National E-Governance Plan

E-governance is the application of information and communication technologies to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of informational and transactional exchanges across different levels of government and to empower citizens through access and use of information. The Government approved the NeGP on May 18, 2006. The plan takes a holistic view of e-governance initiatives across the country, integrating them into a collective vision.

Extent of the Opportunity

- Information Technology is a dominant sector in India. It has increased its contribution to India’s GDP from 1.2% in 1998-99 to 7.5% in 2012-13.
- As of October 2013, India had 20.5 crore Internet users, according to Internet and Mobile Association of India.
- In the U.N e-Government readiness index 2008, India scores in the top thirty percent in the web measure index (55 out of 192) which reflects government readiness but in the bottom 30 percent on Telecommunication infrastructure (138 out of 192).

Objectives

The NeGP aims to simplify governance and make it more transparent and efficient, lowering transaction times and cost in Government-to-Government, Government-to-Business and Government-to-Citizen interactions. It seeks to reduce the cost of delivering public services to citizens and also improve their quality and reach. At its core, the NeGP aspires to empower the citizens of India.

Institutional Arrangement

At the Central level a committee under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister has been constituted with representatives from the National Knowledge Commission, Planning Commission and representatives from Ministries where NeGP is pursuing missions/projects. It provides leadership and monitors the progress of NeGP. The National e-Governance Advisory Group, chaired by Minister of Communications and IT, has been created to bring in views of external stakeholders and advise government on policy issues and strategic interventions necessary to introduce e-Governance across Central and State Government Ministries/Departments. The Apex Committee, chaired by Cabinet Secretary, is present to oversee the program and resolve inter-ministerial issues. Line Ministries and Departments are responsible for implementation of assigned Mission Mode Projects and Components. The National e-Governance Division in the Department of Electronics and Information Technology serves as a secretariat to the Apex committee and undertakes technical appraisal of all NeGP projects. The National Institute for Smart Governance is a not for profit company set up under Public Private Partnership that assists the Central government in the implementation of Mission Mode Projects. Furthermore the support of technical agencies like the National Informatics Centre is also essential to create the high level I.T design. Partnerships with industry also become crucial in the implementation of projects, for example the Banking and Insurance Central Mission Mode Projects are implemented through industry partnerships. While Core Application Development takes place at the Central Level, application customization and roll out is done by the State Governments.
Mission Mode Projects
A Mission Mode Project is an individual project within NeGP that focuses on one aspect of e-governance. There are 33 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) under the NeGP with 11 Central MMPs, 13 State MMPs and 7 Integrated MMPs. While the respective governments implement Central and State MMPs, both implement integrated MMPs.

Components
For delivery of National e-Governance Plan envisions three pillars of e-governance infrastructure.

- **State Wide Area Networks (SWAN):** Under this scheme technical and financial assistance are being provided to States/U.Ts for establishing state-wide area networks to connect all headquarters right from the State to the block level in a vertical hierarchical structure with a minimum bandwidth capacity of 2mbps per link. Each State/U.T can enhance the bandwidth to 34 Mbps between State headquarter and up to 8 Mbps between District headquarter and Block headquarter depending on the utilization. SWAN implementation can be done in two ways
  - **Public Private Partnership Model:** Through models such as Build-operate-transfer (BOT) model where the private entities build it and then return it to the government and Build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT) model where the private entities build it and own it for an extended time period through a lease. An appropriate agency is selected through a suitable competitive process for outsourcing establishment, operation and maintenance of the Network.
  - **NIC Model:** The state designates NIC as the prime implementation agency for establishment, operation and maintenance of the Network.

- **State Data Centre (SDC):** NeGP envisions the creation of State Data Centre to consolidate services, applications and infrastructure to provide efficient electronic delivery of Government-to-Government, Government-to-Citizen and Government-to-Business services. Some of the key functionalities provided at the SDC are Secured Data Storage, Citizen information/services portal and State Intranet Portal. These services can be supported by core connectivity infrastructure such as statewide area network and common service center connectivity extended upto village level.

- **Common Service Centre (CSC):** CSC are ICT enabled front end service delivery points at the village level for the delivery of government, financial, social and private sector services in the areas such as agriculture, health, education, entertainment, banking and insurance. The scheme is being implemented in a public private partnership framework with a focus on rural entrepreneurship. To facilitate the successful implementation of the scheme a Special Purpose Vehicle named CSC e-governance Services India ltd. has been set up.
Operational Guidelines

An e-Governance project goes through various stages, from identification of opportunity at the Central level to implementation and roll out at the State Level.

**Stage 1: Opportunity Identification and Programme Initiation at the Central Line/Implementing Ministry:** The Programme Steering Committee comprises of the government officials such as secretary/additional secretary and joint secretary of respective Line/Implementing Ministries is responsible for opportunity identification and conceptualization of the project. The concept note prepared is approved by the Empowered Committee under the chairmanship of Secretary of the Line/Implementing Ministry.

**Stage 2: Project Initiation and Conceptualization at Central Line Ministry:** A Central Project e-Mission Team (CPeMT) will be established post approval of the concept note at the Line Ministry under the Joint Secretary. It will initiate the design and development of the project scheme. At the end of this stage a broad Mission Mode Project concept would be prepared from the domain perspective after consultations with the stakeholders.

**Stage 3: Project Design and Development at Central Line Ministry:** The CPeMT would select a technical agency for the high level IT design of the project, including potentially National Informatics Centers (NIC). NIC is also used as an additional resource. Along with this the project costing shall also be done and a Detailed Project Report (DPR) shall be prepared. The CPeMT would take the required approval from the Cabinet. The Cabinet note will specify the financial powers required to be delegated to the Empowered Committee.

**Stage 4: Core Application Development:** The core application would be developed with the help of the technical agency and would be customizable in nature. This application must be tested and certified by the Standard Testing and Quality Certification (STQC) Directorate in the Department of Electronics and Information Technology.

**Stage 5: Application Customization at the State Government:** The State Government will establish a two-tier structure at the State Department for the implementation of the project. The State Apex Committee under the Chief Secretary would provide overall guidance and would have financial powers as per the delegation. The State Project e-Mission Team (SPeMT) under the Secretary of the concerned department shall prepare a Detailed Project Report with guidance from the CPeMT for approval of the Line Ministry. The SpeMT shall select an IT agency to customize the application as per the requirements of the State. The application would be first deployed as a pilot in a selected area and then certified by Standard Testing and Quality Certification (STQC) or similar agency. Only after certification will it be rolled out.

**Stage 6: Implementation and Roll out at State Level:** Roll out would include all activities such as supply of equipment, installation, commissioning, operation support, etc. SPeMT shall select implementation agency for procurement of equipment and services for roll out. It is desirable to have the same agency for customization as well as roll out. The SPeMT shall determine the entire methodology for implementation and roll out.
In most cases public procurements become a costly process for the State Governments. Despite efforts to prevent the formation of cartels, the bidding process can be marred by interested parties clandestinely joining hands. Often the existing database on goods, services, works and contractors is disorganized or unwieldy, preventing quick decision-making. Manual processing of paper-based tenders is time-consuming. In the absence of an effective Management Information System, government(s) can incorrectly estimate their procurement expenditure.

The Government of Chattisgarh launched a project to implement a single, unitary, end-to-end e-procurement mechanism across the State. It was implemented under the public private partnership model. The aim was to enhance government efficiency in handling public procurements through automation. The Chhattisgarh infotech and biotech Promotion Society (CHiPS), a registered society promoted by the government and headed by the Chief Minister of the State, became the driver of the e-procurement project. The government involved Wipro and Next Tender as partners in the e-procurement implementation effort.

The benefits of the e-procurement project were many: Improved efficiency through reduced cycle time for processing tenders, there was no scope for cartel formation, the tender process became free and fair and transparent, it also led to the build-up of valuable database on goods, services and contractors. On the e-procurement portal as on 13-2-14, 6037 vendors had registered, 38115 tenders had been processed with a value of Rs 71,729.21 crore.