well-developed portal and with a complete feedback loop is Grievance Redress (GRS) Portal www.grs.gov.bd. The new e-Participation can connect this portal directly with minor modification. For example, feedback on design on public services can be moved to the 'Co-creation and delivery of public services' segment. Integration of AI can make the portal more user-friendly and effective. The portal should promote provision of referral so that a citizen does not need to resubmit the complaint. Despite the intent and good design, the GRS is underutilized. The portal needs to be connected with other channels like mobile app and DM platforms.

Along with the provision of digital channels, physical channels need to be promoted for citizens, who are unable or unwilling to complain through digital means. UDC, information and facilitation desk at government offices, information and facilitation desk at NGOs/CSOs/CBOs can be launched. As citizens are not aware about the GRS, these information and facilitation desks can play very important roles. Social media campaign can be run by the government and NGOs/CSOs/CBOs.

The proposed e-Participation policy framework emphasizes streamlining the scope of the new e-Participation platform *Citizen Connect*. The effectiveness of the e-Participation policy areas relies on the well-defined feedback loop. This loop ensures the meaningful collection of citizens' input, the evaluation, and action. The existing feedback loop needs to be modified and made mandatory for all actors an appropriate standard operating procedure (SoP) needs to be deployed where it is currently missing.

The policy framework must adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the benefit of both supply and demand sides. For each channel mentioned above and for the whole scope of the e-Participation, the opportunity to leverage AI is high, both for enhancing citizens' satisfaction and protection from harm.

The proposed e-Participation policy framework design and its implementation emphasize the idea of innovation in the collaborative approach and need-based co-creation. The quadruple helix model consisting of Government (The Public Sector), Industry (The Private sector), Academia, and Civil Society, is proposed to be adopted for implementing the policy framework. Referring to this model facilitates incorporating the approach of innovation, collective intelligence, skills, and resources.

The policy framework presents a detailed mapping of actors of e-Participation framework implementation. The government is poised to be the initiator and main supply-side actor for the e-Participation framework. The coordinated efforts of multiple actors having a defined role result in successful e-Participation. The driving force for the design and operation of the e-Participation platform is the government. The strategic and operational leadership of e-Participation platform is to be provided by the Cabinet Division, which is already in practice [www.grs.gov.bd is spearheaded by the Cabinet Division]. As a central coordinating body, it plays a critical role in coordinating inter-ministerial actions in matters that require cooperation among multiple ministries. The technical leadership related to e-Participation platform and channel management is to be provided by the ICT Division and its relevant agencies. All ministries and their agencies have role in management of e-Participation, primarily as supply side actors. NGO Affairs Bureau, Department of Social Welfare and Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms are the important agencies for engaging NGOs, CSOs, CBOs and private sector. The other important actor is local administration (offices of division commissioner, district commissioner, offices of Upazilla Nirbahi officer, city corporations, municipalities and union parishad), especially for engaging citizens in the rural areas.

The non-government actors, especially CSOs, CBOs and NGOs are to play an instrumental role in raising awareness about opportunities of e-Participation, involving citizens in policy making and co-designing new generation of digital public services. They are also to play a role in making public institutions accountable on behalf of the citizens.

The e-Participation policy framework also presents an implementation strategy. The strategic priorities based on the quadruple helix model are:

- a. **Institutional rearrangement:** Given the importance of e-Participation with its multiple dimensions and for ensuring maximum participation and satisfaction of citizens, a new dedicated entity under Cabinet Division may be considered with appropriate authority and resources.
- b. **Digital capacity and competence of government agencies:** Over the years the capacity and competence of government agencies have increased. However, for the next generation e-government initiatives and e-Participation they require further improvement. A special program can be undertaken in this regard, where good practices can be learned from home and abroad.
- c. **Development and deployment of Application Programming Interfaces (API):** Effectiveness interoperability is the key for effective e-Participation, which will allow leveraging the power of data, which are scattered, for targeting specific groups, personalize user experience, and improving accuracy.
- d. **Linking D-Nothi with e-Participation platform:** The link will allow the government agencies to improve public service delivery, identifying right beneficiaries of social safety net programs, monitoring progress and ensure greater accountability.
- e. **Adoption of AI strategy for e-Participation:** An AI strategy for e-Participation is required based on proper research and keeping in mind the principle of 'no harm'. It is better to take time and study rather hastily deploy AI, which might be counter-productive.
- f. **Production of searchable information products:** The information available on the websites of the Ministries and government agencies are pre-dominantly searchable. However, the lack of searchability of the remaining information reduces efficiency of information services to citizens. Under the access to information segment of the e-Participation framework, an initiative can be taken to make all information searchable.
- g. **Making data available in computable format:** The data.gov.bd initiative needs to be revived and data in computable format need to be available on a priority basis. The data from all government sources need to be brought together. The quality, transparency and accessibility of statistics are important and, in this regard, in the process of reviving data.gov.bd, the recommendations of the Data taskforce may be considered.
- h. **Development and monitoring of KPIs for responsible Officials for ensuring accountability:** For further improvement of the e-Participation status of Bangladesh KPI-based monitoring mechanism needs to be deployed with appropriate reward system.
- i. **Conversion of content into easy-to-understand format:** While consultation with citizens is the key for functioning democracy, often the content share for opinion is in the language for experts only. Each content needs to be converted into de-jargonized language and voice and audio-visual format.

- j. **Engagement of non-government actors:** NGOs/CSOs/CBOs have access to grassroots citizens; however their resources are tied to specific projects, which may not be targeted towards activities related to e-Participation. The government can negotiate with development partners for allocating resources for improvement of e-government and e-Participation, which will allow to build sustainable partnership among the actors, especially government agencies and non-government actors. As external funding is drastically reducing, the government agencies can involve on competitive basis the non-government actors as is done with private sector agencies.

The proposed e-Participation framework design and its implementation has three major components: design, deployment and engagement. While design and deployment is easier, engagement of citizens is painstakingly long. Even country like Estonia took 10 years for effective engagement of citizens despite high access and digital skills. Thus, the timeframe for action plan is proposed to be 10 years.

Whether e-Participation is effective, inclusive, and accountable depends on the monitoring and reporting system of e-Participation. They transform e-Participation into an evidence-based governance process where citizens' voices are incorporated into decision-making. Measuring e-Participation is crucial with the objective of assessing inclusiveness and transparency, and the impact of governments' digital engagement initiatives. Indicators help policymakers evaluate progress, identify gaps in citizen-government interactions through digital platforms. Four groups of key indicators are proposed: participation level, inclusiveness of participation, transparency and responsiveness, and policy implications. The proposed e-Participation policy framework recommends launching of National e-Participation Index for feeding into the Global Index. It also recommends launching of citizens' satisfaction ratings in e-Participation.

This proposed e-Participation policy framework and its effective implementation of the proposal of a centralized platform with distributed content ownership are expected to take Bangladesh towards an inclusive society with equitable access to digital public services and participation in the governance.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Civic engagement is the cornerstone of any functional democracy, and it goes beyond simple representation of citizens through parliamentary democratic process. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, adopted in 1972, clearly establishes that all state power is derived from the people, making them the foundation of democracy and governance. It guarantees citizens fundamental rights such as equality before the law, freedom of speech, assembly, and association, ensuring their active participation in shaping the nation. Through the right to vote, citizens exercise direct influence over leadership and policy, while constitutional safeguards protect them against abuse of power. In essence, the Constitution enshrines the principle that the government exists to serve the people, and citizens, as the sovereign authority, have both the right and responsibility to uphold democracy and the rule of law.

As technology penetrates all aspects of citizens' life and democratic governance, civic participation is extended to both physical and virtual spaces across the globe as well in Bangladesh. Technology has brought unprecedented opportunities to enhance civic engagement given that there is right policy and mechanism to promote it. Often civic participation through digital platforms has become more powerful than through physical forms. Bangladesh's digitalization journey has encompassed a few aspects of civic participation through digital platforms.

In this context, Bangladesh is in the process of development of an e-Participation policy to leverage the advantages of digital technology. This proposed policy framework is expected to play an important role in formulation of the policy, action plan and a mechanism of monitoring and accountability.

The concept of e-Participation and e-government are intertwined, and the definition of United Nations is being used in designing this e-Participation policy framework. The United Nations defines e-Participation as the process of engaging citizens through information and communication Technologies (ICTs) in policy, decision-making, service design, and delivery to make it participatory, inclusive, and deliberative.ⁱ e-Government refers to the use of ICTs to effectively and efficiently deliver government services to citizens and businesses. The United Nations defines e-Government as the use of ICTs for improving the efficiency of government agencies and providing government services online.ⁱⁱ This definition gets broadened in the area of a wide range of interactions with citizens and businesses, with the use of ICTs to enable innovation in governance. The most common type of e-Government classification is Government to Citizen (G2C). The other types are Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Government (G2G).

In the first type, Government to Citizens (G2C), the target audience are citizens. A government uses electronic means to provide governmental services and seek citizens' engagement in various aspects of governance. Whereas the Government to Business (G2B) type, the government provides e-services for non-government actors including the private sector. In the third type, Government to Government (G2G), one government institution or department exchanges data and provide services to another government institutions.ⁱⁱⁱ

1.2. Importance of e-Participation?

Participation of citizens beyond parliamentary representation is essential to ensure accountability and good governance. Direct participation through both physical and digital means ensures that citizens' positions and perceptions are accurately captured. They prevent dissatisfaction and intolerance. e-Participation extends the idea of democracy into the digital age and allows citizens to contribute in a two-way manner by using digital technologies in governmental processes.

Effective e-Participation promotes an inclusive society by mobilizing people's ideas, opinions, and actions. The e-Participation process opens doors to multiple channels of communication among the government, citizens, civil society and other stakeholders. It not only mobilizes citizens to provide their views on decisions and services but also shapes action in the pursuit of sustainable development.^{iv}

e-Participation opens up direct channels for citizens to interact with government, to express their opinions, hold government accountable, and collaborate in the governance process. The process deepens democracy and builds trust between citizens and the state as the government can capture the perspectives of citizens effectively as a part of democratic necessity.

e-Participation goes beyond being a luxury technological upgrade and serves as the fundamental and necessary element for democratizing governance and ensuring citizens' active involvement in decision-making.¹ This enhances transparency, make public service design according to the needs and readiness of citizens, reduces time and cost in service delivery, and improves citizen trust.

A well-designed e-Participation framework can effectively engage citizens in policymaking, service feedback, and grievance redressal. As a multi-dimensional process, e-participation covers both proactive information disclosure and allows real-time civic engagement.

1.3. Vision and Key Objectives of Proposed e-Participation Policy Framework

1.3.1 Vision

The vision of the proposed e-Participation policy framework is to have a civic engagement space combining both physical and virtual platforms for effective democratic governance where citizens can access information, participate in shaping space for democratic process, contribute in policy and law making, claim rights and entitlement, participate in co-creation process of public services and their delivery, and express grievances and their redressal in transparent manner, which are to ensure exercising constitutional power vested in citizens.

¹ Khulna divisional Consultation: "The issue of e-Participation is one of the main activities of the present interim government. As part of this, we are going to digitalize gradually. And that's why we want those who work in the field administration to know the activities that NGOs have to do, but MRDI has taken this initiative to make it more active."

1.3.2. Key Objectives

- a. Increase transparency and accountability of the government through access to information and create an environment of mutual trust.
- b. Make public-service design and delivery citizen-friendly for effective contribution to economic and social progress.
- c. Make civic participation inclusive through pro-active strategy and action with appropriate design of a multi-platform engagement considering various constraints of citizens.
- d. Integrate e-Participation tools in government agencies, which allows real-time processing citizens' feedback and opinions, where applicable, for effective people-oriented governance.
- e. Strengthening collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and other stakeholders as intermediaries between the government and citizens so existing bottleneck in active citizens' participation are addressed.

“

The participation of the people means the empowerment of the people. That is the first objective, and the second objective is that there should be transparency in the activities of all the authorities of every government department. It should be ensured that the work that is being done is clearly understood that no authority has resorted to any kind of fraud, has resorted to any kind of corruption, has not committed any irregularities while doing this work.

”

Key Informant Interview

2. State of e-Participation in Bangladesh

2.1. Bangladesh's Position in Global Indicators

In 2024, Bangladesh held 70th position among 193 countries in the global e-participation index with a score of 0.6164. Among South Asian nations, only India was ahead of Bangladesh. The e-Government Development Index rank of Bangladesh was 100th, with a score of 0.6570 in that year. Bangladesh was behind of India and Sri Lanka. This ranking is produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) through its bi-annual UN E-Government Survey [Table 2.1].^v In the last few years, according to the country report of the UN e-Government Survey, Bangladesh experienced tremendous growth in access to digital financial accounts, branchless banking across the country, and the increased use of mobile financial services (MFS).^{vi}

Table 2.1 : Bangladesh's Position in Global E-Government Development Index and E-Participation Index, 2024

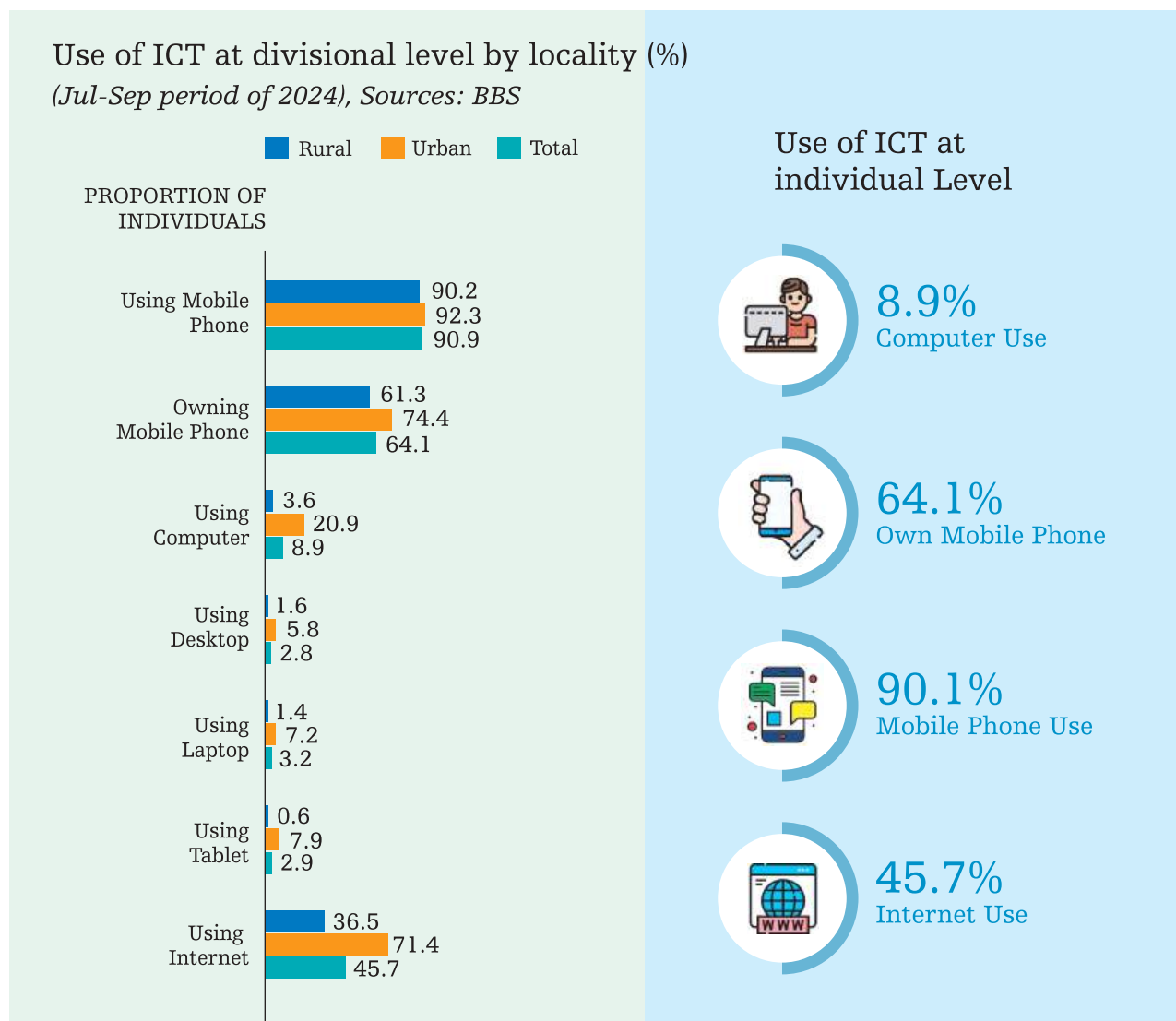
Name of the Countries	E-Government Development Index 2024	E-Participation Index 2024
Bangladesh	Score: 0.6570 out of 1 Rank: 100th	Score: 0.6164 out of 1 Rank: 70th
India	Score: 0.6678 Rank 97 of 193	Score: 0.6575 Rank 61 of 193
Bhutan	Score: 0.6511 Rank 103 of 193	Score: 0.4932 Rank 88 of 193
Nepal	Score: 0.5781 Rank 119 of 193	Score: 0.2192 Rank 152 of 193
Pakistan	Score: 0.5096 Rank 136 of 193	Score: 0.4932 Rank 88 of 193
Sri Lanka	Score: 0.6667 Rank 98 of 193	Score: 0.4110 Rank 108 of 193

Source: UN E-Government Survey 2024.

<https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2024>

This ranking is a demonstration of Bangladesh government's commitment and efforts in e-participation and e-government. The proposed e-participation policy framework is expected to improve this ranking through an action plan and strategy for its implementation.

2.2. Digital Public Infrastructure for e-participation



Access to digital technology and its rural urban disparity is a key determinant of e-participation architecture of Bangladesh. The mobile phone ownership in Bangladesh is 64.1%, with 74.4% ownership is in urban areas and 61.3% in rural areas. However, access to mobile is 90.9%, which indicate that shared access to phone is common within households. The computer usage is very low, only 8.9%, which needs to be considered when website-based e-participation is prevalent.

The rural-urban disparity is high in terms of computer usage (urban 20.9% and rural 3.6%). There is significant divide between urban and rural users of Internet.

In the April-June quarter of fiscal year 2024-25, 71.4% of individuals in urban areas reported using the internet, whereas only 36.5% of rural residents had internet access in the same period, with a national average of 48.6% users. The gap has widened compared to the previous year (urban 68.6% vs rural 36.4%), reflecting slower progress in rural connectivity. This is an important factor to be considered in designing the architecture and process of civic engagement through digital platform².

² BBS (2025). Quarterly ICT Access and Use Survey 2024-25 [April-June Quarter].

https://bbs.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bbs.portal.gov.bd/page/b343a8b4_956b_45ca_872f_4cf9b2f1a6e0/2025-08-26-05-46-17f31da4f0f0aad2db6e5eaf82f0b83d.pdf

2.3. Digitalization of the Government and e-Participation

Although Bangladesh's digitalization journey started with a big-bang approach in 2009, the experience of citizens in accessing digital public services is mixed.

2.3.1. Major Digital Public Platforms

Major Initiative related to e-Participation: Major initiatives related to e-government and e-participation are presented in Table 2.1

Table 2.2. Major Digital Public Platforms

Area of Practice	Platforms Used
Access to Information	Bangladesh National Portal: Bangladesh.gov.bd, RTI Portal: rtitracking.infocom.gov.bd, National Web Portal, MyGov Portal, Ministry Websites, Bangladesh Open Data Portal: Data.gov.bd; Hotline 333, Sheba Kunjo, Service Portal: services.portal.gov.bd, Bangladesh Directory: edirectory.portal.gov.bd
Public Service Applications	MyGov Portal, Union Digital Centers, Prottoyon.com, Ministry Websites, Citizen Portal Health Services: vaxepi.gov.bd, Prottoyon Portal: prottoyon.gov.bd, citizen.ssc.gov.bd [Sylhet City Corporation]
Grievance and Feedback	GRS portal grs.gov.bd, Facebook Government Pages
Consultation in Decision-Making	Feedback on Draft Policies uploaded by Ministries, Google Forms link, Social Media Comments
Monitoring and Accountability	RTI Application, GRS Application Track, MyGov Dashboard
e-Government	e-Nothi, D-Nothi, iBAS

Other digital public services are online submissions of tax returns, online government procurement, online registration of pilgrimage, online access to government forms, online publication of results of public examinations, online admission processing of public educational institutions.

Digitalization of Social Safety Net programs: *The largest digital public service is transfer of allowance to recipients of Social Safety Net (SSN) programs. Twenty-seven ministries now implement 140 programs under the social safety net framework.*^{vii} In FY 2026 total budget allocation for safety net benefits to be transferred to around 10 million beneficiaries is BDT 959.08 billion through mobile financial services channel. Currently, recipients of the social safety net programs (SSNP) receive their allowance digitally through biometric authentication at the Union Digital Center (UDC) mobile financial accounts, and agent banking. From January 2026, the beneficiaries register with SIM against their NIDs. While increasing transparency in disbursement is the goal, recipients who do not have their own mobile phone may face problems. Moreover, digital literacy may also be a challenge.

Digital Financial Services (DFS): Bangladesh's DFS sector is predominantly focused on basic mobile money, digital transfer of money among citizens. The growth of digital transfer and payment is exponential. In February 2025 total number of active mobile financial services accounts was 87.15 million with total transaction of BDT 1.65 trillion. The payment for purchase using mobile financial

services is getting traction. There are startups, which are collaborating with scheduled commercial banks for transitioning from basic mobile money to full-scale fintech services, including digital lending, micro-insurance, and investment platforms. The MFS is being used for transferring cash to recipients of social safety net program.

Union Digital Center: The government of Bangladesh introduced Union Digital Centers (UDCs), information and public service delivery outlets, and one-stop shops for providing information and service centers for the community and citizens. UDCs provide the most popular public services, starting from birth registration, citizen certificates, to registration for migrant workers. UDCs not only provide citizens the government services but also incorporate public services in the form of micro entrepreneurship at the union level.

2.3.2. Major Challenges of e-Participation: Citizens' Perspective

Major challenges of digital public services from citizens' perspective are mentioned below³.

Challenges in access to technology: The limited access to a digital device, broadband and reliable electricity for large portions of the population make them reliant on various intermediaries, adding both cost and inconvenience.

The digital divide between rural and urban populations: Digital access to services and other government initiatives remains unequal when it comes to rural population.⁴ Even if there is no digital divide, there is a need for affordable internet connectivity.

Political interference and petty corruption: Few digital public services in Bangladesh offer fully end-to-end functionality. Almost all rely on some manual touchpoints with the state involving human intermediation for both access and authorizations. These touchpoints introduce opportunities for corruption. Local politicians and officials also manipulate the distribution of access to services to serve political ends, using it as patronage to reward favored beneficiaries and exclude others.⁵

Physical access: Given the necessity of physical interactions to access public digital services, proximity to those points of service plays a vital role in access. Especially in remote locations, the requirement to travel (both by foot and/or by transport) to access services can present insurmountable challenges. Travel requirements have specific implications for women owing to concerns about safety in public spaces.

Digital literacy and usability: Even where internet access is available in rural areas, users mainly prefer to use Union Digital Centers (UDCs) or computer shops to get access to services. This preference is exacerbated by poor design of services, where public digital services and applications are developed by vendors on the instructions of officials, neither of whom have full insight into what citizens actually need.

Digital security and data protection: Gaps in security provision have led to major data breaches in Bangladesh, putting user information and digital identities at risk. Ambiguities around ownership of data between government departments, and between the government and IT vendors, create security vulnerabilities for citizens.

³ British Council (2025). Context Analysis Report: A Political Economy Analysis, April 2025.

⁴ Divisional Consultation meeting: "Urban residents enjoy more benefits than rural ones. Many marginalized communities lack network access, especially coastal people like fishermen who go to sea and remain disconnected."

⁵ Divisional Consultation Meetings

Language and culture barriers: Citizens of Bangladesh are mostly Bengali-speaking, and most of the e-Government initiatives are created in English. When citizens use public services, they face language difficulty.

Misinformation and online safety in digital space: The increased spread of misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech poses threats to citizens' participation. The growing concern also affects women and minorities in terms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) and online harassment.^{viii} Limited awareness of safe online behavior and harassment of women on social media discourages e-participation.

Lack of awareness: The lack of public awareness around the availability of digital public services leaves the public subject to unnecessary additional charges and creates bottlenecks around usage.

2.3.3. Challenges of e-Participation: Government Perspectives

- a. **Lack of system integration:** While the government has made progress in digitizing more than 30 district-level services, the lack of system integration remains a major obstacle. District-level services are online, but offices still cannot share data.
- b. **Limited verification mechanism:** Many approval processes create opportunities for document forgery. Due to a limited verification mechanism and falsified certificate submission, full automation risks remained.
- c. **The capacity limitations of public authorities:** Many public servants often lack the knowledge and expertise to administer e-governance technology. They also face restrictions on scarce budgetary resources. Both government institutions and civil society actors require capacity building to harness digital tools in order to ensure transparent and accountable governance.
- d. **Partial digitization:** Most of the government data is partially digitized, whereas many documents are still in paper form and are in the process of digitization. So, these issues make it difficult to access and use for digital projects.
- e. **Incompatibility of services and data:** The absence of a single platform or digital authorization for access to digital public services, and the lack of interoperability between government databases, creates fragmented digital assets. Rather than treating data as a public good, individual Ministries and Divisions often treat it as a departmental asset, restricting access to maximize departmental gain. This creates numerous inefficiencies for the user, as well as a lack of transparency.
- f. **Misuse of information disclosure:** At the field level, some people misuse the Right to Information (RTI) Act to access sensitive project data and spread false information. To ensure transparency without risking misuse, clearer rules need to be made public.
- g. **Limited real-time oversight:** Many NGOs apply for certifications only after completing the project. It limits effective monitoring and necessitates a real-time digital tracking system to ensure accountability.

3. e-Participation Practices: Global Scenario

3.1. Global Good Practices: A Few Examples

Countries have been undertaking various initiatives, focusing both on the domain of e-government and e-participation over last two decades. Investment, talent development citizen-centered design, accountability system made many countries move fast and make significant progress. Some countries focused more on digital delivery of public services, others prioritized both e-government and e-participation. A few examples from countries with higher ranking and with relatively lower ranking are presented below, which is supposed to inform Bangladesh's design of e-participation policy framework and action plan.

Denmark: Denmark ranks number one both in e-government development index and e-participation index 2024. Denmark has a centralized platform with decentralized content ownership. It is one of the successful examples of implementing E-Government. Information and communication technology has been well integrated into the public services and government administration. Denmark provides easy access through an integrated E-Gov portal to enable citizens to carry out administrative activities online. The platform Borger.dk launched in 2007, is the national citizen portal to access all public services for residents. Through this unified platform, citizens can get access to over 2000 different services. Borger.dk is run by the Agency for Digital Government. Citizens get information on the website about the public sector, administrative procedures, and rights and responsibilities. Borger.dk was expanded in the year 2018 to *Mit Overblik (My Overview)*. This website allows citizens to see information about the public authorities in one place, including taxes, pensions, student grants, health, and housing. Denmark has an interactive platform named 'Digital Post Platform' where residents of Denmark communicate with public authorities. People access the Digital Post Platform through the National Citizen Portal, borger.dk, using their Danish national eID. The simple interface makes accessing services and information easier with high digital literacy. Denmark has achieved 69.6% basic digital skills coverage, compared to the EU average of 55.6%. This puts Denmark at 87% of the overall target for the EU 2030 goal, which aims to have 80% of the EU population possessing at least basic digital skills.⁶

Estonia: Ranking second in global e-government development index and e-participation index 2024, this northern European country introduced an e-Participation policy and launched the e-Estonia platform. This platform represents a whole of society approach with access to all e-services. Most of the e-services do not have any human touch point while accessing services. The portal offers public consultation, online decision-making, and e-voting opportunities. One of the most popular e-Participation tools in Estonia is e-voting. In Estonia, Young people aged 16 and 17 can vote at local elections, that makes e-voting one of the most popular options among young people.

⁶ Report on the state of the Digital Decade 2024 | Shaping Europe's digital future

India: According to the *United Nations e-Participation Index (2024)*, India has been placed at the 61st position, enabling citizens to engage with public authorities through digital platforms. Complementing this, India's standing on the *United Nations e-Government Development Index (EGDI 2024)* shows an improved rank of 97, underscoring enhanced institutional and technological capacities for digital service delivery. Within this broader trajectory of digital governance, two citizen-centric initiatives merit particular attention for their role in strengthening e-Governance and e-Participation in India. One of the initiatives is Digital India Program, undertaken in 2015, which aims to transform India into a digital economy with the incorporation of citizens' participation and businesses. The main focus goes to transform India's digital public infrastructure, creating broadband highways, reforming government through technology, and e-Kranti: electronic service delivery, unified payment interface, unified mobile application for new age governance, and more.^{ix} The other initiative is MyGov Platform, launched in 2014, to ensure citizens' engagement in decision-making. Through MyGov, multiple government agencies and Ministries collaborate and engage with citizens for policy formulation and seek the opinion of people on various issues and topics related to public interest and welfare. By 2023, the MyGov platform had 30 million registered users. The channels where citizens engage through MyGov platforms are Poll/Survey, Blog, Talk', Do', Discuss, Pledge, and more.

Malaysia: Malaysia, a Southeast Asian country, possesses a separate e-Participation Policy. The country secured a score of 0.6986 at the rank of 53 of 193.^x Through the policy, the country offers online services by government agencies to the citizens through multiple channels. According to the policy, every government agency collects citizens' feedback using digital tools in a distributed approach during the formulation of any policy and law. Malaysia has an e-Participation framework that comprises three core elements: e-Information, e-Consultation, and e-Decision Making. Their mode of e-Participation channels are online poll, online feedback (includes questions, feedback, complaints, suggestions), satisfaction Survey, and social media. Citizens can participate via any channels by complying with the terms and conditions of participation.^{xi} The centralized portal of Malaysia is titled My Government, or the Malaysian Government Public Service Portal. It is a well-designed single gateway to information and services provided by the Government of Malaysia. Through this portal, users can receive services from more than 900 government agencies' websites. This initiative is taken by the Malaysian Administrative Modernization and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), a department of the Prime Minister's Department. The portal commenced operations in 2005 with the primary objective of providing the public and business community with convenient access to online information and government services previously available only at local service centers.^{xii} Key services offered include: Prime news display, event calendar, job vacancies, tender notices, advertisements and announcements, public complaint submissions, form downloads. Through this portal, interactions with government agencies have become more efficient and accessible. It reduces the need for physical counter visits, saving time and enhancing delivery service for both the public and businesses.

Scotland: Scotland's e-Participation policy has a proactive approach. There is no single e-Participation Policy. The country introduces a portal for collecting opinion from citizens with a segment titled 'We Asked, You Said, We Did'. This component promotes e-consultations and collects opinions from citizens and stakeholders to keep the public informed. It is also meant for receiving observations and opinions on implementation of various policies. The government explains its position on certain policy matters and asks citizens for suggestions on the implementation of the policy and options through this one-on-one interactive module. When a consultation is launched on certain policy matter of government decision, the online communication team promotes it through news releases, social media, or blog posts, prompting debate among stakeholders. For participation, citizens must provide an email address, state whether they participate as individuals or on behalf of an organization and may choose to publish their responses anonymously. The platform does not have option for interaction among citizens.^{xiii}

Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka is ranked 98 and 108, respectively, in the E-Government Development Index and E-Participation Index for the year 2024. It has a centralized e-Participation portal titled eparticipation.gov.lk, which is supposed to act as an official platform for citizens to interact with the government on a variety of policy issues. It is also supposed to serve as a unified interface for government interaction to increase transparency and to win trust by allowing citizens to contribute to decision-making. The e-Participation portal led by the Government of Sri Lanka offers citizens to participate in public consultations and events. The portal also launches a diverse range of feedback channels for citizens to participate, for instance: Email, face-to-face dialogues, WhatsApp interactive chat group. There is also a scope to collaborate with community organizations and grassroots movements on ensuring a comprehensive connection.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE): The country secured a score of 0.7808 in e-participation index 2024, ranking 37 out of 193 countries.^{xiv} The country has a Digital Participation Policy to facilitate citizen engagement with its government through various channels. The digital participation strategy of the UAE involves collecting suggestions, complaints, and feedback through a range of digital platforms. The mode of e-Participation channels through the portal is: Polls, Consultations, Forums, Blogs, and ideation. The UAE has an official portal titled Sharik.ae, which follows a centralized model where all feedback from citizens is processed through a unified national portal. The portal has a separate section named Your Voice for citizens' input in decision-making and policy development. The platform works like a one-stop solution to access any information and services. The UAE also has a centralized portal for tracking observations, suggestions, and inquiries from citizens, titled Tawasul. This segment of e-participation encourages using single identity and single login created using national single identity. The citizens can also create their own personalized dashboard for tracking interaction with various government agencies and matters related to e-participation.

3.2. Good Practices Relevant for Bangladesh

Bangladesh has made progress both in e-government and e-participation. For next generation development the government is actively working. The country examples mentioned above may facilitate next generation design and deployment in multiple ways:

- a. e-participation platform architecture
- b. Interaction process of the government with citizens
- c. Channels to be used
- d. Quality assurance and accountability system.
- e. Accessibility

e-participation platform architecture: Most of the initiatives covers multiple aspects of e-participation: access to information, access to services, consultations with citizens, grievance and redressal, citizens' rights and democratic process in certain cases. This classification vindicates that Bangladesh's journey towards e-government and e-participation on the right track from the classification perspective. The most countries adopted a hybrid model and cluster-based approach in making certain components centralized. The role of government agencies is multi-layer clearly defining role and responsibilities of various agencies.

Interaction process of the government with citizens: Countries like Denmark allow citizens' direct participation and through organizations, which is a recognition of role of civil society organizations and private sector. Countries promote using single IDs and also allow anonymity when it comes to sharing feedback and opinion.

Channels to be used: All countries adopt multiple channels for interaction with citizens, including social media platforms and platform like WhatsApp. The divisional consultations also opined for inclusion of platform like WhatsApp. Website is common for all countries and high usages is also ensured thanks to high digital skills of citizens.

Quality assurance and accountability system: Quality assurance is in-built in the public service delivery mechanism of the countries in examples. There is also system of accountability, which keeps the data and response up-to-date, which is important for high satisfaction of citizens in the interaction with citizens. Some countries conduct satisfaction survey on digital public service delivery. The countries conduct regular survey for monitoring progress vis-à-vis progress set by the country's governments and regional bodies like European Union.

Accessibility: Other than DPI related limitations, where quality of Internet and access to devices are important factors to be considered, countries have given importance in inclusion, thus, the website and other platforms are made accessible for visually impaired citizens.

4. Guiding Principles for Ensuring Effective e-Participation

The proposed e-Participation Policy is expected to be developed based on twelve key principles. Presented below in alphabetical order.

- a. **Affordability:** Affordability is a major challenge and significant part of the citizens.
- b. **Citizen-centered transformation:** Instead of focusing technology, the citizen should be the focus of the digital transformation process. Ease of use, user empowerment, and strengthening a culture of digital transformation need to be incorporated in the service design process rather than relying on only technical expertise.
- c. **Choice:** Citizens need to be given choice in accessing public services and participating in the governance process. This issue of choice emanates from human rights perspective and is also connected with digital divide.
- d. **Co-creation:** Digital services are developed through collaboration among local authorities, citizens, and relevant public, private, and civil society actors.
- e. **Data ownership:** As citizens share many sensitive personal data in the process of interaction with government and non-government actors, which are being used by multiple other parties. The e-participation policy should ensure data ownership and when possible, its monetization, which does not breach their data security.
- f. **Data security and privacy:** Public services often require sensitive personal data (health, financial, identity). The ethical dimension of offering digital public services is ensuring data security, preventing misuse, and complying with proper regulations related to data protection. Citizens must feel confident that their information is handled responsibly.
- g. **Ethics:** It is an ethical consideration that design of systems is inclusive that guarantee equal access regardless of digital literacy or resources.
- h. **Flexibility and continuous improvement:** e-participation architecture, platforms and digital public services need to be designed in a way that there is room for continuous improvement through a mechanism of receiving feedback.

- i. **Inclusion:** Digital platforms risk excluding vulnerable groups (elderly, rural populations, low-income citizens). As majority of citizens have access to only basic mobile phone, voice and text-based interactions may be one way to reduce exclusion. Application of AI can facilitate this to a great extent. Considerations of accessibility should also be part of the strategy, where citizens with physical disability are also included.
- j. **Partnership:** Given the resource limitation and capability to include citizens with limited access to device and high-quality Internet due to affordability and limited digital literacy, it is essential to engage non-state actors (civil society organizations, private sector, and NGOs). This engagement needs to be complimented by allocating resources for non-state actors, as the foreign-funding landscape is evolving.
- k. **Pragmatism and contextual feasibility:** Given the extent and quality of DPI, digital literacy, digital divide, the digitalization initiatives must be designed in a way where unnecessary human touch points need to eliminate to reduce scope of rent-seeking, and for other cases, human-technology model needs to be promoted for avoiding exclusion. A roadmap-based gradual approach is more sustainable and usable rather than driving for numbers.
- l. **Sustainability:** Services need to be re-designed and deployed in a way so that they are fully functional and majority of the intended citizens can access those services with any technical or operational failure. This requires technology platform development supported by proper appropriate institutional capacity and resource allocation with proper allocation of businesses.
- m. **Transparency and accountability:** The ultimate objective of e-participation is to ensure transparency on how a government functions and public participation in the process. The e-participation policy must include provision on mechanism of ensuring transparency and accountability.

5. Scope and Key Priorities of e-Participation for Bangladesh

Given the progress made in Bangladesh, learning from global practices and considering factors unique to Bangladesh, six key segments are identified for Bangladesh' e-participation policy framework: access to Information, democratic process, policy and law-making, citizens' rights and entitlement, co-creation and delivery of public services, grievances and feedback, and democratic process.

Access to information: There are multiple initiatives for improving access to information that has been observed with various degrees of maturity and effectiveness, notably the web portal bangladesh.gov.bd and data.gov.bd, physical public access points like Union Digital Centers (UDCs) and phone-based information service like 333. This diversity of platforms perfectly matches with the factors related to access to technology, digital literacy and affordability. Having 90.2% access to mobile phone 333 can be the most popular information service channel, where citizens can access information about the public services. When people have no access to mobile phone, they can visit a nearby UDC and request information, which can be served by the entrepreneurs at the UDC by searching information sources digitally. The web-based initiatives like bangladesh.gov.bd can be accessed by citizens having computer and Internet connection and intermediaries at UDC and other commercial access points.

According to the Right to Information Act 2009, all public institutions are legally bound to disclose information proactively [section 6 of the law] and to provide information on demand [following section 6 and section 7 of the law]. However, the awareness among citizens about the law is very low, only 7.7% according to RTI Survey 2019, whereas such awareness was 23% in 2012. The erosion of awareness can be attributed to lack sustained campaign targeting the citizens and lack of engagement and interest by majority of CSOs. The web portal data.gov.bd is now dysfunctional and initiative failed to pull data from all government institutions including Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

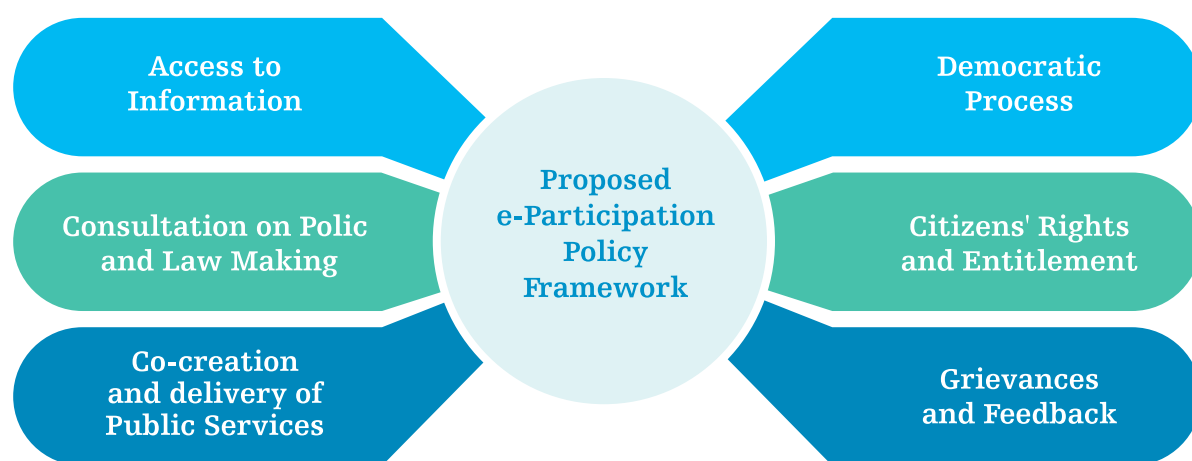
The only functional information service is bangladesh.gov.bd. The Bangladesh National Web Portal (bangladesh.gov.bd) is designed to be a one-stop platform for citizens, businesses, and government offices, offering digital services, official information, and interactive tools. With bilingual interface (Bangla and English), searchable service directory and categorized menus for easy navigation, it is the most comprehensive information portal of the government. It connects 58 ministries/divisions, 353 directorates/offices, 8 divisions, 64 districts, 495 upazilas, and 4,554 unions.

The proposed e-participation policy framework emphasizes currency of the information on Bangladesh.gov.bd and revival of data.gov.bd and 333. It also prioritizes spread of physical centers for accessing information and services beyond union parishad through partnership with private operators and NGOs and CBOs.

Democratic process: While political parties use social media for their campaign, for electoral process citizens and actors still rely on manual voting system. Trust deficit among the actors is also a major factor why electoral participation through digital means is pre-mature for Bangladesh. However, for voter awareness both for national and local elections digital platforms can be used. Strong social media presence and channels like 333 and UDCs can be used for creating awareness about electoral process, including getting information on the candidates for elections. The portal of Bangladesh Election Commission can be effectively used for this purpose and can be part of e-participation architecture.

Consultation on policy and law making: Public consultation for enactment of new policy and law has become a tradition in Bangladesh. However, due to lack of campaign and limited access to website through computers, participation is limited within urban elite and interest groups. Following the principle of fairness and inclusion, the consultation process needs to be revamped. For effective involvement of all stakeholders, both from urban and rural areas, a mix of in-person method and digital platform-based method are to be followed. For getting input on policy and law documents, popular version of documents need to be produced which are de-jargonized. Collaboration with CSOs and think-tanks are important for this purpose.

Figure 5.1. Scope of proposed e-Participation Policy Framework



Citizens' rights and entitlement: Awareness of rights and entitlement is essential for exercising rights and claiming entitlement benefits by the citizens. The government needs to be pro-active in this regard engaging non-state actors and through its own channel. The project like Digital Legal Aid Project (2025), launched by the National Legal Aid Services Organisation (NLASO) with UNDP support, which uses online platforms to provide faster and fairer access to justice, can play an important role in this regard. Through this project, citizens can now file cases, access legal advice, and track progress digitally. Digital platforms are being integrated into alternative dispute resolution (ADR) processes, reducing delays and making justice more accessible to marginalized groups. CSOs and CBOs can play an important role in facilitating access to justice.

As mentioned above, the social SafetyNet programs of the government, disbursing more than BDT 1 trillion each year, is the biggest endeavor for ensuring entitlement of the marginalized citizens. The process of beneficiary identification to disbursement has been digitized. However, problem remains with selection of the right beneficiaries. The proposed e-participation policy framework would lay out a new design for the digitalization of social safety net programs engaging citizens and CSOs and CBOs.

Co-creation and delivery of public services: Digital Public Services (DPSs) in Bangladesh are evolving rapidly as part of the government's broader digital transformation strategy. Initiatives such as MyGov and Bangladesh.gov.bd have been introduced to simplify and expand access to public services via digital channels. The service are available through website, UDCs and commercial intermediary points, for the citizens having lack of access to digital technology and digital literacy. Despite these efforts, the ecosystem remains fragmented. Services vary widely in design and functionality across ministries, and integration remains limited. Although MyGov is positioned as a central entry point for accessing government-to-citizen (G2C) services, most platforms continue to operate as siloed systems. As a result, the promise of a unified digital government experience has yet to be fully realized. A significant barrier to effective digital service delivery is the inconsistent design and structure of service platforms. Poor navigation, non-intuitive labels, and the absence of standardized terminology impede service discoverability and usability. Lack of engagement of real users and reliance on team having no or limited experience in designing and development of enterprise-level solutions make the services ineffective in many instances. The e-participation framework would, based on the experience of first-generation service design and delivery, layout an efficient mechanism of citizens' engagement in service design and engagement non-state actors in facilitating accessing services by citizens.

Grievances and feedback: The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) offers a Grievance Redressal System (GRS, www.grs.gov.bd) platform where citizens can lodge complaints through the online portal and track the resolutions in the given portal. They can also submit suggestions on service delivery and the overall process of the resolution. Although the main purpose of the portal is to capture grievances and complaints of the citizens, the portal also has segment for consultation for service improvement and feedback collection. This portal can be a basis for designing the comprehensive e-participation platform.

6. e-Participation Actors, Architecture and Process

6.1. Institutional Mechanism for Effective e-Participation

The proposed e-participation policy framework lays out the institutional architecture for managing an effective e-participation platform linking multiple channels.

6.1.1. Government Actors

The government is poised to be the initiator and main supply side actor for the proposed e-participation framework. The major actors and their role is depicted below [Figure 6.1]. The coordinated efforts of multiple actors having a defined role result in successful e-participation. The Responsibilities of Government Institutions include:

- a. Develop and enforce e-participation policies
- b. Invest in rural digital infrastructure (electricity, internet)
- c. Train public officials in digital service delivery
- d. Ensure data security and prevent misuse
- e. Ensure policy leadership and deliver accessible services.
- f. Ensure citizen participation is implemented through user-friendly digital platforms.
- g. Create an enabling environment and ensure self-accountability.

Cabinet Division: The driving force for the design and operation of the e-participation platform is the government. The strategic and operational leadership of e-participation platform is to be provided by the Cabinet Division, which is already in practice [www.grs.gov.bd is spearheaded by the Cabinet Division]. As a central coordinating body, it plays a critical role in coordinating inter-ministerial actions in matters that require cooperation among multiple ministries. Specific role of the Cabinet Division in connection with the e-participation are as follows:

- a. Setting guidelines to enhance digital public service delivery, feedback mechanisms, and digital citizen participation inclusion.
- b. Ensuring uniform compliance across ministries in the use of digital tools for e-participation.
- c. Tracking the performance of e-participation initiatives.
- d. Assessing whether citizen feedback is incorporated into the service design, policymaking, and decision-making.

ICT Division: The technical leadership related to e-participation platform and channel management is to be provided by the ICT Division and its relevant agencies.

- a. Making DPI accessible country-wide and affordable for citizens, so that e-participation becomes effective. Special emphasis is required for the citizens living in remote areas as well as disadvantaged citizens.
- b. Facilitating Ministries and agencies in designing and implementing digital public services that enable engagement of intermediaries within the service ecosystem.
- c. Deploying multiple channels for maintaining the principle of equity and inclusive (for women, people with disabilities, the elderly) to make the e-participation inclusive.⁷
- d. Designing platforms (Government portals, and other e-participation platforms), which are citizen-friendly to ensure meaningful e-participation.

“

ICT Division would be well-suited for the responsibility of e-participation due to its prior experience, technical capacity, established infrastructure, and previous work experience in e-learning. ICT Division, being equivalent to a ministry, can oversee the execution efficiently. If all concerned entities follow their directives, the process should proceed without any major issues.

”

Key Informant Interview

Line ministries and agencies: All ministries and their agencies have role in management of e-participation, primarily as supply side actors. They leverage mandates, resources, and expertise, and with effective collaboration, make e-participation initiatives inclusive and responsive. Making information available proactively following the provision of Right to Information Act 2009, processing information on request, receiving complaints and their redressal, referring request and complaints to relevant authorities, consulting citizens for making new policy and law, and making public services efficient and effective engaging citizens.

Agencies for building bridges between the government and citizens: NGO Affairs Bureau, Department of Social Welfare and Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms are the important agencies for engaging NGOs, CSOs, CBOs and private sector. NGO Affairs Bureau in particular can engage NGOs in promoting e-participation.

⁷ At divisional consultation meeting, Kazi Hafizur Rahman from Swabalambi, Narail, stressed 'It is important to tailor participation tools for vulnerable groups, remarking that marginalized people, especially women, people with disabilities, & elderly, [and figure out] how to increase their capacity and include them in e-participation.'

Local administration: The other important actor is Local administration (offices of division commissioner, district commissioner, offices of Upazilla Nirbahi Officer, city corporations, municipalities and Union Parishads), especially for engaging citizens in the rural areas. They are the intermediaries between citizens and line ministries and agencies. The role of the administration and local government institutions was reflected in divisional consultations:

- a. Ensure digital access points
- b. Facilitate citizen engagement
- c. Promote transparency and accountability
- d. Raise public awareness about available digital services.

Figure 6.1. Actors of e-participation Platform

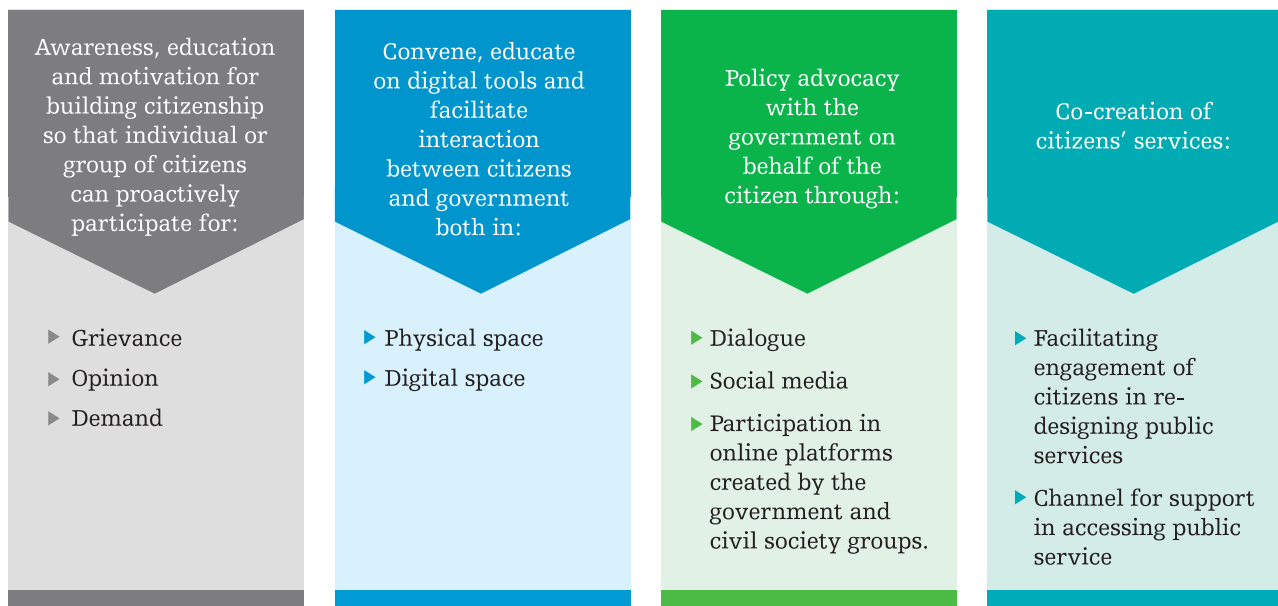
Supply Side	Cabinet Division		ICT Division	
	Line Ministries			
	Agencies of Line Ministries	NGO Affairs Bureau	Department of Social Welfare	Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies
Demand and Supply Side	CSOs	CBOs	NGOs	Political Parties
Demand Side	Citizens			
Facilitating Actors	Private Sector	Media	Academia	Development Partners

6.1.2. Non-government actors

6.1.2.1. NGOs/CSOs/CBOs

The non-government actors are an integral part of the e-participation policy framework and platform design and its effectiveness. The non-government actors, especially CSOs, CBOs and NGOs are to play an instrumental role in raising awareness about opportunities of e-participation, involving citizens in policy making and co-designing new generation of digital public services [Figure 6.2]. They are also to play a role in making public institutions accountable on behalf of the citizens.

Figure 6.2. Role of Non-Government Actors in e-participation



Civic education and awareness: NGOs/CSOs/CBOs play a crucial role in educating citizens about e-participation and digital governance. Their educational role includes:

- a. Raise awareness of available digital public services.
- b. Explain the participation process through digital channels.
- c. Build digital literacy through workshops and community engagement.
- d. Empower communities through engaging citizens in policy consultations and feedback mechanisms.

Facilitation and intermediation: Apart from the educational role, CSOs serve as intermediaries between citizens and government institutions. Their facilitating role includes:

- a. Facilitate communication and collect citizen feedback.
- b. Help articulate community needs and present to policymakers.
- c. Develop actionable insights from the responsive population.

The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and NGOs serve as both catalysts and bridges.⁸ Their role ensures that digital platforms, as government initiatives, meet community priorities. NGOs bridge citizens with the government at the grassroots level, with criticism persists due to inadequate digital accountability.⁹

⁸ Divisional consultation meeting: "One is digital literacy or raising awareness... The second is to build a bridge between the government and the citizens... The job of accountability is to explain why this is not happening."

⁹ Divisional Consultation Meeting: "The government is about 75% better at releasing this self-motivated information while NGOs are in 4-5% better position. It's a challenge."

Policy dialogue and advocacy: In the policy advocacy role, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs play the following responsibilities:

- a. Capacity-building for marginalized communities.
- b. Conduct research, public campaigns, and stakeholder dialogues to influence policy formulation.

Co-creation and innovation: NGOs/CSOs/CBOs contribute to the co-creation of public services through the following responsibilities:

- a. Bring citizens' perspectives in service design to ensure citizens' needs are met.
- b. Facilitate feedback loops and joint initiatives.

6.1.2.2. Role of Private Sector

The private sector, especially ICT sector has been playing an important role in building DPI on behalf of the government, developing Gov-tech solutions. For making e-participation meaningful, enterprise level solutions are required, which can be delivered by them making application of human-centered design mandatory. There specific roles are:

- a. Design and develop applications and tools for e-participation.
- b. Ensure accessibility in digital services.
- c. Provide technical support and training to enhance service delivery.
- d. Partner with government and civil society organizations to establish public engagement.

6.1.2.3. Role of Academia and Research

While the government and the development partners are making investments in e-participation, it is important to understand what works and what doesn't and why. It is also important to under the impact and its magnitude whether there is value for money and how it can be improved. Thus, the academia, think-tanks and research entities are important actor of e-participation. The academia can play an important role in building professionals for e-government and e-participation through tier curricula. The government and NGOs/CSOs/CBOs must partner with research entities.

6.1.2.4. Role of Media

Given the low level of awareness among citizens about aspects of e-participation, media can play an important role. Specific roles are:

- a. Raise public awareness about e-participation and public services.
- b. Facilitate information dissemination through traditional and digital forms of communication.
- c. Highlight successes, challenges, and public feedback on any policy change and improvement.

6.2. e-Participation Platform Design

This section presents elements of designing a new coherent and distributed platform for e-participation with a single access point.

6.2.1. Pillars of e-Participation Platform

The following pillars are to be considered for designing next-generation e-participation platform:

- Alignment with national digital transformation strategies and policies
- Adopting existing good practices and learning from good practices from other countries
- Adoption of Human-Centered Design¹⁰
- Banking on collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnership
- Integrating institutional learning
- Capacity development at all level
- Ensuring adequate resources and enabling infrastructure
- Deployment of change management strategy and process
- Deployment of Risk management strategy and mechanism.

6.2.2. Integrating Existing e-Participation Initiatives

The new e-participation platform does not need to start from scratch as there are multiple initiatives which are to be modified and integrated into the new platform. The institutional mechanism is also there, which may be tweaked [Figure 6.3].

Figure 6.3. Existing Digital Platform for Integration into New Platform

↓ Channel	Access to Information	Democratic Process	Consultation on Policy and Law Making	Citizens' Rights and Entitlement	Co-creation and delivery of public services	Grievance and Feedback
Digital	Top-down [Proactive Disclosure]	Top-down [Opinion Poll]	Top-down [Online form for opinion]	Top-down [Proactive Disclosure]	Top-down [Online form for opinion]	Top-down [Online form for opinion]
	bangladesh.gov.bd	bangladesh.gov.bd	bangladesh.gov.bd	bangladesh.gov.bd	bangladesh.gov.bd	grs.gov.bd
	data.gov.bd	ecs.gov.bd	Websites of relevant Ministries and Agencies	Websites of all Ministries and Agencies	Websites of all Ministries and Agencies	Websites of all Ministries and Agencies
	Websites of all Ministries and Agencies	Websites of all Ministries and Agencies				
	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive
	333	Mobile App		333	999	333
Physical	UDC		Policy Dialogue	UDC	Court-yard sessions of NGOs/ CSOs/CBOs	UDC
	Court-yard sessions of NGOs/ CSOs/CBOs		Court-yard sessions of NGOs/ CSOs/CBOs	Court-yard sessions of NGOs/ CSOs/CBOs		

¹⁰ Human-Centered Design is an innovative approach to problem-solving that places citizens' needs, experiences, and aspirations at the heart of service design. It relies on experiential, creative, participatory, and iterative learning methods to ensure that solutions genuinely respond to the needs of the people they are designed for.

6.2.3. Elements and Channels for the New e-Participation Platform

This new platform may have name 'Citizen Connect' [নাগরিক সংযোগ] The proposed new platform will have six segments, which have been consulted at divisional level. Figure 6.4. presents the segments and channels relevant for each segment. Considering the key factors related to DPI, affordability, digital literacy, culture and principle of 'choice', the new platform considers integrate both digital and physical channels and connect both forms for maximum access. Some of these channels are top-down, some are interactive and others are bottom-up. Deployment of multiple channels will ensure inclusion of all citizens.

Figure 6.4. Segments and Channels for New E-Participation Platform

↓ Channel	Access to Information	Democratic Process	Consultation on Policy and Law Making	Citizen's Right and Entitlement	Co-creation and Delivery of Public Services	Grievance and Feedback
Digital	Top-Down [Proactive Disclosure]	Top-Down [Opinion Poll]	Top-Down [Online Form for Opinion]	Top-Down [Proactive Disclosure]	Top-Down [Online Form for Opinion]	Top-Down [Online Form for Opinion]
	Web-based Platform	Web-based Platform	Web-based Platform	Web-based Platform	Web based Platform	Web-based Platform
	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive	Interactive
	Short code-based IVR and agentic information services	Mobile App	Social Media	Short code-based IVR and agentic information services	Mobile App	Short code-based IVR and agentic information services
	Mobile App		Direct Messaging Platforms	Social Media	Social Media	Mobile App
	Social Media		Online Policy Dialogue	AI-based messaging integrated on the website and other platforms	Direct Messaging Platforms	Social Media
	AI-based messaging integrated on the website and other platforms					Direct Messaging Platforms
	Direct Messaging Platforms		Bottom-up	Bottom-up	Bottom-up	Online Public Hearing
	Bottom-up					Bottom-up
	Email		Email	Email	Email	Email
Physical	UDC		Policy Dialogue	UDC	Court-yard Sessions of NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	UDC
	Information/Facilitati on Desks in Government Offices			Information/Facilitati on Desks in Government Offices		Information/Facilitati on Desks in Government Offices
	Information/Facilitati on Desks in NGOs/CSOs/CBOs		Court-yard Sessions of NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Information/Facilitati on Desks in NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Co-creation Session with Target Users of Public Services	Information/Facilitati on Desks in NGOs/CSOs/CBOs
	Court-yard Sessions of NGOs/CSOs/CBOs			Court-yard Sessions of NGOs/CSOs/CBOs		

Access to information: This segment can be based on the national portal bangladesh.gov.bd and websites of Ministries and agencies. The websites can be aligned with the provisions of article 6 and 7 of RTI Act 2009. The website visualization can be further improved and simplified. The information categories require further research and AI-based search engine can be integrated for comprehensive and complete information output.

There are multiple interactive channels, which are relevant for accessing information: short-code-based IVR and agentic information services. The phone-based agentic government information service 333 can be revived with revamped knowledge base for complete response with appropriate referral mechanism. A citizen information mobile app can be launched with feature of voice search and option for asking question through voice, as Bangla voice engine is now available.

Social media can be a very strong platform for dissemination of information about government services and interaction with citizens on various pertinent issues. A social media strategy is to be developed and appropriate resources to be deployed. While social media is an important channel, where significant segment of citizens interact, there is a need for filtering 'noise' and a strong mechanism for filtering misinformation and disinformation.

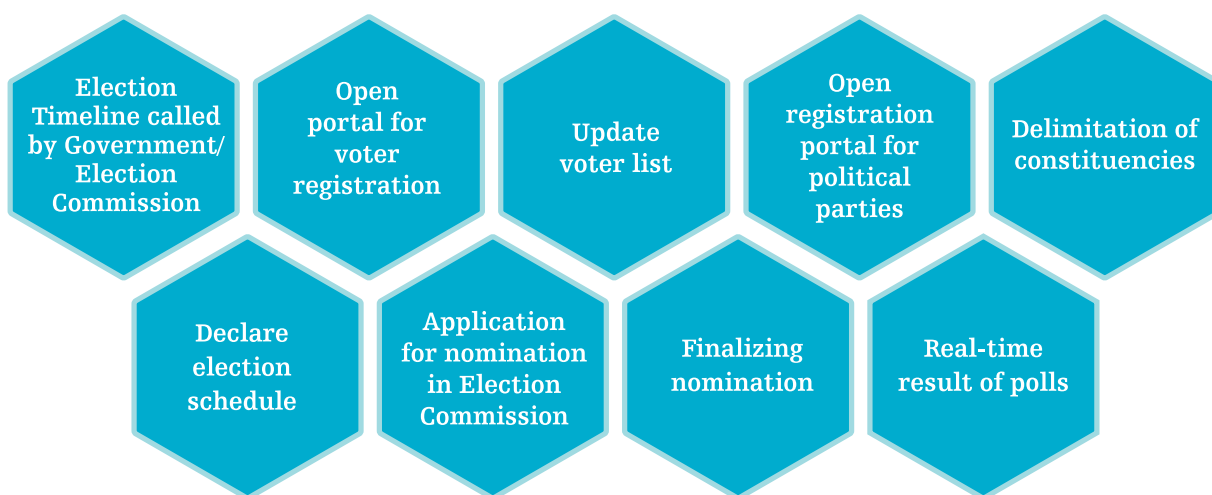
Direct messaging (DM) channel like WhatsApp can be deployed for dissemination and responding to queries. The DM channel can be central as well as local (district, upazila and union).

Email can be a strong bottom-up channel for seeking information. This channel can be officially recognized for seeking information under the provision of RTI Act 2009.

Given the limitations in accessing information through digital means by a vast segment of citizens, the physical channels are very important. Along with the existing Union Digital Centers, every government office may have an information/facilitation desk, which can be operated by designated officer under RTI Act 2009. Similarly, the NGOs/CSOs/CBOs may launch information and facilitation desk for seeking information. These desks can be used for other segments of the e-participation framework. As the awareness about RTI Act 2009 is low, the NGOs/CSOs/CBOs can use their courtyard sessions for raising awareness about access to information and their rights and entitlement.

Democratic process: The e-participation portal may have a segment on participation in democratic process. Initially the scope can be limited to running poll on various pertinent issues and voter registration service can be launched online and through mobile app. The poll can be run by Cabinet Division and Ministry of Information. The voter registration and access to information about candidates can be launched by Bangladesh Election Commission. Figure 6.5 mentions other areas of e-participation in electoral process.

Figure 6.5: Areas of E-Participation in Electoral Process



Consultation on policy and law making: The new e-participation portal may have a centralized system for seeking opinion about new policy and law as well as amendment of existing policies and laws. Each Ministry, responsible for specific policies and laws, can publish the document for consultation to the central portal as well as on their own website. The process is presented in Figure 6.6.

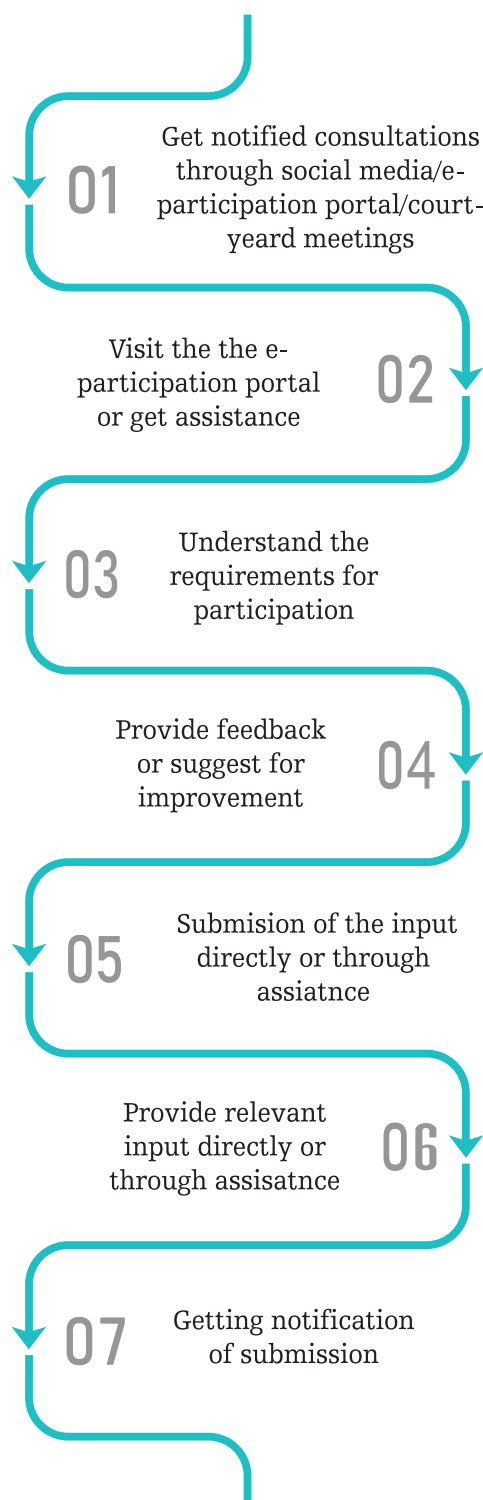


Whenever the ministries create any policy, they should ask for opinions through their websites and through social media.



-Key informant Interview

Figure 6.6 Process of Citizens' Participation in Consultation on Policies and Laws



For consultation with all segments of society only website-based consultation is not adequate, moreover, in most cases the content of the document is technical, which requires simplification and in format easily comprehensible by citizens. Thus, platforms like social media and direct messaging platforms can be used. The provision of sending opinion through email can be adopted across the board. For making citizens aware of any policy and law, which touch their lives, policy dialogues, both online and offline can be organized. NGOs/CSOs/CBOs can mobilize citizens through court-yard sessions for collecting opinion and sending to respective government entities for consideration.

Citizens' rights and entitlement: As for the access to information segment of the new e-participation portal, this segment may apply to the same digital and physical channels. For this segment one specific element is important, which is informing citizens and enabling them to enroll for accessing benefit with ease. This channel can elaborate on each of the social safety benefits, their eligibility criteria, application process in multiple formats, including visual [infographics], audio and audio-visual. For this purpose, AI tools can be used for timeliness and cost-effectiveness.

Co-creation and delivery of public services: This segment can be dedicated to only information, about process of accessing each of the services as well as accessing fully digitalized services eliminating human touch-point where applicable.

A special taskforce is proposed for revisiting and redesigning public services applying human-centered design approach and considering difficulties citizens face in accessing the services in their current form.

A mobile app can be launched for accessing digital public services with option for voice interactions. Social media needs to be used for promoting digital public services and making citizens aware of how to remain safe from fraudulence. YouTube, Facebook, TikTok can be used for this purpose.

As citizens rely heavily on intermediaries, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs may act as facilitators to citizens for accessing the services, reducing reliance on purely commercial actors. The concept of 'Authorized Service Provider' can also be explored.

Grievance and feedback: The most well-developed portal and with a complete feedback loop is Grievance Redress (GRS) Portal www.grs.gov.bd. The new e-participation can connect this portal directly with minor modification. For example, feedback on design on public services can be moved to the 'Co-creation and delivery of public services' segment. Integration of AI can make the portal more user-friendly and effective. The portal should promote provision of referral so that a citizen does not need to resubmit the complaint. Despite the intent and good design, the GRS is underutilized. The portal needs to be connected with other channels like mobile app and DM platforms.

Along with the provision of digital channels, physical channels need to be promoted for citizens, who are unable or unwilling to complain through digital means. UDC, information and facilitation desk at government offices, information and facilitation desk at NGOs/CSOs/CBOs can be launched. As citizens are not aware about the GRS, these information and facilitation desks can play very important roles. Social media campaign can be run by the government and NGOs/CSOs/CBOs.

6.2.4. Streamlining the Scope of New e-Participation Platform

The high-level scope of the new e-participation platform is presented in Figure 6.7.

Figure 6.7. High-Level Scope of Each Segment of New e-Participation Portal

Access to Information	Democratic Process	Consultation on Policy and Law Making	Citizen's Right and Entitlement	Co-creation and Delivery of Public Services	Grievance and Feedback
All information according to provision of section 6 and 7 of RTI Act 2009 by various categories	Opinion poll on selected issues	Formulation on new policy	All information according to provision of section 6 and 7 of RTI Act 2009 by various categories	Feedback on existing services	Complaints on difficulties in accessing public services
Awareness about facilities for accessing information	Voter registration	Enactment of a new law	Information of constitutional rights of a citizen	Demand for new services	Complaints about corruption during accessing a service
Publication of progress in improving access to information	Publication of results of opinion polls	Amendment/Upgradation of an existing law	Information on all social safety net programs	Awareness about services availability and modes of accessing services	Complaints on corruption on projects using public money
		Explanatory and simplified version of policy and law for understanding of non-experts		Periodic progress report in accessing public services through digital means including citizens satisfaction survey	Complaints about misconduct of a service provider
		Publication of summary of feedback received			Periodic report on grievance redressed

6.2.5. Incorporation of Feedback Loop

The effectiveness of the e-Participation policy areas relies on the well-defined feedback loop. This loop ensures the meaningful collection of citizens' input, the evaluation, and action [Figure 6.8]. The existing feedback loop needs to be modified and made mandatory for all actors an appropriate standard operating procedure (SoP) needs to be deployed where it is currently missing.

Figure 6.8. Feedback Loop in Interactions and Service Delivery to Citizens



The mechanism ensures transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in decision-making processes. The feedback loop to be adopted universally has five important steps:

- i. **Input collection:** Citizens submit concerns, requests, complaints, and feedback through designated channels of participation, described above.
- ii. **Receiving inputs by designated official:** Once citizens submit their input, the submission automatically routed to the designated officials. In case of GRS, the designated officials are assigned from district levels and above.
- iii. **Evaluation and decision-making:** The designated officials review, check, determine, and put the issue in the tracking dashboard (if there is any), or transfers it to the related Ministry or Government Office for the approval from the authority level.
- iv. **Action:** The responsible authority executes the solution, and fix the issues, or takes disciplinary action, provides social assistance in response to the concern.
- v. **Feedback within stipulated time:** Once the action is taken, scheduled, and solved, the system automatically notifies citizens through SMS, Follow-up phone call, e-participation portal, and DM inbox.
- vi. **Documentation:** After completion of each request or addressing each complaint, the history of the issue and actions taken need to be recorded and preserved for future reference.

6.2.6. Application of Artificial Intelligence in e-Participation

The e-participation policy framework must adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the benefit of both supply side and demand side. For each channel mentioned above and for the whole scope of the e-participation, the opportunity to leverage AI is high, both for enhancing citizens' satisfaction and protection from harm. Table 6.1. presents certain areas where AI can make e-Participation meaningful.

Table 6.1. Examples of Application of AI in e-Participation

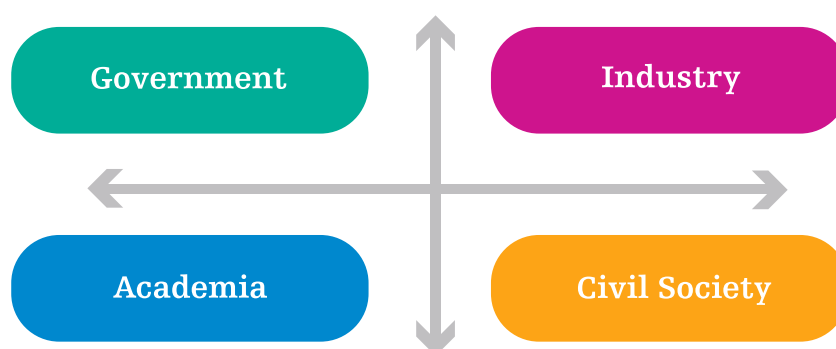
Areas of AI Incorporation	Description
AI-based analysis	Integration of AI-based analysis may foster accepting and acting upon citizen feedback with personalization on the basis of age, demographics, and locations in both Bangla and English results.
AI-powered Anomaly	To detect advanced fraudulence, inconsistencies, repetitive responses, it is important to have various mechanism, including CAPTCHA verification, AI AI-powered anomaly detection, authentication protocol to implement safeguards.
A voice-enabled chatbot while visiting UDCs or via mobile phone	With the help of AI chatbots, citizens can submit their concerns in Bangla speech.
Data mining from social media for analyzing public	Using legal principles, AI can analyze the publicly available social media where citizens participate through commenting on public government pages, topic trends, or public posts in open groups. Using AI tools to analyze citizen feedback from discussion sections or comments in both Bangla and English format.
AI-enabled Dashboards to show real-time updates	AI-enabled dashboards can show real-time updates on the number of complaints received, number of issues solved, and trend of average response time.

7. e-Participation Implementation Strategy

7.1. Quadruple Helix Model and its Relation to e-Participation

The proposed e-participation policy framework design and its implementation emphasizes the idea of innovation in the collaborative approach and need-based co-creation. The quadruple helix model consisting of Government (The Public Sector), Industry (The Private sector), Academia, and Civil Society, is proposed to be adopted for implementing the policy framework [Figure 7.1]. Referring to this model facilitates incorporating the approach of innovation, collective intelligence, skills, and resources.

Figure 7.1: The Quadruple Helix Model



The Four Helices include:

- Government or the Public Sector: Government agencies, public institutions, policymakers.
- Academia or Research Institutions: Public and private universities, research centers of universities, research organizations, thinktanks.
- Industry or the Private Sector: Businesses, start-ups.
- Civil Society: Citizens, NGOs, community-based groups.

The model is proposed to be applied to leverage strength of each party [Table 7.1].

Table 7.1. The Quadruple Helix Model in e-Participation

Elements of Quadruple Helix	Description
Government	Identify participatory challenges, create e-participation platforms, ensure transparency, and adopt public input into policies
Academia Detection	Provide knowledge, data analysis to evaluate the citizen input and participation impact
Industry	Provide support in digital tools, platforms, and technological innovation.
Civil Society	Participate in service design, policy, and decision-making, practice rights

The strategic priorities based on the model are:

- a. **Institutional rearrangement:** Given the importance of e-participation with its multiple dimensions and for ensuring maximum participation and satisfaction of citizens, a new dedicated entity under Cabinet Division may be considered with appropriate authority and resources.
- b. **Digital capacity and competence of government agencies:** Over the years the capacity and competence of government agencies have increased. However, for the next generation e-government initiatives and e-participation they require further improvement. A special program can be undertaken in this regard, where good practices can be learned from home and abroad.
- c. **Development and deployment of Application Programming Interfaces (API):** Effectiveness interoperability is the key for effective e-participation, which will allow leveraging the power of data, which are scattered, for targeting specific groups, personalize user experience, and improving accuracy.
- d. **Linking D-Nothi with e-participation platform:** The link will allow the government agencies to improve public service delivery, identifying right beneficiaries of social safety net programs, monitoring progress and ensure greater accountability.
- e. **Adoption of AI strategy for e-participation:** An AI strategy for e-participation is required based on proper research and keeping in mind the principle of 'no harm'. It is better to take time and study rather hastily deploy AI, which might be counter-productive.
- f. **Production of searchable information products:** The information available on the websites of the Ministries and government agencies are pre-dominantly searchable. However, the lack of searchability of the remaining information reduces efficiency of information services to citizens. Under the access to information segment of the e-Participation framework, an initiative can be taken to make all information searchable.

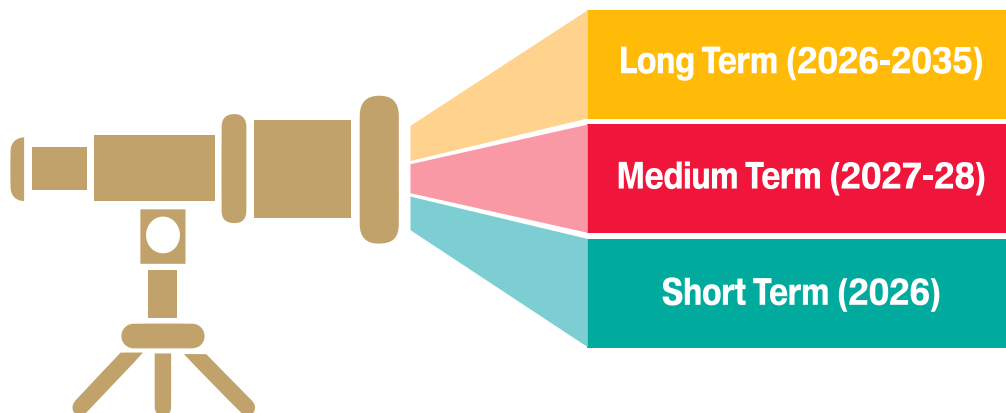
- g. **Making data available in computable format:** The data.gov.bd initiative needs to be revived and data in computable format need to be available on a priority basis. The data from all government sources need to be brought together. The quality, transparency and accessibility of statistics are important and, in this regard, in the process of reviving data.gov.bd, the recommendations of the Data taskforce may be considered.
- h. **Development and monitoring of KPIs for responsible officials for ensuring accountability:** For further improvement of the e-participation status of Bangladesh KPI-based monitoring mechanism needs to be deployed with appropriate reward system.
- i. **Conversion of content into easy-to-understand format:** While consultation with citizens is the key for functioning democracy, often the content share for opinion is in the language for experts only. Each content needs to be converted into de-jargonized language and voice and audio-visual format.
- j. **Engagement of non-government actors:** NGOs/CSOs/CBOs have access to grassroots citizens; however their resources are tied to specific projects, which may not be targeted towards activities related to e-Participation. The government can negotiate with development partners for allocating resources for improvement of e-government and e-Participation, which will allow to build sustainable partnership among the actors, especially government agencies and non-government actors. As external funding is drastically reducing, the government agencies can involve on competitive basis the non-government actors as is done with private sector agencies.

8. e-Participation Action Plan

8.1. Action Agenda

The proposed e-participation framework design and its implementation has three major components: design, deployment and engagement. While design and deployment is easier, engagement of citizens is painstakingly long. Even country like Estonia took 10 years for effective engagement of citizens despite high access and digital skills. Thus, the timeframe for action plan is proposed to be 10 years [Figure 8.1].

Figure 8.1. Timeframe for e-Participation Framework Action Plan



The high-level Action Plan 2026-2035 is presented in Table 8.1. It is to be noted that the action agenda is presented under 10 strategic priority areas. The lead and co-lead institutions are identified as well as participating agencies. The Action Agenda also presented timeline and years of accomplishment. The Action Agenda matrix includes a column on monitoring index. Further details on the monitoring indicators are presented in the following section.

The Action Agenda is subject to further elaboration and modification through multiple consultations among the key stakeholders.

e-Participation Action Agenda [High Level]

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
I	Strengthening institutional mechanism	a	Mandate e-Participation Focal Points in every ministry and agency with specific TORs.	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Short term	% of institutions having e-Participation focal points	2026
		b	Define decision-making authority, escalation procedures, and inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms.	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Short term	a. Timeline by when SoPs are developed and deployed b. Timeline by when the inter-,ministerial coordination mechanism are in place	2026
		c	Undertake an initiative for legal and regulatory alignment of e-Participation framework [identifying enabling laws, areas requiring amendment, and new regulations needed for secure digital participation]. Make legal and regulatory upgradation with clarity on citizens' rights to digital participation, anonymity, whistle blower protection and data security.	ICT Division	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions CSOs, private sector, academia	Mid term	Timeline by when the legal and regulatory upgradation is complete	2026-2030
		d	Introducing ministerial performance indicators tied to the Government Performance Management System (GPMS)	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Mid term	a. Timeline by when the ministerial performance indicators are developed and launched b. Timeline for publication of first performance report on e-Participation by all ministries and agencies	2026-2027

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
II		e	Establish a new dedicated entity under Cabinet Division with appropriate authority and resources to spearhead the action plan and take Bangladesh among top 30 countries in EGDI and EPI.	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Finance Division	Mid term	Timeline by when the new e-Participation entity is established	2026-2027
		f	a.Undertake a special program to build an e-governance workforce within government in collaboration with national and international institutions. Prepare a capacity development roadmap for 5 years, including: i. Training for digital service design ii. Cybersecurity skills iii. Consultation management iv. Data analytics v. Content moderation. Foster collaboration with universities, training academies, and CSOs.	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Long-term	% of ministries and agencies have at least one trained personnel for managing e-Participation related activities.	2026-2035
		g	Development of a financing strategy covering government, PPP, donor support, and CSO partnerships.	Cabinet Division	Finance Division ICT Division	Private sector, development partners, NGOs/CSOs,	Long-term	Timeline when the financing strategy for e-Participation action plan is developed and approved	2026-2027
		h	Mobilize financial resources for implementation of e-Participation action plan					% of mobilization of targeted financial resources by year	2026-2035
		Design and development of e-participation digital ecosystem [DPI]	a	Develop the definition and scope of e-Participation within the six segments.	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Short term	Timeline by when the definition and scope of e-Participation is developed and deployed

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
III		b	Link DPI layers, including identity, trust, data exchange, and service delivery with public service delivery mechanism	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Mid term	a. Timeline by when the DPIs are integrated with e-Participation ecosystem b. % of integration of DPIs	2026-2030
		c	Design the platforms with multiple channels applying human-centered design. Create offline-to-online mechanisms (toll-free IVR, SMS services, WhatsApp-based feedback).	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Mid term	Timeline by when each of the targeted channels are launched	2026-2030
		d	Revamp existing portals following the principles of proposed e-Participation framework.	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Mid term	% of existing portals are revamped within targeted timeline	2026-2028
	Digital-physical ecosystem for improving access to information	a	Relaunch data.gov.bd and make all data available in searchable format.	BBS	Cabinet Division and ICT Division	Line ministries, agencies under the ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Mid term	a. Timeline by when the data.gov.bd is relaunched b. % of target government data are available on the portal	2026-2030
		b	Re-launch the National Helpline 333 as a means of accessing information by citizens having access to basic phone.	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	ICT Division	Line ministries, agencies under the ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Short term	a. Timeline when the hotline 333 is relaunched. b. % of government services information are available for meeting information needs of the citizens	2026

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
		c	Link D-Nothi with e-Participation platforms to improve public service delivery, identifying right beneficiaries of social safety net programs, monitoring progress and ensure greater accountability.	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Short term	Timeline by when the D-Nothi is linked with e-Participation platforms.	2026
		d	Develop an AI strategy for e-Participation for personalizing the participation experience of citizens with the government agencies. Introduce AI governance principles including transparency, explainability, non-discrimination, and human oversight.	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, Academia	Mid term	Timeline when the AI strategy for e-Participation is developed and adopted	2026-27
		e	Identify practical use cases of integration of AI in citizen engagement [e.g., automatic classification of citizen feedback, sentiment analysis, voice-based interaction and service delivery including voice-to-text for illiterate users, AI chatbots for government FAQs]	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, Academia	Mid term	a. % of implementation of defined use cases of AI integration in e-Participation platforms and public services b. % of use cases implemented by target timeline	2026-28
		f	Develop and deploy Application Programming Interfaces for connecting all government and non-government websites and ensure effective and safe data exchange to leverage maximum potential to offer best experiences to citizens in information and service delivery.	ICT Division		Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, academia	Mid term	a. % of implementation of API development integration in e-Participation platforms, websites and public services b. % of APIs implemented by target timeline	2026-2028

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
IV		g	Undertake an initiative to make all government information searchable by replacing all scanned copies of documents.	BBS	Cabinet Division and ICT Division	Line ministries, Agencies under the ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions	Mid term	% of information converted into searchable format by target timeline	2026-30
	Design and development of second-generation public services with appropriate digital ingredients		Design and implement second generation digital public services applying human-centered design approach minimizing human touch points for certain services and involving intermediaries in others based on the nature of service.	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, academia	Mid term	a. % of public services upgraded/redesigned b. % of citizens who accessed public services are satisfied with new design of public services	2026-30
V	Reduction of Digital Divide for effective engagement of citizens	a	Develop guidelines to ensure accessibility for marginalized groups	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, Academia	Mid term	a. Timeline by when the inclusion guideline and action plan are Developed	2026-27
		b	Introduce EMI-based schemes to ensure citizen access to digital devices. Companies can offer extended EMI options for up to 3 years, eligible for tax incentives.	ICT Division	Finance Division, Bangladesh Bank	Telecom operators, mobile phone manufacturers, CSOs	Short term	a. % of marginalized citizens receive own phones b. Timeline when tax incentives are provided to companies offering EMI for mobile phone	2026-27

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
		c	Strengthen UDCs/Nagorik Sheba Kendra as formal e-Participation Access Points, with financing for training and infrastructure.	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, Academia	Mid term	a. Timeline when the UDCs/ Nagorik Sheba Kendra launch e-Participation access point b. % of users of UDCs/Nagorik Sheba Kendra experienced e-Participation	2026-27
		d	Introduce booth-based customer care centers. For instance, the physical extension of the National Helpline 333 to ensure inclusive access for citizens with limited digital access. Information and facilitating desk at all government offices and NGOs/CSOs/CBOs.						2026-28
		e	Engage NGOs/CSOs/CBOs to enhance digital literacy and e-Participation awareness among citizens to foster active citizen engagement.	NGOAB	ICT Division	NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Long-term	Timeline a project to engage NGOs/CSOs/CBOs is launched for digital literacy and awareness on e-Participation % of citizens got digital literacy and awareness on e-Participation against the target	2026-2035

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Timeline	Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities			
VI	Reduction of communication divide	f	Engage educational institutions to enhance digital literacy and e-Participation awareness among students to foster active citizen engagement.	Ministry of Education	ICT Division	UGC	Long-term	a. % of tertiary educational institutions engaged in digital literacy and e-Participation awareness program b. % of higher secondary educational institutions engaged in digital literacy and e-Participation awareness program c. % of students received digital literacy for e-Participation	2026-2035
		a	Develop a social media strategy for ensuring effective e-Participation, filtering noises.	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	ICT Division	NGOs/CSOs/CBOs, Media	Short term	a. Timeline when an integrated social media strategy for government institutions is developed b. Timeline when social media strategy being implemented	2026
		b	Develop a special team for content conversion for citizens to understand and contribute to policy making process.	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	ICT Division	NGOs/CSOs/CBOs, Media	Mid term	Timeline when teams are formed in selected government agencies for content conversion	2026-27
VII	Engagement of civil society actors	a	Partner with NGOs/CSOs/CBOs to for play their four-pronged roles in effective engagement of citizens with the government including enhancing outreach of public services to all communities.	Cabinet Division	ICT Division, NGOAB	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Long-term	% of target NGOs/CSOs/CBOs engaged through partnership in enhancing e-Participation of marginalized citizens	2026-30

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners			Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities		
VIII		b	Collaborate with CSOs to run community awareness, courtyard meetings, and mobile outreach.					
		c	Launch e-services for NGOs/CSOs/CBOs with NGOAB's service portal.	NGOAB	ICT Division	NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Long-term	2026-27
		d	Authorize Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) as public service providers (APSP) to extend government services to citizens' doorsteps, similar to Union Digital Centers (UDCs).	Cabinet Division	ICT Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Mid term	2026-28
	Data ownership and data protection		Implement the Data Protection Act to ensure data ownership, safeguard citizens' personal information and ensure safe access to e-Participation platforms.	ICT Division	Cabinet Division	Line ministries, Local administration, Local government institutions, CSOs, private sector, academia	Short term	2026-28

#	Priority Area		Action Item	Implementing Partners				Monitoring Indicators	Year of Achievement
				Lead	Co-Lead	Participating Entities	Timeline		
IX	Cyber security, protection from misinformation and fraudulence		Provide clear standards for misinformation management, safe digital communication, and appropriate moderation.	ICT Division	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting		Mid term	a. Timeline when standards and SoPs are announced to be followed by respective institutions b. % of government and non-government institutions have trained personnel for handling misinformation and cyber protection	2026-27
X	Monitoring and progress tracking	a	Develop a National e-Participation Index for Bangladesh with annual scoring.	Cabinet Division and ICT Division	BBS	Research institutions, think-tanks CSOs	Mid term	a. Timeline when the e-Participation research is launched b. Timeline when first annual e-Participation index is published	2026-28
		b	Introduce SMART KPIs for monitoring progress and take corrective action [e.g., i. % of feedback addressed within 15 days ii. Citizen satisfaction ratings iii. Participation rate of women and marginalized groups iv. Number of policies amended based on public input]	Cabinet Division and ICT Division	BBS	Research institutions, think-tanks CSOs	Mid term	a. Timeline when citizens' satisfaction ratings on e-Participation by category of government institutions are published b. % of citizens are satisfied with e-Participation	2026-27
		c	Launch a Research and Analytics Unit under the new authority of e-Participation.	Cabinet Division and ICT Division	BBS	Research institutions, think-tanks CSOs	Mid term	Timeline when the e-Participation Research and Analytics Unit is launched	2026-27
		d	Publish Annual e-Participation Report published by Cabinet Division/ICT Division	Cabinet Division and ICT Division	BBS	Research institutions, think-tanks CSOs	Mid term	Timeline when first e-Participation Report is published	2026-28

9. Monitoring and Reporting on e-Participation

Whether e-Participation is effective, inclusive, and accountable depends on the monitoring and reporting system of e-Participation. They transform e-Participation into an evidence-based governance process where citizens' voices are incorporated into decision-making.

9.1. Accountability Framework

An accountability framework ensures that e-participation initiatives operate transparently and responsibly. The proposed e-participation policy framework defines roles and standards that hold stakeholders accountable for decisions and outcomes derived from digital engagement.

The responsibility of being accountable should not be limited to the civil administration alone. Institutions such as the judiciary, parliament, and public representatives also need to be included within the accountability framework.

The accountability framework is presented in Table 9.1.

“

If we, who provide services, service providers, come under accountability, it can come through our hierarchy, or it can also be through the judiciary. So, I think that everyone can play a large role from their position.

”

-Key Informant Interview

Table 9.1. Accountability Framework for the Actors

Stakeholder	Responsibilities in Accountability
Cabinet Division	Provide policy direction to integrate government institutions and ministries with citizen engagement.
ICT Division	Provide technical leadership related to e-Participation platform and channel management
Line Ministries and Agencies	Ensure effective access to provisions of access to information and services, update information related to functioning of the agencies, consult citizens for and laws amendment and enactment, address grievances with equity.
NGO Affairs Bureau	Submit timely reports on e-Participation initiatives, projects, and funding, and ensure compliance with national policies; engage NGOs/CSOs/CBOs in e-Participation related activities.
Local Administration	Ensure digital participation through local platforms, collect citizens' concerns and feedback, and publish the outcomes
Civil Society Organizations	Support citizens in understanding e-Participation tools effectively and monitor the performance of government institutions in implementing citizen feedback.
Political Parties	Integrate citizens' inputs, priorities, and concerns into party policies and the decision-making process.
News Media	Disseminate accurate information about participation opportunities, report performance, decisions, and results.
Academia	Provide independent analysis, action-oriented, and evidence-based recommendations to improve transparency.
Citizen	Participate responsibly in respecting digital ethics and providing constructive feedback.

9.2 Indicators and Measurement Tools

Measuring e-Participation is crucial with the objective of assessing inclusiveness and transparency, and the impact of governments' digital engagement initiatives. Indicators help policymakers evaluate progress, identify gaps in citizen-government interactions through digital platforms.

As Bangladesh aspires to rise up the ladder of global indices, it makes sense to launch Bangladesh's National e-Participation Index (NEPI) with annual scoring. A research and analytics unit may be formed under proposed new entity of e-Participation. It is also proposed to introduce ministerial performance indicators tied to the Government Performance Management System (GPMS). As a part of the NEPI, it is proposed to conduct annual citizens' satisfaction ratings by Ministries and Agencies. Incorporating the NEPI and satisfaction ratings, an Annual e-Participation Report can be published jointly by the Cabinet Division and ICT Division. All line Ministries and their agencies, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs and private sector will be included in the report in terms of their performance in e-Participation.

Key performance indicators can be:

- a. **Participation level:** Number of citizens engaged in e-Participation platforms through designated channels (e.g., websites, social media engagement, letter response, participation in consultation meetings, and public hearings).
- b. **Inclusive participation:** Demographic analysis of whether participation by women, youth, rural populations, and technology-disadvantaged populations is being considered.
- c. **Transparency and responsiveness:** Percentage of feedback received through e-Participation platforms, average response time to citizen queries, and publication of reports of consultation meetings. Average response time and
- d. **Policy implication:** Citizens' input being considered in the policy draft, citizen satisfaction level with e-Participation initiatives and outcomes. Number of policies amended based on public input can also be an indicator.

Possible data collection and evaluation methods are presented in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2. Data Collection and Evaluation Methods of E-Participation Channels

Channels	Data Collection Method
Digital	
Web-based platform	Web analytics, Surveys, Polls, Opinions, and Feedback, Download counts, and User registration records
Short-code based IVR (push) and agentic information services	Access log, call log, recordings
Mobile App	App download and sign-up statistics, Surveys, Polls, Opinions, and Feedback
Government social media	Engagement metrics in Surveys, Polls, Q & A sessions.
Direct Messaging Platforms	Text mining, natural language processing (NLP), and visualization techniques
Online consultation meeting	Sign-in logs, registration data, Polls, Q&A sessions, and Chat transcripts
Physical	
UDC/ Nagorik Sheba Kendra and e-Participation points [information/facilitation desks] of government offices and NGOs/CSOs/CBOs	Service register, ERP [when available] data, Surveys, Polls, Opinions, and Feedback
Letter	Record management in manual or digital, any database of received letters, and Feedback monitoring
In-person consultation meeting	On-the-spot survey, Interviews, Consultations, Sign-in-sheets records, feedback forms, and audio-visual recordings.
Public hearing	Sign-in sheet log, recording of the proceedings, and Feedback forms

9.3. Indicators

Table 9.3. Selected Channels and Indicators of E-Participation:

Channel	Evaluation Methods
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of citizens' e-Participation - E-Participation satisfaction ratings [based on a set of indicators to be identified through consultation] - % of citizens accessing information - % of citizens consulted in policy and law making - % of citizens accessing digital public services - % of NGOs/CSOs/CBOs became part of e-Participation
Digital	
Web-based platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of visits - Number of registered users - Click-through rate on e-Participation initiatives (announcements, surveys, opinions, feedback). - Number of information request - Number of access to services
Government social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reach and Impression - Engagement and Constructive response rate - Citizen-initiated discussions
Physical	
Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of letters received (letters: feedback, grievance complaints) - Response rate - Respondent type (demographic inclusiveness)
Consultation Meetings (in-person and online)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demographic Representation - Level of participant satisfaction with - Participation in suggestions and feedback.
Public Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of participants - Number of issues raised - Type of issues raised - Recommendations or Feedback incorporated into decisions - Participants' satisfaction

9.4. Reporting Frequency

Table 9.4. Reporting Frequency

Channel	Reporting Method	Timeline
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public dashboard - Progress report by the implementing authority - An annual final report submitted to the Cabinet Division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Dashboard: Updated monthly - Progress Report: Quarterly - Final Report: Annually
Government social media	Social media insights shared on Government official pages	Monthly
Letter	Received letter compilation including topics and responses.	Compiled report on letters received and responses: Quarterly
Consultation Meetings (in-person and online)	Attendance records and Feedback forms	Report on meetings conducted, participants, and key outcomes: Quarterly
Public Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of hearings held, participation, and responses. - Report or summary of issues raised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on hearings after each hearing. - Quarterly report on the summary. - Annual report on performance, feedback, and impact.

End Notes

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