



**South
South
Network**

Public Service Innovation

innovate . serve . transfer

THE SOUTH-SOUTH MATCHMAKER

**South-South Network for Public Service Innovation
Vol. III (2021-2022 Best Practices)**

#SSN4PSI



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**Cabinet
Division**
Government of the People's
Republic of Bangladesh



**ICT
DIVISION**
FUTURE IS HERE



Foreword



Zunaid Ahmed Palak

State Minister

Information & Communication Technology Division
Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications & IT
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The role of South South Cooperation is undeniable to Southern countries and communities. Bangladesh has made praiseworthy efforts to turn the ideation of the “Digital Bangladesh” into reality. This has led Bangladesh to reach a contemporary height with peace, prosperity, and dignity. The Government of Bangladesh has carried out numerous projects relating to digital technologies, which are bringing salutary benefits to citizens, largely for the marginalized group of people. This inspiration was achieved due to the foresight in direction that was demonstrated by the Government of Bangladesh under the leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Such dynamism has invoked people's aspirations and pride that, effectively boosted the country's growth.

The demonstration of solidarity among countries of the South that help to achieve nations' well-being, self-resilience, and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals is South South Cooperation's essential contribution. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, southern countries and communities fell behind in attaining the commitments to Sustainable Development Goals; therefore, southern countries' development milestones were halted, and there was an increase in challenges.

In the post-COVID-19 era, the importance of South South Cooperation has multiplied, which has led to the enhancement of southern countries and communities to share peer-to-peer learning, exchange of knowledge, experiences, and expertise on public service innovation. I am pleased that through publication like the South South Matchmaker, Southern countries and communities are being exposed to an engaging platform to share their good practices for the rest to learn and adopt. At the same time, the Matchmaker allows countries and organizations to showcase their good practices, which are more crucial in the post-COVID-19 reality.

The 3rd Volume of the South-South Matchmaker contains 15 good practices from 12 countries and 3 organizations which mostly focused on the response and recovery from health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, most of the best practices are ICT-based solutions promoting inclusive innovation and digital transformation.

I hope that the South South Matchmaker (2021-22 best practices) will help to accelerate innovation and development in global Southern countries, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Foreword



Xiaojun Grace Wang

Xiaojun Grace Wang

On behalf of Adel Abdellatif
Director ai. and Interim Chair of the Advisory Board
UN Office for South-South Cooperation

The 3rd Volume of the South-South Matchmaker contains 15 case studies from 14 countries mostly focusing on the response and recovery from the health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The case studies cover vulnerable communities including children, migrants, the unemployed, and women. Five (5) case studies were adapted through the facilitation of the South-South Network for Public Service Innovation activities such as Matchmaking workshops and field visits.

The case studies show how frequently the solutions for response or recovery from COVID-19 have resulted from the adaptation of existing public service innovations. Similarly, innovations to address COVID-19 related challenges are also increasingly used to address other pertinent development challenges. This is encouraging and should be reinforced by the Network in all relevant cases.

The guidelines for the case studies were built based on reflection of the submitted case studies for the first two volumes of the Matchmaker. They are slanted towards capturing the problem to be addressed, how it was addressed, and the gains for the citizens. These gains range from tangible and measurable such as cost and time savings to attend to the required action, to more qualitative gains such as convenience and user-friendliness of the solutions. These also significantly improve and transform people's lives. The case studies show that awareness creation about the systems, user view of the services required, a continuous engagement process to submit ideas and views by the users, and mechanisms to respond by the service providers are at the center of such gains.

Once again, it is my hope that the 15 case studies will inspire members of the Network to embark on changes that can impact the lives of their people in a very real way and in a short time.

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About The Network

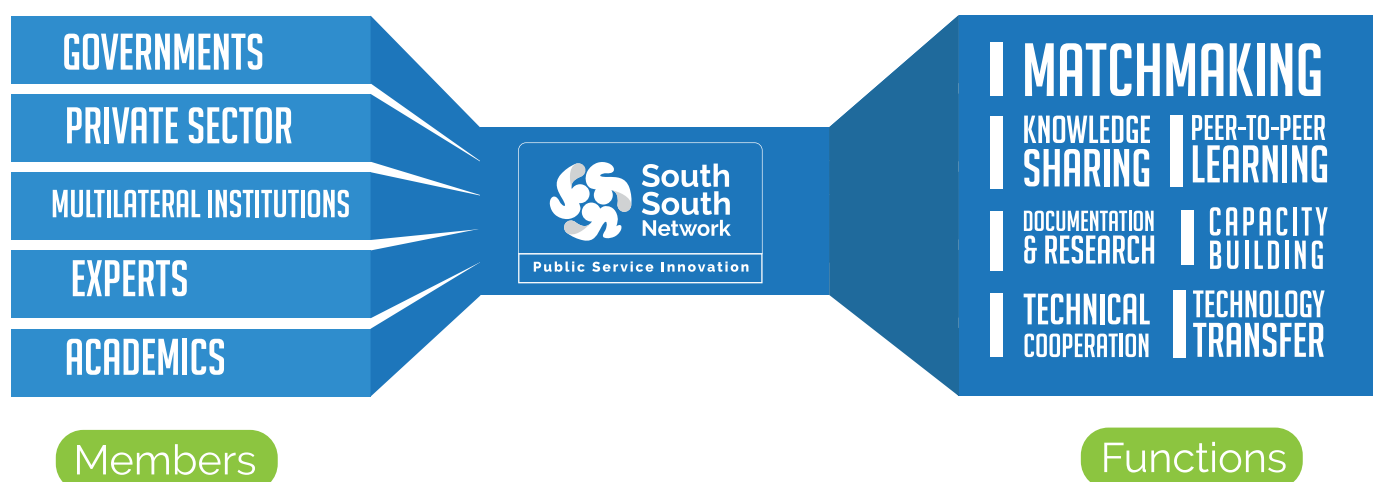
The South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) is a collaborative platform where governments, private sector organizations, experts and academics exchange knowledge, experiences and expertise on public service innovation.

The Network utilizes South-South and triangular cooperation approaches to empower southern countries to learn from and support one another in identifying vital innovations and scaling up novel solutions to public service challenges by customizing the necessary tools and strategies to their unique country contexts.

The South-South Network for Public Service Innovation was launched at the 2017 Global South-South Development Expo in Antalya, Turkey, to harness innovations, particularly in the area of public service delivery and to help developing countries in the Global South achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Global Collaborative Platform

Exchange Ideas, Experiences and Expertise
Harness Innovations in Public Service Delivery



The Network focuses on six thematic areas:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Future of Public Service | 4. Future of Work |
| 2. Future of Civil Service | 5. Future of Data Innovation |
| 3. Future of Finance | 6. Future of Commerce |

SSN4PSI Knowledge Export-Import Model

The SSN4PSI uses a “**Matchmaking**” methodology to achieve its objectives. Matchmaking ensures that countries that have successfully tackled public service challenges transfer “**export**” solutions to countries that need them the most. The model is depicted in figure 1.

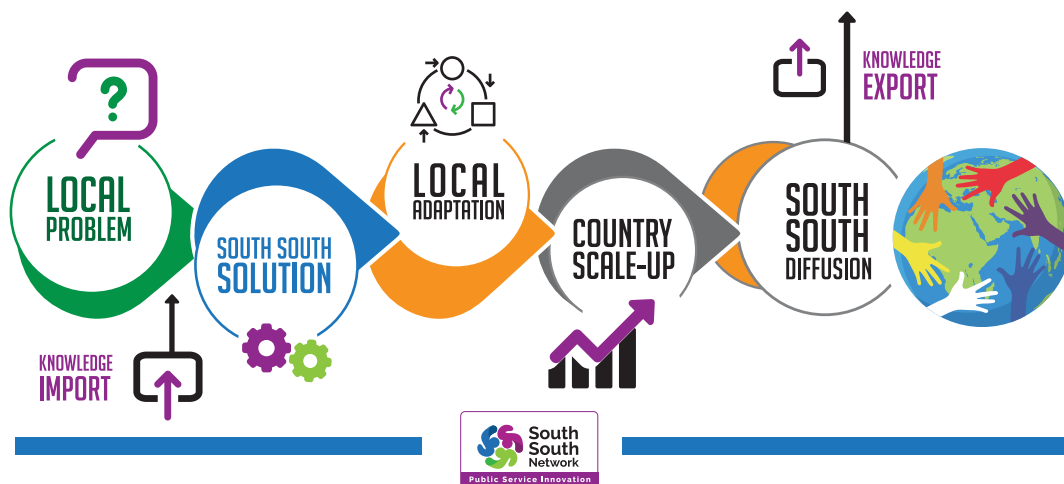


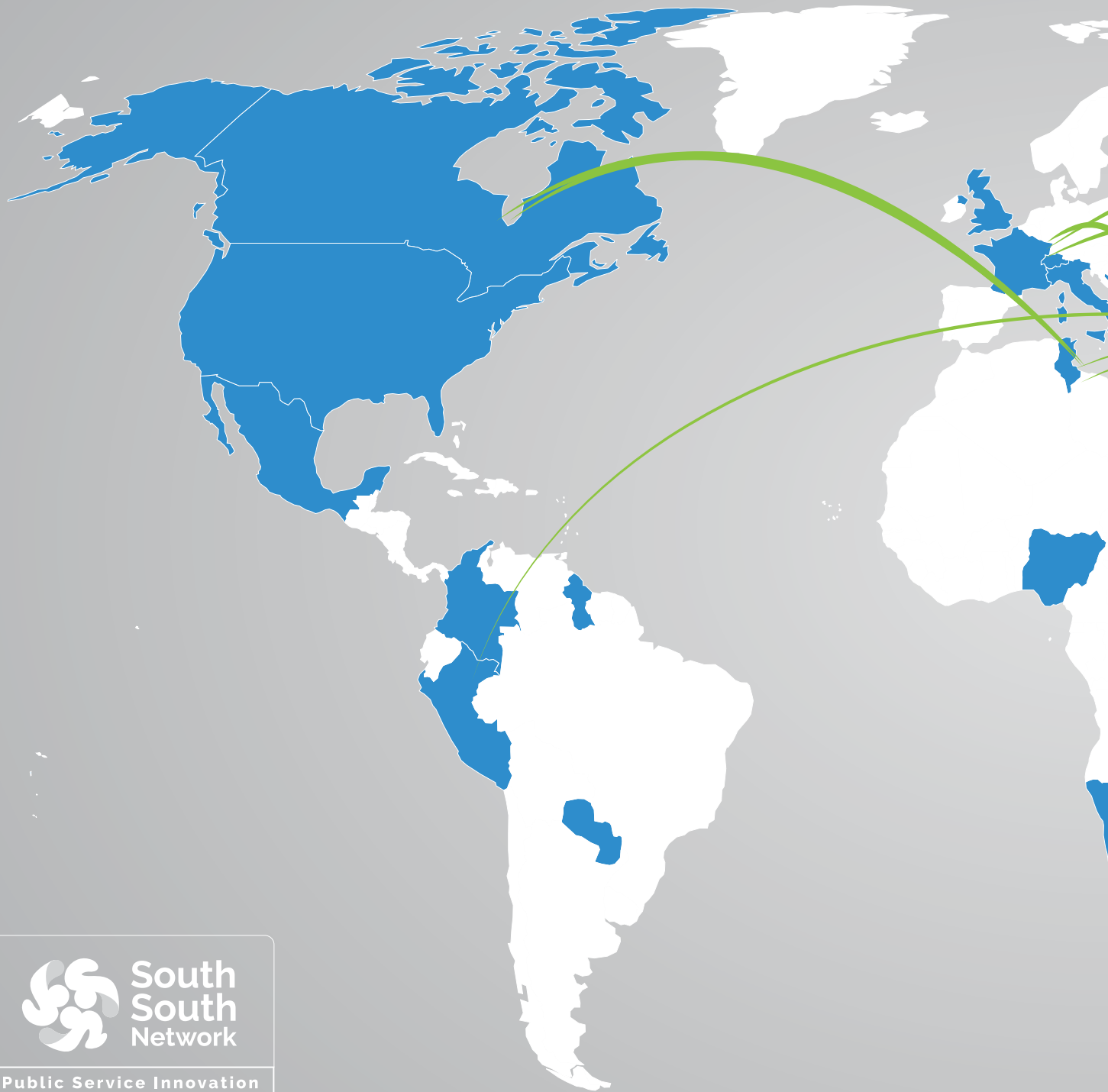
Figure 1- Export/Import Model

The Matchmaking model goes beyond traditional knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer as follows:

1. 'Problem owner' in importer country identifies problem;
2. Importer country reaches out to SSN4PSI;
3. An innovative solution is found in an exporter country;
4. Importer country adapts the solution to fit its context facilitated by SSN4PSI;
5. The proven solution is scaled up for impact and
6. Lessons and insights are diffused globally

SSN4PSI Network

Matches Made (2021-2022)



South
South
Network

Public Service Innovation

-  Countries Connected to the Network
-  Matchmaking on Good Practices

THE SOUTH-SOUTH MATCHMAKER



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The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

CASES FEATURED IN THE MATCHMAKER



THE SOUTH-SOUTH MATCHMAKER

COUNTRY BEST PRACTICES

THE SOUTH-SOUTH
MATCHMAKER

North Macedonia



Establishment of e-Dashboard with financial indicators (As part of Empowering Municipal Councils Projects)

An overview of the development challenges in the country

For a long period of time, transparency in the country, and especially the transparency related to public finance at the local level, has been identified as a challenge not only from municipalities but by citizens as well. Although municipalities share their data on budget execution at the local level, that is often done in an unsystematized and ununified fashion, making data unreadable and hard to understand for the general public. The Swiss/SDC funded project "Empowering Municipal Councils" which is implemented by UNDP, aims to address this challenge through development of web solutions that present financial data of municipalities in a way that is systematized and easy to understand, thus improving the fiscal transparency at the local level.

The solution

The overall objective of the Empowering Municipal Councils Project is to strengthen municipal councils to become more effective and autonomous bodies, better able to withstand the executive's influence by properly fulfilling their constitutionally assigned roles of legislation, oversight, and representation. One of the most specific objectives of the project is to increase the transparency and accountability of the local institutions, especially in terms of fiscal transparency,

as well as to increase the citizens' participation in the decision-making process at the local level.

In the process of designing the solution that will improve fiscal transparency at the local level, several research studies and surveys were conducted within the project: a) the quality of local governance; b) the state of public financial management at the local level; c) quantitative assessments of gender equality, equal opportunities and inter-ethnic relations; d) the potential for innovation in municipal processes and interaction with citizens; and e) transparency, citizen outreach and service orientation as demonstrated in a review of all 81 municipal websites.

This comprehensive research approach provided a clear view of the current situation regarding the needs of the citizens as well as the local government bodies in terms of the fiscal transparency at the local level. The research results showed that citizens are least satisfied with the information on how their municipal budget is spent, as well as with the way financial information is presented.

Considering these findings, it was decided that the best way to address this challenge would be through use of IT solutions. In this context, a web application (financial e-dashboard) was developed enabling municipalities to present their financial data (revenues, expenditures, liabilities, borrowings, and general

budget realization) in a clear and simple way, that is understandable for the municipal administration, municipal councillors and the general public. As a result of this solution, in the past five years beneficiary municipalities who are actively using the e-dashboards to present their financial data, were able to increase their transparency index, as per several independent analyses conducted in the country.

It is worth noting that, as part of the national Open Government Partnership (OGP) commitment related to "Introducing new tools to improve the financial transparency and accountability of the Local share their data on budget execution at the local level, that is often done in an unsystematized and ununified fashion, making the data unreadable and hard to understand for the general public. The Swiss/SDC funded project "Empowering Municipal Councils" which is

implemented by UNDP, aims to address this challenge through development of web solutions that present financial data of municipalities in a way that is systematized and easy to understand, thus improving the fiscal transparency at the local level.

"Self-Government Units (LSGUs)" the e-dashboard has been globally recognized by the OGP community. It won third place in the Europe region, at the Global OGP summit organized in December 2021. The Global "OGP Impact Awards" highlight commitments that have demonstrably improved people's lives or the quality of democracy in the respective countries.

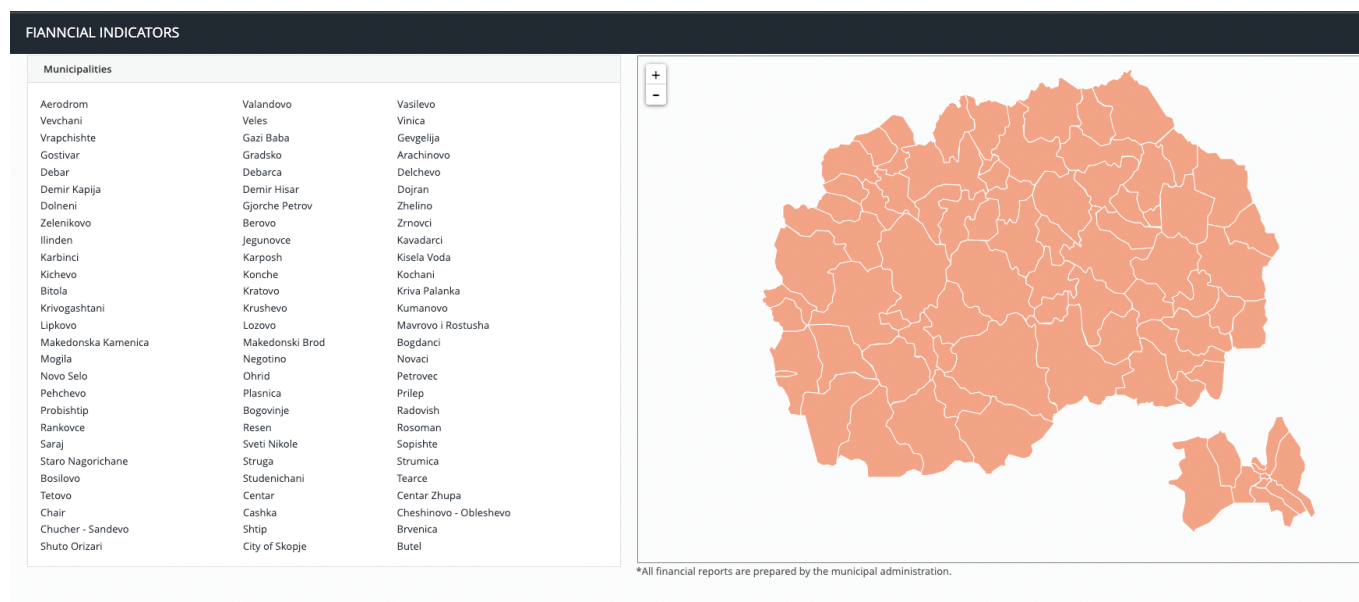


Figure 2: e-dashboard

Challenges

The main challenge is related to ensuring the sustainability of the e-dashboard after the Empowering Municipal Councils project is fully implemented. However, in this context, it should be noted that all municipalities that have completed their participation in the project activities are

regularly using this tool to share their data, which confirms the potential for sustainability of the solution.

Potential for replication and/or adaptation

The solution was originally intended for the first six municipalities involved in the project Empowering Municipal Councils. Thanks to the successful implementation and the positive effects on the strengthening of transparency in local government, during the first semester of 2022, a total of 42 municipalities (52 % of local self-government units in the country) are actively using this solution.

The idea of the e-dashboards did not come from a specific case study but rather from regional and global trends in the use of digital technologies by public institutions to achieve higher level of transparency and accountability, as well as to provide easier access to public information for the citizens. Once developed and established, the e-dashboard was introduced in 24 partner municipalities (part of the Empowering Municipal Councils project) and in additional 18 municipalities

that recognized the benefits of the solution. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance has contributed to the further promotion of the e-dashboard by making efforts to urge the remaining municipalities to incorporate the e-dashboards within their websites so they can improve financial transparency as well.

Lessons learned

In recent years research studies showed an upward trend for the transparency index in almost all municipalities that have implemented the e-dashboard. However, recent surveys on citizens' satisfaction with services at the local level show that their satisfaction with fiscal transparency remains at a relatively low level. In this context, in parallel with the creation of digital solutions, project activities should be taken on reducing the digital divide between the population, as well as on increasing the awareness of citizens, media, business sector, academia, and NGOs, on the availability of digital tools that provide easy and equal access to public information.

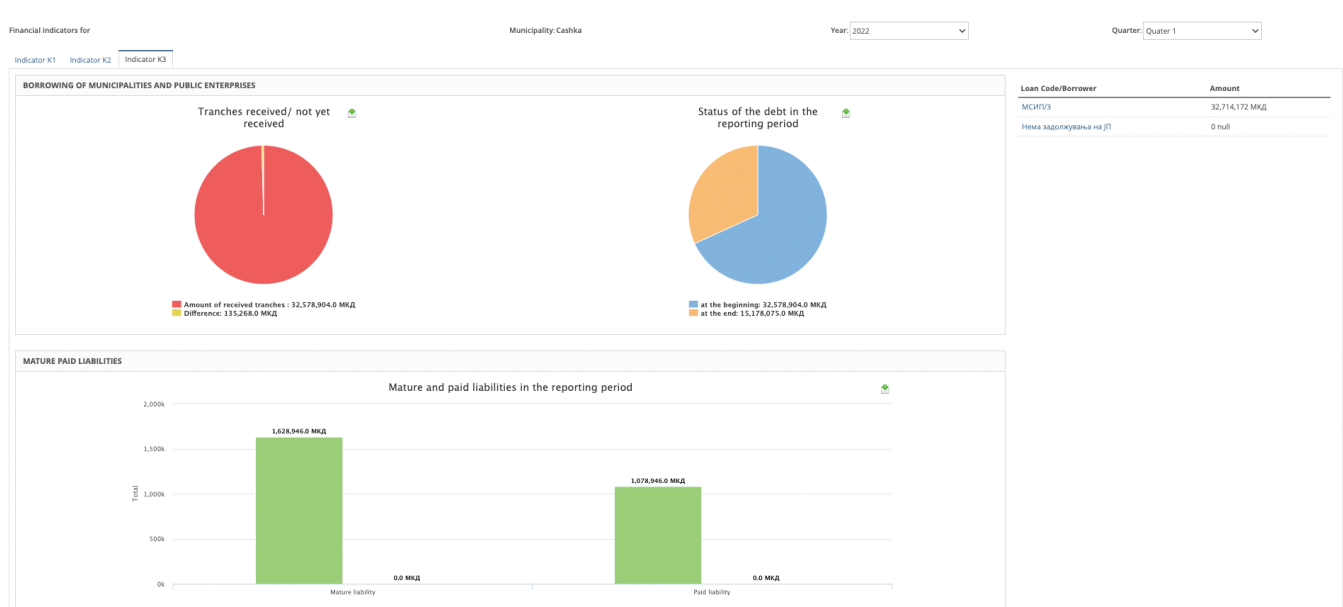


Figure 3: Financial Indicators

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South Africa



Domestic Observer Digital App

An overview of the development challenges

Strong, effective, home-grown domestic observation capacity is vital to ensure the credibility of the elections process, especially as elections become more contested and sophisticated. Impartial election observation by citizen organizations is a valuable confidence-building measure that contributes to enhancing the integrity and transparency of elections by promoting the responsibility of all stakeholders, and therefore potentially reducing the risk of election-related conflict.

The solution

The digital platform speaks directly to the South African Government's Active Citizenry policy through strengthening the domestic observer sector. It will provide means to support the sector that enriches the sector's ability to both encourage citizen participation in the electoral process, as well as build a strengthened coalition of domestic observers that can encourage the IEC to improve its performance.

"We developed a centralized application that serves as a common management platform to improve management, resource allocation, and the prioritization of observer accreditation processes. The application enables the IEC's imperative to enhance the digitisation of the applications of the accreditation and elections processes by domestic observers".—Rogret Mogane,

As the domestic observer sector remains somewhat uncoordinated in South Africa, and with less international observers on the ground during elections, the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) has partnered with UNDP and a selected service provider to develop an Information Technology platform for data collection and to serve as a reporting tool for domestic observers. The platform will not only strengthen the sector's ability to encourage citizen participation in the electoral process, but also build a strengthened coalition of domestic observers that can encourage the IEC to improve its performance.

Chief Executive Officer at EconArch Consulting and IT Services.

This software application has two elements. The first element allows for the online registration and application for accreditation to observe in a specific election which is the mandate of the IEC. The second element will enable the accredited observer groups to upload observations in real time throughout the electoral process and can create a real time report for the IEC on election day. The platform will also provide civil society, the media, lawmakers, and the voting population with accessible reports on the elections process as documented by the observers.

The development outcomes of the platform have been met as the app has been able to assimilate with the IEC's "System Development Environment", being able to retrieve, read, and input the required data. The

platform is currently in its final stages of user testing with the training for both the system administrators and the observers to begin imminently. Post-testing, a pilot will run in which the system will be deployed in the local by-elections. This pilot will test the platform's efficacy in a "live" environment.

Challenges

Two of the major concerns were whether the platform should be subject to the country's Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), and whether any contractual agreement between the service provider and the IEC would be needed. After multiple discussions, it was agreed the platform is not subject to POPIA as it will not store and collect citizen data. It was agreed that the platform should have a user consent message requiring agreement prior to allowing the user to login.

The other potential challenges may be the reliability and the extent to which the platform will be fool-proof, however, the investment that the team is putting in creating and testing the back end will overcome these challenges.

What makes the practice more effective?

Digital in-field data collection for observers has several benefits over traditional paper methods including improved speed and efficiency. Digital processes reduce both data collection time and the time required to analyze and distribute the observers' reports. Digital data collection not only reduces the possibility of error at the point of in-field data collection, but it can also automate data auditing. By both processing and auditing data much faster, errors get caught and corrected much quicker. Another advantage of digital over paper in-field data collection is tracking. Digital options offer real-time tracking that is accessible to all stakeholders, and to the elections commission and other organizations interested in making determinations of the freeness and fairness of the elections.

Potential for replication and/or adaptation

The interface and architecture can be applied in any context and at any scale. The idea was also based on a similar experience in India a few years ago but customized to the local context.

The solution is an adaptation from another case study?

The solution did not arise out of a specific case study but rather emerged from the partnership agreement between UNDP and the IEC. Dubbed "U Count", the agreement aims to enhance the electoral processes in several areas. The two entities have signed a project agreement thereby to help consolidate and build further on the gains made from the democratic transition process in South Africa since the first multi-party democratic elections in 1994. However, there are global case studies that focus on digitizing the electoral process such as the "Electoral Monitoring Dashboard" implemented by the government of India.

The direct involvement of the IEC's ICT division has been crucial in the development of the platform, to ensure adequate safeguards in the development of both the back and front end. Working together with IEC's ICT Unit has allowed for the seamless integration between the platform as an innovation, and the IEC's internal architecture.

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Armenia



Seamless communication with the Armenia state and Citizens

An overview of the development challenges in the country

With the advent of the pandemic, Armenia faced a challenge to keep communication with its citizens as smooth as before the lockdown restrictions. In just a few days the government urged the citizens to stay home

and restricted their physical interaction with state officials. The citizens, who used face-to-face communication, especially with the state entities, were urged to shift to online communication. An online single contact point platform for all government entities was introduced in parallel with the restrictions.

About the platform

A platform, through which it was possible to submit requests, complaints, and applications, was available for a list of state entities, however, the business processes were cumbersome, and it was not very popular among the citizens. Taking into account the situation during the lockdown and all the risks that could arise due to insufficient means for easy communication with the government, the e-Governance Infrastructure Implementation Agency

(EKENG), of the Government of the Republic of Armenia decided to re-engineer the platform and facilitate a user-friendly environment for submitting letters to the state entities without limitation. This idea was presented to the state entities, which had not yet been integrated into the system, and got positive feedback. Subsequently, several months later, the platform united more than 200 organizations from legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, as well as the local government bodies.

The platform integrates with electronic document management systems, making it possible to receive communication directly in the working environment of the organizations. Conversely, other channels like paper, e-mail, and postal services require additional work (copy, scan, register, etc.) In order to be utilized in the main document management system.

From the citizen's perspective, the platform gives a single channel for contacting state officials. Moreover, the platform gives the opportunity to track

the status of their communication and enables interaction with the responsible staff dealing with their case (please see figure 4).

The implementation of the idea was not as easy at first instance. The number of communications submitted through the platform increased significantly. In comparison with the pre-Covid-19 levels, the number of communications reached around 1,000 letters per day.

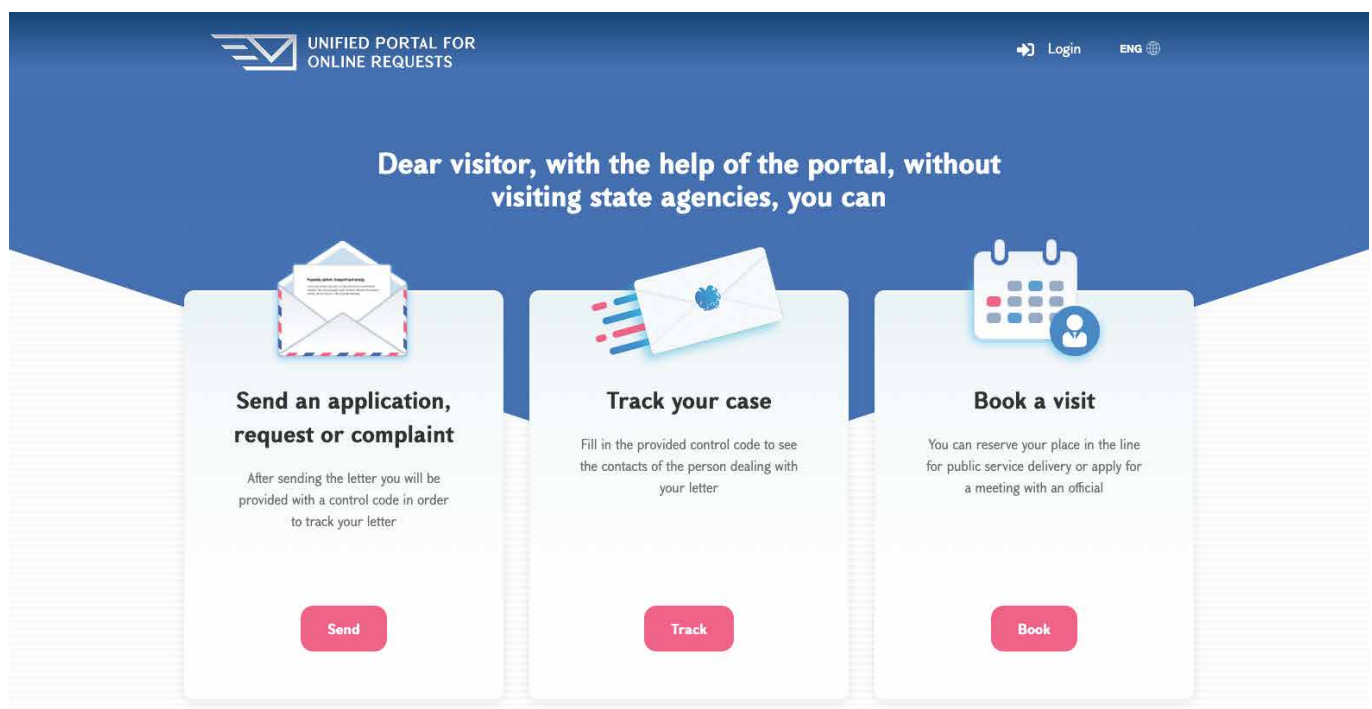


Figure 4: Unified portal for online requests: <https://e-request.am/en>

Challenges

The introduction of the platform led to several challenges at the outset. It became an additional burden for the state officials when the communication increased. But along with the increase in communication, several negative aspects also rose. The law of the country requires that each letter submitted by the citizens be clarified and answered. Some of the communication did not have proper content. Attempts to find the authors of such letters were usually unsuccessful as the platform did not have any reliable identification mechanism.

The unanswered communication led to complaints about public service workers. This became a signal for EKENG to find solutions for filtering (eliminating the possibility of spam) the communication and making the tool efficient. The creation of personal accounts, electronic identification, and the requirement to sign the electronic documents made the communication sent by the citizens more traceable. The risk of fraud cases and communication with improper and sufficient content to act on was significantly mitigated.

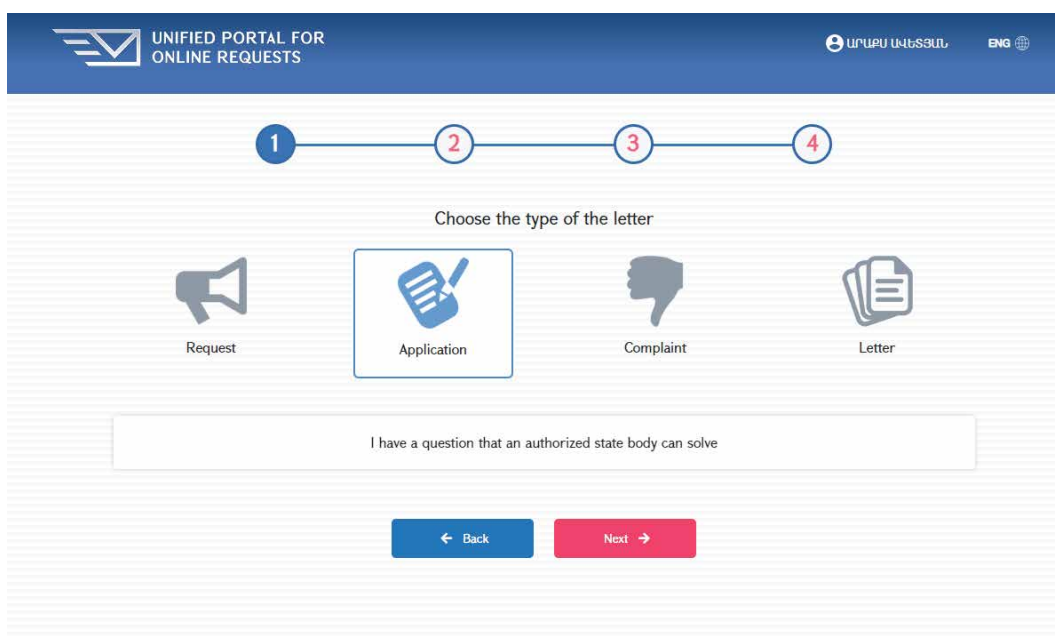


Figure 5: Unified portal for online requests

What makes the practice more effective?

The new practice made it possible to extensively shift to digital communication between the government and the citizens. From both perspectives, the users gain the benefits as described below:

- The processing of citizens' communication is more transparent,
- The government knows exactly with whom it interacts and manages the cases without additional office work, concentrating on the content rather than preparing documents for review.
- The need for follow-up phone calls on the status of requests was reduced as the applicant can see the status anytime.
- The feedback to the requests became more efficient, as the citizens can see the response to their request on the platform in real-time.
- The risks of losing documents were eliminated.

Replicable and/or Adapt

The solution can be customized and adapted to other countries as one of the most explicit stories in the e-gov sphere. At first, the idea was implemented solely for the central government. The judicial, and legislative entities, as well as the local-self-government bodies, realizing the benefits that the platform provides, adopted the same approach. It is important to note that the message for extending the coverage of the platform came not only from the side of the entities but also from numerous citizens, who regularly give feedback on the functionality of the

platform. With knowledge of the efficiency of the platform in some sectors, the citizens urged government to extend it to other parts of government.

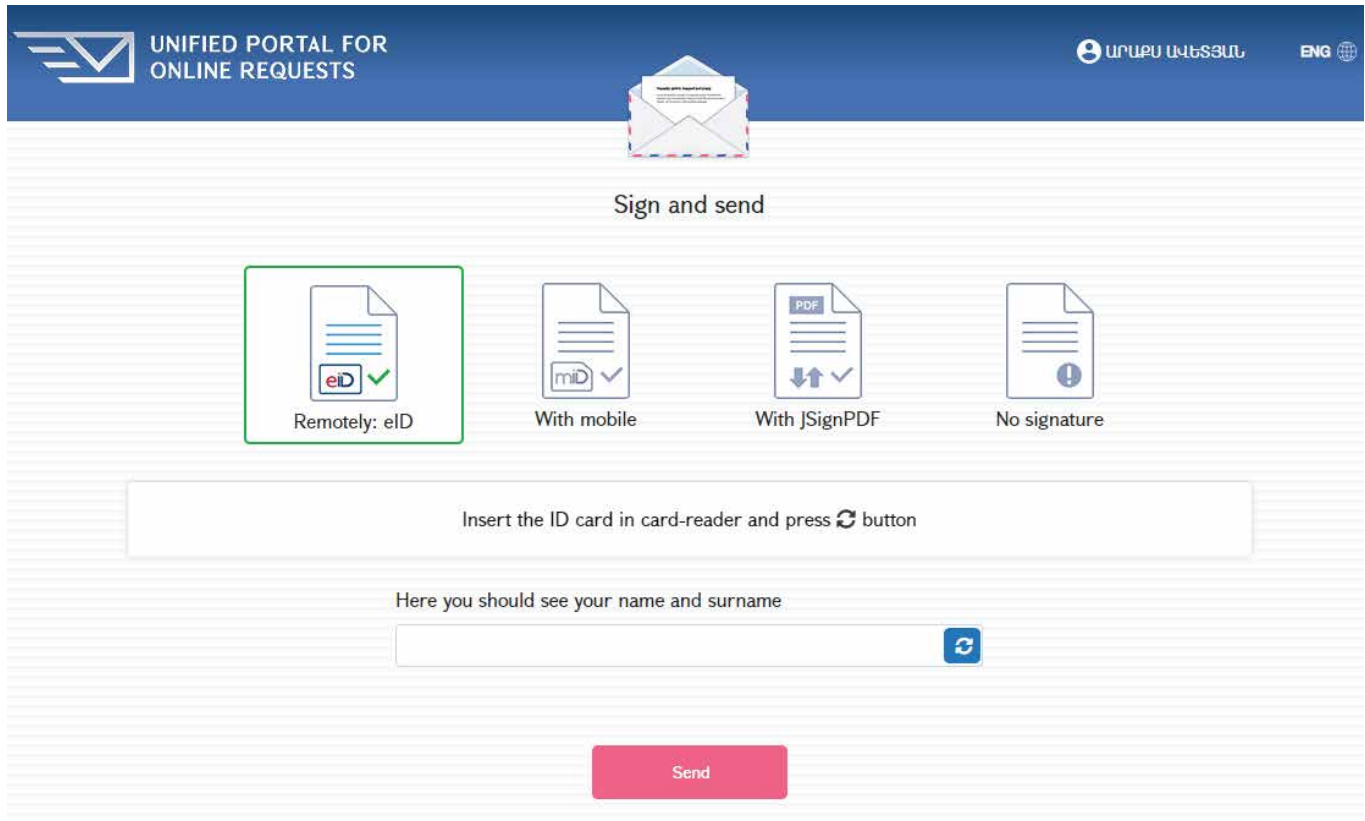
Lessons Learned

The introduction of the unified platform for online requests broke the stereotype that the citizens are reluctant to use online services. If the Government provides the citizens with convenient, understandable, and easy-to-use tools, they are likely to adapt and use them. Moreover, the citizens in their turn will contribute to the development and improvement of the tool with

their proposals and suggestions.

The successful implementation of the platform on such a scale showed that due attention and consideration for security and reliability measures

should be put in place in order to achieve the objectives of efficiency and relief from burdensome processes for the government.



The screenshot displays the 'UNIFIED PORTAL FOR ONLINE REQUESTS' interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the portal's name and logo on the left, and user information and a language selector (ENG) on the right. Below the header, a central graphic shows an envelope icon with the text 'Sign and send'. Underneath, four options for signing a document are presented: 'Remotely: eID' (highlighted with a green border), 'With mobile', 'With JSigPDF', and 'No signature'. Each option is accompanied by a document icon with a signature symbol. Below these options, a white box contains the instruction 'Insert the ID card in card-reader and press [refresh] button'. Further down, a text field is labeled 'Here you should see your name and surname' and includes a refresh button. At the bottom, a prominent pink 'Send' button is visible.

Figure 6: Website of Unified portal of Online request

About the Seamless communication with the state

Seamless communication with the state is an online single contact point platform led by e-Governance Infrastructure Implementation Agency, Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia with the financial support from European Union (EU), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and MSI Armenia (a Tetra Tech Company). The project was completed in 2021. However, the development activities are still on going. The initiative is a blueprint to contribute to the achievement of SDG 16.

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Bangladesh



Surokkha Covid-19 Vaccine Management System

(A digital System to manage the overall Covid-19 vaccination programme in Bangladesh)

An overview of the development challenges

Like the rest of the world, Bangladesh was also heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the country has faced challenges in procuring essential medical supplies in a severely constrained global supply chain. Under this critical situation the mass vaccination programme, an essential approach to stop the spread of the

COVID-19 pandemic faced difficulties.

The Government of Bangladesh set an ambitious target of vaccinating 80% of its population of over 138 million people. However, there were challenges in ensuring adequate supplies within a short time and tracking the vaccination programme through technology as most rural populations lacked access to the internet or required digital devices to register for the vaccine.

The solution

To address the challenge above, the Bangladesh Government developed the "Surokkha" System to implement the overall management of COVID-19 vaccination roll-out. The system is a Public Service Innovation to ensure service delivery is brought closer to the doorsteps of citizens especially in this COVID-19 emergency situation. With the best use of technology, the COVID-19 vaccination programme was greatly facilitated by the "Surokkha" system. The objective of this new system was to ensure that all citizens have access to the vaccine through online Self-Registration and to improve the quality of government services by the participation of the

government employees; and ensure transparency and accountability through the proper use of information technology.

Surokkha is used for vaccine registration, issuing vaccination card, scheduling management, vaccination, providing Smart Vaccination certification and Global Verification of Certificate which is playing a vital role in enabling traveling abroad. This initiative is contributing to SDG 3 "To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages".

A transparent database was created for the recipients of the COVID-19 vaccine, thus enabling compilation of various statistics related to the COVID-19 vaccine,

helping the government in making informed decisions in the vaccine roll-out and gathering knowledge for future health emergencies. In order to reach the targeted beneficiaries, the system was implemented with collaboration and engagement with various government institutions to ensure its ownership and proper roll-out. Surokha was designed by a pool of experts in the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), Management Information System (MIS), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) of the country which cooperated with Department of ICT in implementing the system.

In the implementation stage, many government and non-governmental organizations engaged with the system. The Ministry of Education (MoE), -Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), and the University Grant Commission (UGC) collaborated to vaccinate the students, teachers and staff. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) vaccinated foreign diplomats, foreign nationals including international Students studying in Bangladesh with the help of the “Surokha” system. The Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) vaccinated migrant workers. The Ministry of Social Welfare (MSW) focused on child vaccination

under the “Surokha” System. All the districts, sub-districts, union level offices were aligned with the system.

This initiative is sustainable in social, economic and environmental terms because there is no barrier for all citizens including vulnerable groups such as children over the age of 12 women, senior citizens, the poor, and the slum dwellers. Even the refugees at the Rohingya Camp were enabled to register and get access to vaccination at no cost. People who have no internet facilities were assisted by volunteers at the more than 5,000 union digital centres (UDC) throughout the country. There were also provisions for spot registration and vaccination for disabled and elder citizens.

This initiative has showcased its sustainability as it will be expanded to include an Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), Director General of Health Services (DGHS) who are interested to implement the system for regular child vaccination to cover 45 million children. In the vaccination programme, about 100 million people registered using a national identity card, passport, or birth certificate in the online system to receive the first, second, and third doses of the vaccines. Out of 100 million people, 81 million citizens were vaccinated

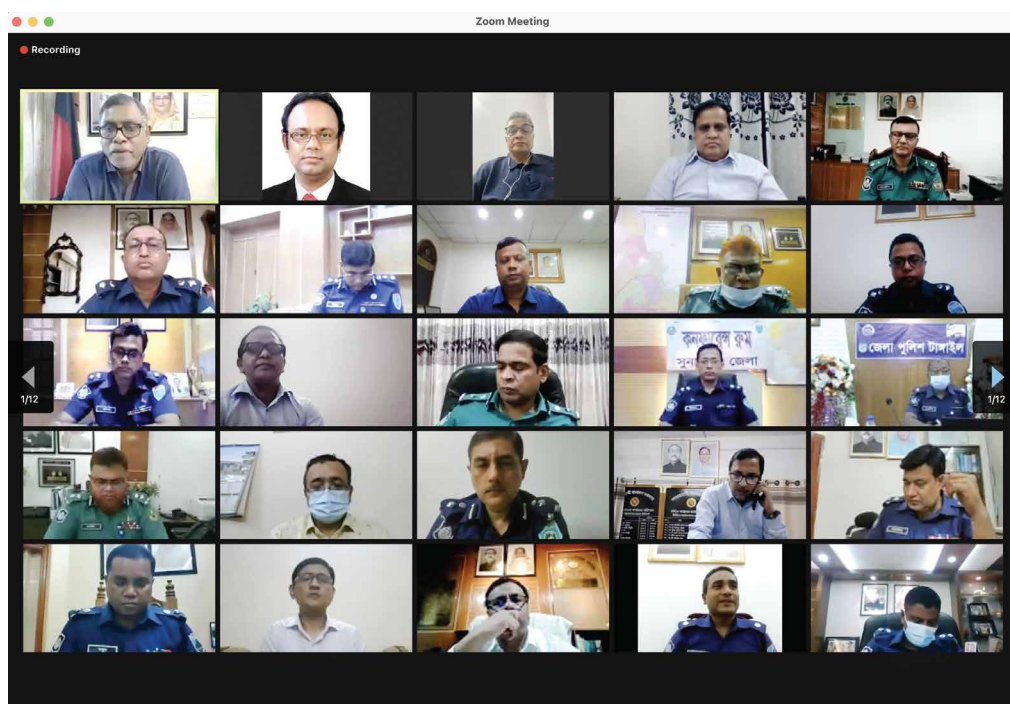


Figure 7:
A webinar where experts discussed Surokha, the COVID-19 Vaccine management system



Figure 8: Photo of a consultative meeting

for the first dose, 72 million citizens took the second dose, and 16 million citizens have taken the third/booster dose as of now.

The government successfully implemented and managed COVID-19 vaccination in Bangladesh and achieved a hugely successful milestone. Around 200 million citizens have been administered vaccine doses to date. The system already proved to be scalable, and secure and helped in decision-making, hence it can be transferred/adapted to other

countries as well. It will be easy to replicate as the system is already available in English along with Bengali, but it requires the existence of a good digital infrastructure.

Initially, the initiative targeted the vaccination of priority groups, that is, the people living in urban and densely populated areas. Later on, the initiative was re-focused on the sub-districts and villages where the target audience was citizens 12 years and older.

Figure 9:
Experts and Senior
Government officials of
Surokha Vaccine
management system



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Bosnia and Herzegovina



Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – Values generated by CAF

An overview of the development challenges in the country

The Administrative Reform of public institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a long, arduous, and costly journey that needed foundations for reform plans, promising programmes, specific requirements and paths for reform. The need for quality has always been another vital part of the reform. While implementing the Public Administration Reform (PAR), an external evaluation showed that there is no umbrella service delivery policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the delivery of services differed at different places, institutions and employees. While analysing the existing problems during the new policy cycle, the working group with participation of the Civil Service Agency of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) realised that there is a need to optimise the services (simplify and digitalise them), build the capacities for service delivery, strengthen the control mechanisms and better coordinate the institutions in charge.

One of the challenges faced was that Bosnia and Herzegovina inherited a culture of over-regulation from the past. The prevailing practice was that everything needed to be regulated by laws and the implementation has to be done according to the law as well. The contention was not that institutionalisation and a legal framework do not matter, as they are an important and necessary element of any policy, practice showed that many of the horizontal reforms were not systematically implemented due to the differences of the people employed or differences between organizations and their distinct organizational cultures. This was one of the areas of focus in the new Strategic Framework for Public Administration Reform (2018-22) in Bosnia and Herzegovina with an aim to change the administrative culture.

What does it mean in practice?

Most of the current services in Bosnia and Herzegovina were created through a top-down approach. The aim was to change the approach to bottom-up, encompassing the feedback of customers and satisfaction measurement, for instance, developing mechanisms for the co-design of services with customers. In order to overcome the resistance to the administrative culture change and embrace the new approach, institutions needed to self-introspect, have sets of standards to use as a point of reference for evaluating self-performance and the level of quality of their work and customer satisfaction. This is how the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) entered into the picture, as a soft and perhaps not so fast, but excellent tool for gradual change management in administration. The Civil Service Agency and the Training System for local self-government units in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ADSFBiH) noted that the country has been planning and implementing macro-level (horizontal) reforms for many

years, although the challenges identified for unfulfilled objectives of the reforms are often found at micro-level (the level of organisation or people). In this sense, solutions had to come from not only adopting regulations and laws but also gradually supporting institutions to focus on how they can enhance their services, their organization and the way in which they serve their customers, until some point when continuous self-assessment can be integrated as a practice in public sector routines. Thus, agencies were encouraged to look more closely at the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and what can be achieved by using it in public institutions: specifically, what its existence can achieve in the context of reforming, developing and working on continuous improvement for administrations to become strong effective institutions working at all levels and able to implement the development plans. The CAF aims to be a catalyst for a full improvement process within the organization and has five main purposes:

1. To introduce public administrations into the culture of excellence and the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM)¹
2. To guide progressively to a fully-fledged PDCA (PLAN, DO, CHECK, ACT) cycle
3. To facilitate the self-assessment of a public organization in order to obtain a diagnosis and a definition of improvement actions
4. To act as a bridge across the various models used in quality management, both in the public and private sectors
5. To facilitate bench learning between public sector organizations

The CAF model (please see figure 10 below) represents the nine-box structure identifying the main aspects requiring consideration in any organisational analysis. Criteria 1–5 (the enablers) deal with the managerial practices of an organisation. These determine what the organisation does and how it approaches its tasks to achieve the desired results. In Criteria 6–9, the results achieved in the fields of citizens/customers, people, social responsibility and key performance are measured by perception and performance measurements.

Each criterion is broken down into a list of sub criteria. 28 sub criteria identify the main issues that need to be considered when assessing an organisation. They are illustrated by examples that explain the content of the sub criteria in more detail and suggest possible areas to address, in order to explore how the administration meets the requirements expressed in the sub criterion.

1. Total Quality Management (TQM)¹ describes a management approach to long-term success through customer satisfaction. In a TQM effort, all members of an organization participate in improving processes, products, services, and the culture in which they work. <https://asq.org/quality-resources/total-quality-management>

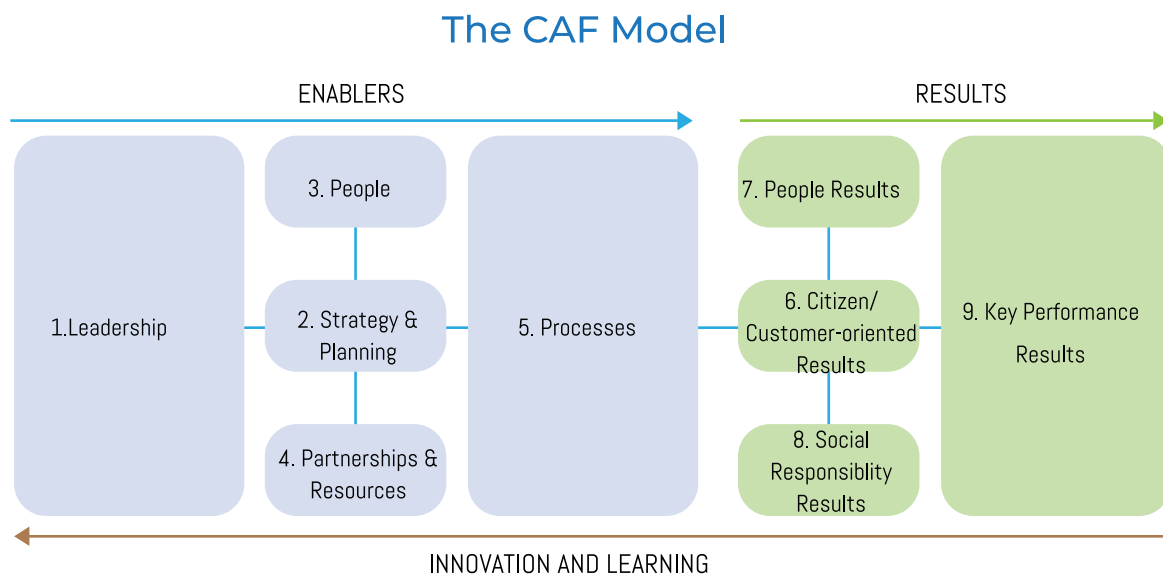


Figure 10: The Common Assessment Framework Model

Challenges

According to CAF experts, spreading and promoting the use of the CAF is not an easy task, it is a challenge, and its levels and proportions vary from one institution to another according to the availability of willingness and certainty of success. The most important challenges while promoting the CAF were:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Traditional management style, the absence of effective leadership in the organization | f) The emergence of unexpected problems and crises that reduced interest in the implementation process |
| b) The lack of administrative transparency | g) The lack of sufficient time allocated to institutions to implement CAF |
| c) The rigidity of laws especially those related to civil service | h) Poor administrative infrastructure in the institution with bureaucratic management. |
| d) The spread of a culture of resisting change among workers | |
| e) The absence of internal motivation for creativity and excellence | |

When COVID-19 surged, the need for flexible working conditions and the use of digitalization tools were boosted. CAF was also adopted in the same period, strengthening its focus on digitalization, agility, sustainability and diversity to support the implementation of reforms.

Although, the implementation of the CAF faced many challenges, overcoming them was possible through clarification of the value, importance and benefits of using CAF for development, improvement and speed-up of digital transformation, as well as adopting the principle of transformational leadership in institutions,

The Response

The Government, Civil Service Agency of the Federation of BiH started the promotion of the CAF model by introducing mentorship in seven local government units and in two level of administrations (cantonal) and federal civil service authorities. The mentorship programme was supported by the Centre for Public Administration Research (KdZ Austria) and the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA). In those authorities, the CAF was a part of a masterplan and enabled an analytical organizational diagnosis

involvement of people with leadership skills and implementing capacity building programmes for increasing the number of competent personnel who have the ability to spread and implement the CAF.

within a constructive discussion process between leadership and employees in a short time. The first visible results or areas of improvement of the CAF implementation in the authorities of the Federation of BiH were: improved internal communication, the re-evaluation of internal over-regulation processes, flexible working conditions and use of digitalization tools. In addition to improving daily work, the focus was on the strategic orientation, by introducing the new management model with a systematic overview of its potential for improvement.



Figure 11.a: The response workshop on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Lessons Learned

The involvement of the staff and the leadership level were essential for a sustainable success of the CAF. It is also helpful to build internal knowledge of the

CAF and have sufficient personnel assigned to quality management tasks. The contribution of the CAF to start further reform activities also became noticeable. The CAF has been instrumental in the innovation and learning cycle that an organization

goes through within the framework of a quality management system. The CAF can also be used as an internal early warning system for administration, although the instrument should not be overburdened. Complex problems that have taken hold in an ever-increasing digital administrative practice would

not have been resolved without major adjustments. The CAF has proven to be a well-suited instrument to review and encourage innovative activities within the public sector. The longer that an organization uses the instrument the more gratifying the results can become.



Figure 11.b: The response workshop on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)



Figure 11.c: The response workshop on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

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Montenegro



"Be Safe" mobile helpline app for women

An overview of the development challenges

"The key measures to halt the spread of Coronavirus – such as lockdowns, restriction of movement and social isolation - left many women more vulnerable to violence. With nowhere to go, risking being arrested if they got caught on the street past the curfew, and shelters closed, it feels as if there's no way out. Distressed from the abuse itself, confined and discouraged by the lack of support, many women felt helpless and at the mercy of their oppressor.

After just a month of lockdown, emerging data from civil society proved our worst fears. Civil society organizations were flooded with requests for help. Some recorded a 30 percent increase in reports

(reports of the NGOs which are specialized service providers for victims of gender-based violence), many through an intermediary party, as victims lived in fear of retaliation. UNDP joined hands with a tech savvy developers and key partners—CSOs, government, police, judiciary, ombudsperson—to come up with a solution. The app was developed amidst the COVID-19 crisis, but it actually provides a long-term solution for all those situations when you can't call for help. The idea of this solution arose in the context of COVID-19 and nation-wide lockdown. It aimed to provide a long-term digital solution which can be utilised in all circumstances not only during the pandemic containment measures or restriction of movement and social isolation."

The solution

"Be Safe" is an online application that enables victims of violence to reach help at just one click. A message with the phone number and geolocation is received by the National SOS Helpline for victims of domestic violence. Their staff will immediately contact the person who tapped the help button. Professional staff are well trained and educated for acting in emergency situations related to violence, while all the data are kept safe and confidential.

The Application is available for Android users and can be downloaded from Google Playstore and iOS. It is a simple digital solution that operates at a lower level of data exchange than WhatsApp or Viber (Chat applications). It aims to provide a long-term digital solution, which can be utilised in all circumstances not only during the pandemic containment measures of restriction of movement and social isolation².

2. <https://www.undp.org/eurasia/blog/%E2%80%9Cbe-safe%E2%80%9D-mobile-app-protect-victims-violence> written by Daniela Gasparikova, Resident Representative UNDP to Montenegro and Kaca Djurickovic, Gender Programme Manager, UNDP Montenegro.

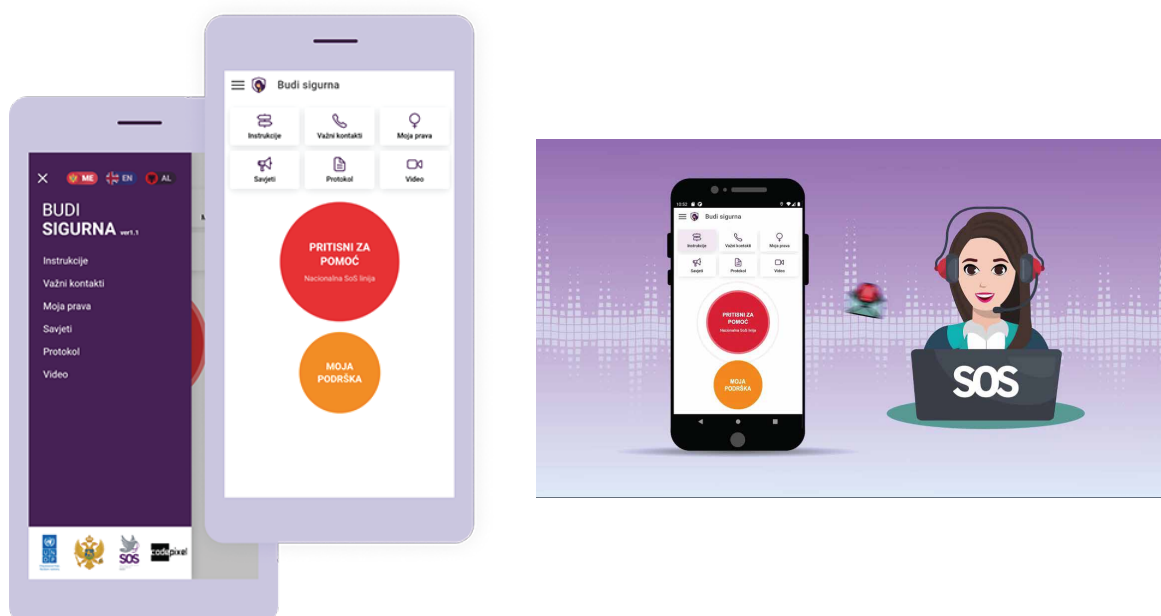


Figure 12: Front Page of Application

Technical details are as follows:

- Permissions required during installation/downloads: location (based on GPS and network-based), access to contacts, sending SMS messages and directly calling phone numbers.
- The App uses the user's location and Google Geolocator gets the current user's address (street name, house number).
- Google Geolocator service is protected by GOOGLE PRIVACY POLICY protocols (<https://policies.google.com/privacy>).
- The App directly sends geolocation data with an emergency alert SMS to the National SOS-line for women victims of violence or to the trusted contacts chosen by the app user.
- All Data is transferred as a regular SMS and its protection is confident as a regular SMS user's communication (dependant on contracted mobile provider and national laws).
- Chat feature is available and provides a possibility for direct contact between the beneficiary (victim) and service provider. It does not use any external SMS service and can be used only within Montenegro.
- End-users of the data shared through application (geolocator and number) is the National SOS-line, managing them in accordance with internal Protocol that includes privacy protection.
- The App offers push notifications that enables SOS Hotline to share information relevant for beneficiaries.
- There is no database stored in application programme.
- Police is called by women's group to intervene and act only upon agreement of women.
- Secrecy (built-in feature to hide the app in the phone).



BUDI SIGURNA

Aplikacija za prijavu nasilja



Figure 13: Logo of “Be safe” mobile helpline app for Women

Challenges

Some of the detected challenges are access to technology, access to internet and overall internet coverage particularly in the northern and rural parts of the country and digital literacy. Another challenge has to do with false reporting including by perpetrators of violence.

An important step for overcoming some of the challenges is awareness raising, including work done by women's organizations working in this field, especially increasing digital literacy.

Lessons learned

To use solutions that are simple and user-friendly. Engagement of all relevant stakeholders is required.

Potential for Replication and/or Adaptation?

The added value of this app is its simplicity, rapidity, and its security (built-in feature to hide the app in the phone). This application is easy to replicate. For instance, the Republic of North Macedonia has already developed an app based on BeSafe. It has also inspired the development of the application in Serbia called Sound of Soul.

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<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=budisigurna.me&hl=en&gl=US>

Somalia



Shaqo Abuur

(Virtual job and skills platform for real-time data-based policy planning to mitigate unemployment in Somalia)

An overview of the development challenges

Somalia is home to the youngest population in Africa, 81.5% of the population is under the age of 35, with the unemployment rate for youth aged 14 to 29 at 67%—one of the highest rates in the world. Women, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Returnees are the most vulnerable communities impacted by COVID-19, according to the most recent research published by the Raagsan Policy center.

The Somalia National Development Plan explicitly emphasizes “sustainable, inclusive growth through

digital economy, however, there is no single intelligence platform that connects young people, skills providers, job providers, academia and policymakers to matchmake among themselves as per their own needs.

In Somalia, there is a dominant of informal economy and non-transparent practices for recruiting, and digital platforms would address the challenges of inequality, stigma, and barriers to vulnerable groups for hire. In the context of COVID-19 and work-from-home set ups, digital platforms for skill seekers, job seekers and private sector engagement would allow a resilient social economic response.

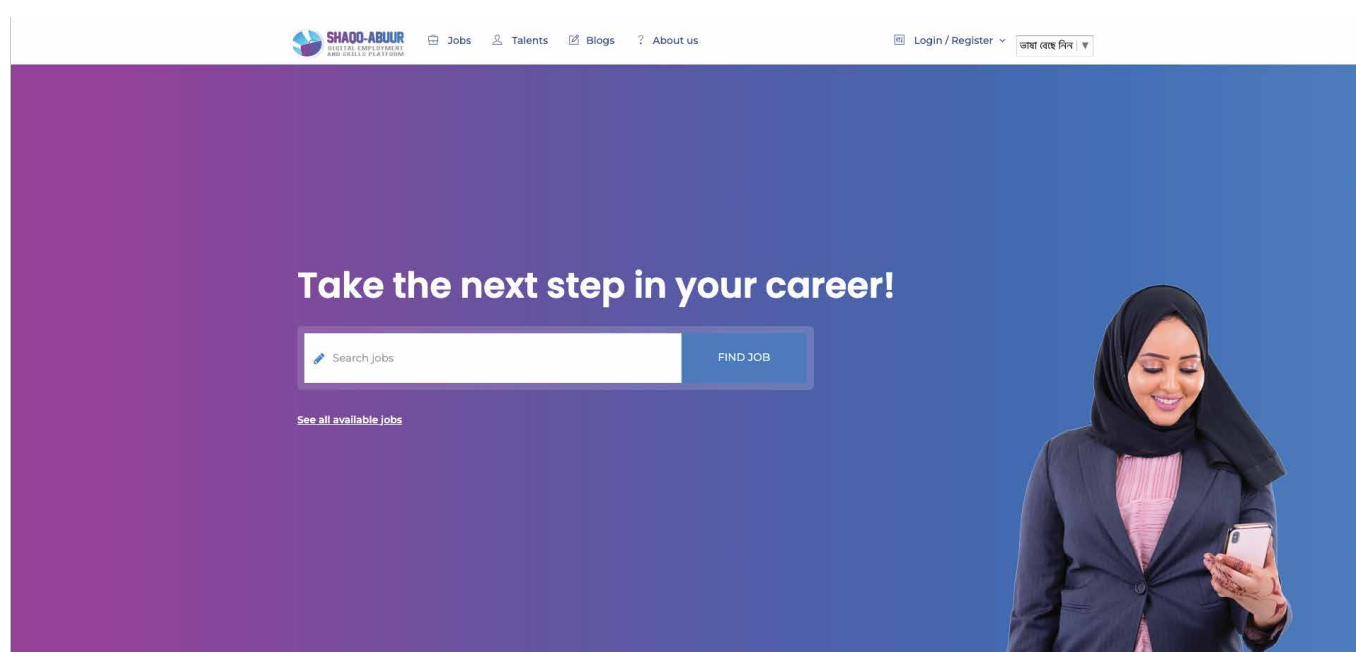


Figure 14.a: Shaqo Abuur portal

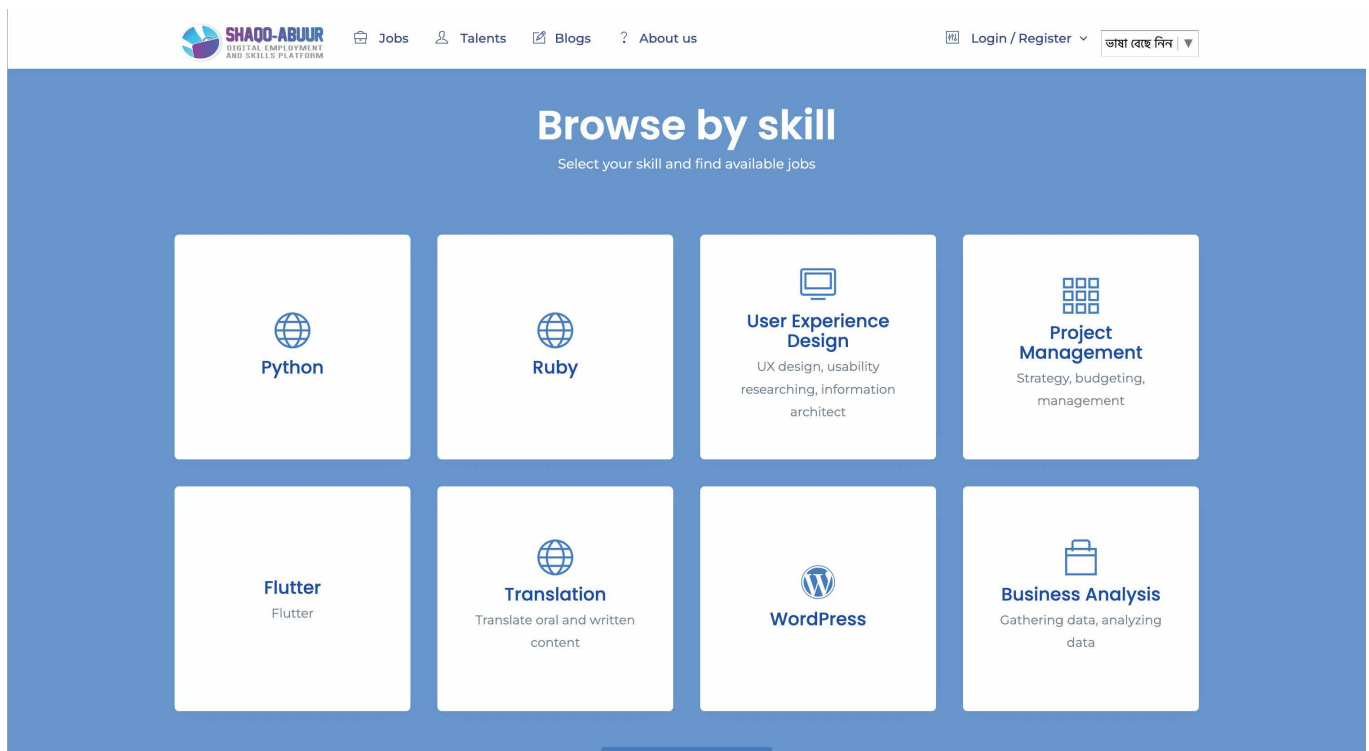


Figure 14.b: Shaqo Abuur portal

The Solution

Somalia and Bangladesh share similar contexts in youth unemployment with 2 million youths joining the labor force each year. To address such similar problems the Government of Bangladesh's recent initiative, National Intelligence for Skills, Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship (NISE), is a matchmaking platform for unemployed youth, skills service providers (public and private) and industries to minimize the supply-demand gap by facilitating market-driven skills development and ensuring increased access to decent work opportunities. This digital platform works as a supplement for achieving Sustainable Development Goals no. 4 and 8.

For youth, the NISE platform offers self-assessment, career counseling and guidance, information on occupation-based skills and the ability to apply online for courses, jobs and apprenticeships. For the skills service providers, the platform helps manage course enrollment mentors and monitors their skills development activities online which may also provide labor market information and forecasting of emerging job opportunities to identify market-driven occupations and establish industry linkages. For employers, the

NISE helps with advertising job vacancies targeting the right audience, attracting skilled youths and building up a supply-demand relationship with the skills providers so that information can be shared among them on emerging job opportunities, skilled human resources and market-driven skills. For decision-makers, the NISE platform generates real-time data to help with data-driven planning and decision-making to address supply and demand gaps.

After reviewing the impacts of the NISE platform in Bangladesh, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Somalia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications and Technology (MOCT) of Somalia, approached Bangladesh to customize the platform to Somalia's context. To customize the platform to Somalia's context, the UNDP Chief Digital Office Programme Digital X provided technical support. Also, the a2i programme from Bangladesh provided knowledge and technical support. The platform was localized and called "Shaqo Abuur, meaning "youth employment service."

The Shaqo Abuur platform was launched at the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) in 2021 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, by the Hon'ble Minister for Communications and Technology of Somalia H.E Abdi Sheikh Ahmed, Federal Republic of Somalia and The Honorable ICT State Minister of Bangladesh H.E Zunaïd Ahmed Palak. The platform aims to address skills mismatch in Somalia's labor market so that the country's unemployment problem can be mitigated. Thus, Shaqo Abuur is essentially making impacts in economic development by developing a demand driven skilled workforce. Youths equipped with proper skills will be able to secure decent and gainful employment not only in their own country but also abroad by ensuring skilled and safe

migration and equal pay as per their skillsets.

The Shaqo Abuur platform is the first of its kind in Somalia, that connects young Somali job seekers, job sites, training institutions, industries and academia with data intelligence and analytics. The Digital solution allows a marketplace for youth, private sector companies, as well as regional and international diaspora interested in accessing the value-for-money of the Somali market of highly skilled professionals. The platform's data-driven approach helps adapt and focus the growing number of IT and engineering training efforts to be more market-driven and builds a foundation for securing professional pathways for young Somalis going into digital jobs.

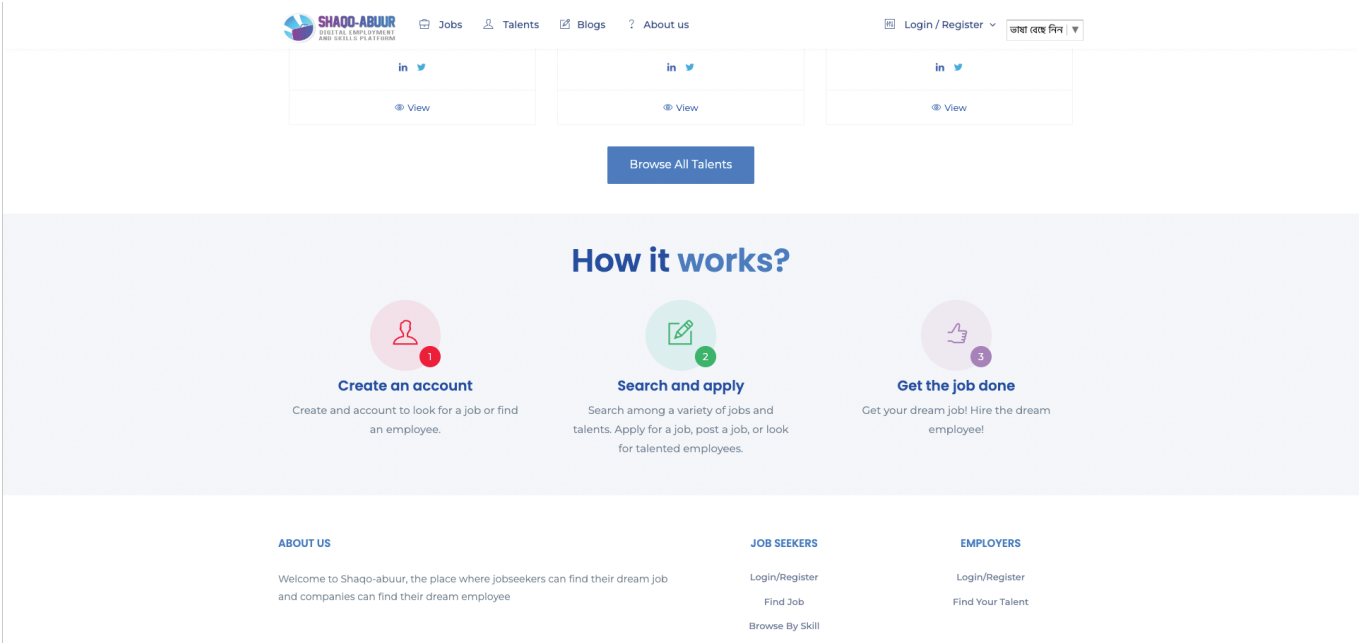


Figure 14.c: Shaqo Abuur portal

The platform has been identified by other southern countries for replication in their country's context. For instance, UNDP Jordan, in collaboration with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship in Jordan, is currently replicating the NISE platform in Jordan's context with technical support from the UNDP Crisis Bureau office. Besides, a few other southern countries are in the pipeline to replicate this platform in their country's context.

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Turkey



Dukkan Freelance Working Platform

An overview of the development challenges

The Dukkan Freelance Working Platform was developed to address various livelihood challenges facing Syrian refugees living in Turkey. One of the main reasons for the social tension between Syrian refugees and the host community is competition over job opportunities. Furthermore, the skills that Syrian refugees have often do not find their match in the job market because of the language barrier, lack of documentation, and necessity for a work permit. The COVID-19 pandemic and a shrinking economy made the

conditions even harsher for the refugees seeking decent livelihood opportunities.

To develop an efficient ecosystem for the e-Commerce industry, the government of Turkey took the initiative to establish an integrated and assisted e-Commerce platform, “ekShop,” with the objective of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all and facilitating digital livelihood opportunities for refugees.

The solution

The solution was adapted from the success and the impact of the ekShop initiative in Bangladesh. The ekShop is an integrated assisted rural e-Commerce platform. It has gathered all major e-Commerce players and integrated them into a single platform. Rural and urban merchants are able to connect and collaborate with effective e-Commerce and logistics players for shipment facilitation with the potential of global escalation. The ekShop utilizes union-level delivery points to penetrate hard-to-access areas and government and human resources to make a decentralized

supply chain. It enables sellers into a “Single Point of Entry” to all e-Commerce platforms. The ekShop also leverages ESCROW, a financial arrangement to temporarily hold money for a transaction before the transaction has been finalized to ensure maximum security for an e-commerce transaction.

Dukkan is a freelance working platform for Syrian refugees holding ICT skills. Since some Syrian refugees graduated from the university departments providing ICT skills and many NGOs in Turkey organized ICT courses for refugees, the number of Syrian refugees who can perform as freelancers are relatively high in Turkey.

The Platform aims to match these freelancers with demand from outside of Turkey, mainly in Bangladesh and Arabic-speaking countries. For achieving this purpose, outreach was conducted to reach Syrians with ICT skills. UNDP Turkey and UNDP Bangladesh established relations with the private sector, the Platform's candidate clients.

Traditional livelihood projects are strictly bound by time and location boundaries. With Dukkan, refugees can find job opportunities from anywhere in the world. Since the Platform targets mainly Arabic-speaking customers, this solution will not raise the social tension between refugees and the host community. Lastly, freelancers can adopt anytime as their working hours. Hence, disadvantaged groups such as single parents, women, and individuals with a disability can be a freelancer on the Platform.

The Platform is easily replicable. Localization to desired languages and relations with the private sector of the target countries will be vital elements for the replication.

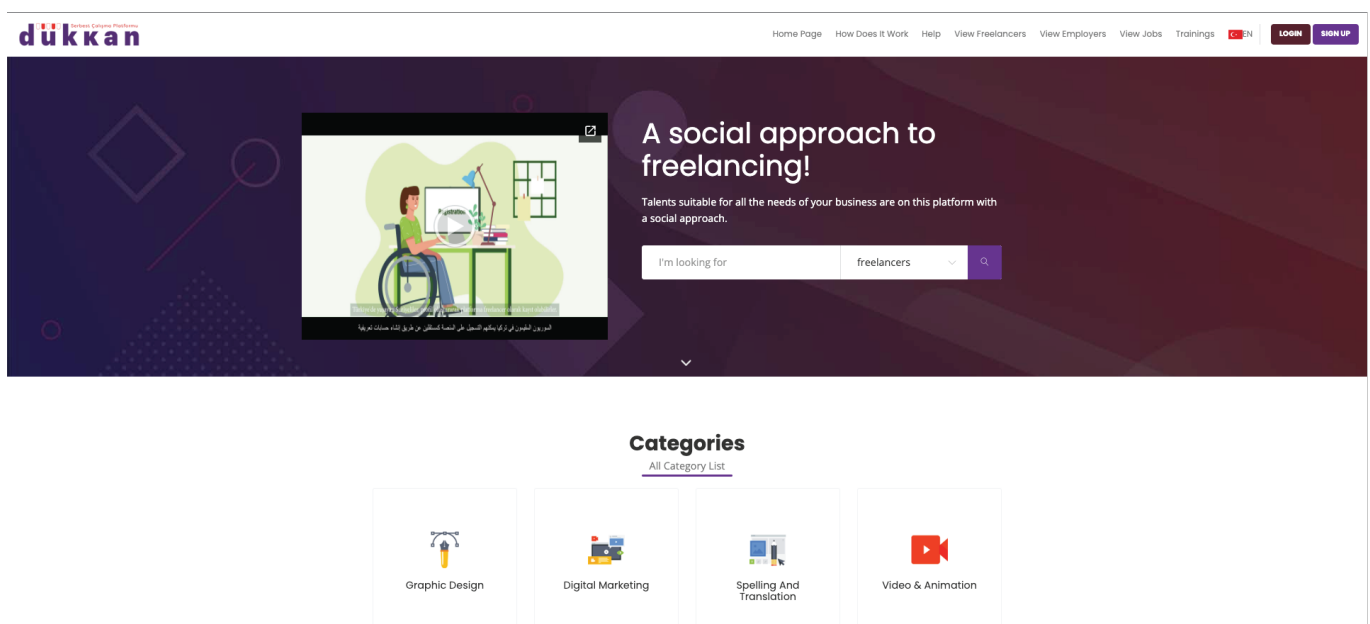


Figure 15: Dukkan portal

Challenges and Learning

- When starting Dukkan, posting jobs and hiring personnel posed a challenge. The site was up and running, however, partners had to be brought in.
- Bug testing took longer than expected.
- Language posed as a barrier when communicating with potential partners.
- Integrating payment services, who were willing to work with Syrian refugees, posed a difficulty.

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Uzbekistan



Transformation of licensing and permits through “License” digital platform

An overview of the development challenges in the country

Before digitalization licensing and permission procedures in Uzbekistan were done on paper. It took a lot of time to process applications and issue permits and the process was not transparent

leading to corruption risks. Therefore, during the development of the system and transformation of the services, not all ministries were eager to adopt the changes. As a result, the Senate adopted a new Law to regulate the delivery of public services on licensing and issuing permits³.

The solution

The purpose of the “License” platform is to support the activities of licensing authorities and digitalize

all services on issuing licenses and permits by streamlining the underlying business processes and procedures, developing and implementing a new information system.

The objectives of the platform:

- automate all processes related to the issuance of licenses, permits, and certificates, as well as sending and confirming notifications, and tracking the fulfilment of license requirements;
- simplify operations related to the issuance of licenses and permits for business entities, as well as operations for sending notifications through digital channels;
- increase the efficiency of interaction between the executive authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, their territorial branches within the framework of the exercise of powers on licensing, permits and notification operations;
- enhance the quality of interaction between applicants and public licensing authorities;
- ensure transparency of information on licensing of certain types of activities in Uzbekistan, including information included in the register of licenses, permits, and notifications;
- increase the productivity of staff in licensing organizations.

3. <https://license.gov.uz/>

The information system developed by the UNDP IPSP project also features a mobile application (Android and iOS versions). The project supported the Ministry of Justice with business process re-engineering of 31 out of 199 licensing services. This included a redesign of the core business processes to achieve significant improvements in productivity, speed, and quality of the services. The 31 licenses were fully digitalized and redesigned by the end of 2020 and from January 1, 2021, are available through the new "License" digital platform.

The project also supported the development of a new version of the Law on Licensing, which was approved by the President on July 14, 2021.

The new "License" information system creates a single platform enabling entrepreneurs to obtain all 199 licenses, permits and, notifications, which resulted in streamlined processes, lower costs, and reduced reliance on paper.

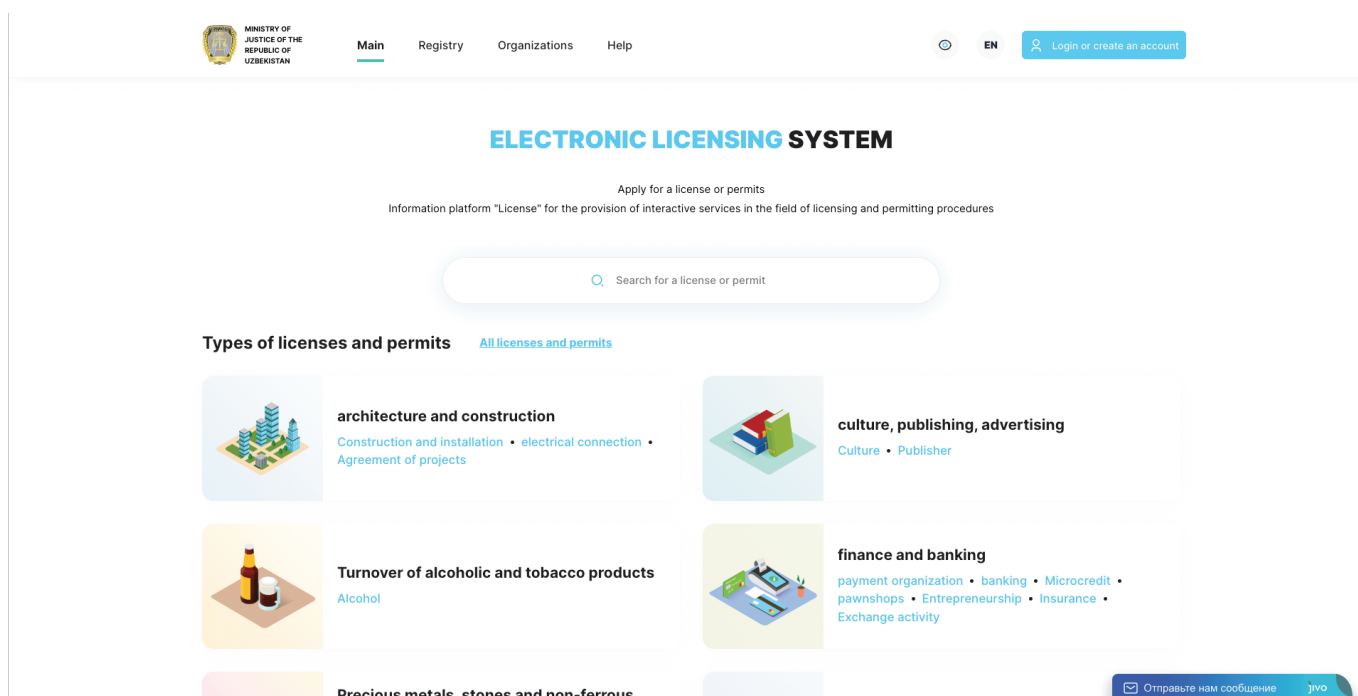


Figure 16: Information platform "License" for the provision of interactive services in the field of licensing and permitting procedures. Source: <https://license.gov.uz/>

Twenty-one (21) online training workshops on using the "License" platform have been organized for 513 staff (477 men, 36 women) of the Ministry of Justice, its 14 regional branches, Public Service Centres in 205 districts, and 5 back-office organizations responsible for licensing.

From its launch on January 1, 2021, till June 10, 2022, 34,456 online applications were received and processed through the platform.

What makes the practice more effective?

The following processes have been fully digitalized:

- acceptance of applications and documents for obtaining licenses and permits in electronic form based on the "single window" principle;

- review and approval of applications, execution of permits by various organizations;
- issuing licenses and permits electronically with a QR code;
- sending notifications by individuals and legal entities and receiving confirmation of their acceptance;
- management of a unified register of licensed organizations and online monitoring of their activities.

Name of service	Organization	Document number	Validity period	Document type	Active
Architecture and construction Licence for the development of architectural and urban planning documents	307680978 "MODERN BUILDINGS ENGINEERING GROUP"...	A/I-001357	from 10.09.2022	License	✓
Architecture and construction Licence for the development of architectural and urban planning documents	300831105 "MARIFAT SUV LOYIXA" mas'uliyati cheklangan jamiyati	A/I-001355	from 10.09.2022	License	✓
Architecture and construction Licence for the development of architectural and urban planning documents	305763090 "NUR PROJECT TOPOGRAPHY" mas'uliyati cheklangan jamiyati	A/I-001356	from 10.09.2022	License	✓
Education and sports Activities of family non-governmental preschool education organizations	MAMLAKAT MAJITOVA MUROTOVNA	030351	from 20.06.2022	Notification document	✓
Medicine and veterinary License for veterinary activities	309499234 "ZEBINISO BAXT PILOL" OK	030350	from 20.06.2022	License	✓
Precious metals, stones and non-ferrous metals Notice of commencement or termination of activities for the sale of jewelry and other items made of precious metals and precious stones	301943907 "JELEGUM GOLD SERVICE" MCHJ	030349	from 20.06.2022	Notification document	✓
Education and sports Activities of family non-governmental preschool education organizations	AXMEDOVA BARNOXON AKYULOVA	030348	from 20.06.2022	Notification document	✓
Transport	508933433		from 20.06.2022		

Figure 17: The License Application

Potential for replication and/or adaptation

This method can be replicated in the digitalization of other public services. The idea of the solution has not been adapted from any other case study of Uzbekistan. However, it was developed based on previous experience of the national software development company "SSP Maroqand".

Lessons learned

The business processes of the many licensing services were not optimized for digital technologies, which created many challenges in the implementation, speed, and scope of the project.

Delivering the solution on time was the biggest

challenge during the implementation phase since most of the licensing services were delivered by different government organizations and were regulated by a lot of legal and normative acts. It is suggested to further streamline the regulatory framework underlying the delivery of public services related to issuing licenses and permits.

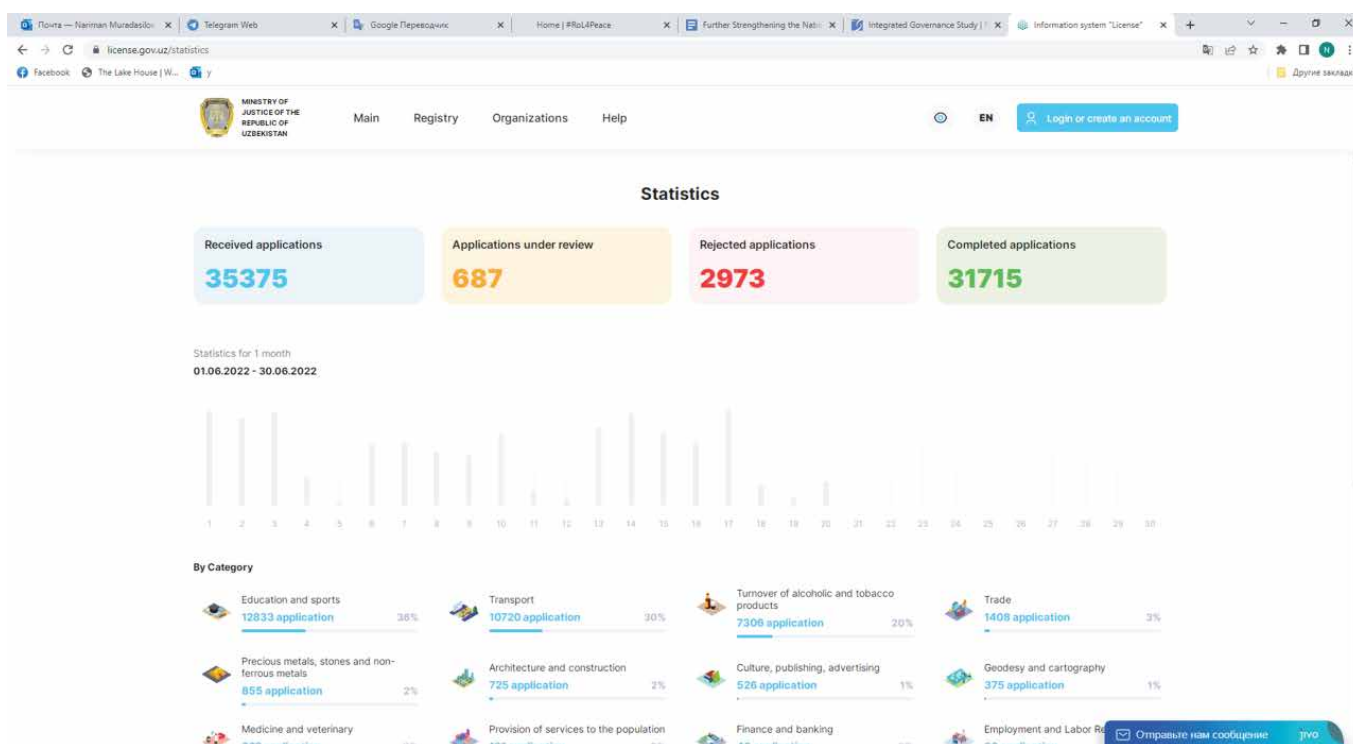


Figure 18: General Statistics of the usage of the license application

About the Information System for the automation of licensing and permit services

The project, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, has been supporting the Government in the digitalization of the licensing system through the establishment of an online licensing platform, the "License" information system. UNDP project participated in the preparation of a Decree of the President of Uzbekistan on improving licensing

procedures for businesses and individuals that would involve digitalizing all processes related to the issuing of licenses, permits and, notification procedures to individuals and legal entities. The project contributes to accelerating the achievement of SDG 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), and SDG 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation).

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Philippines



Digital Bangsamoro Portal

An overview of the development challenges

The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) was established in March 2019 ending nearly a half-century of Moro separatist conflict in the southern Philippines. Based on information from an independent information provider (ACAPS organization⁴), mentioned that due to the

long-lasting conflict, the Bangsamoro Region is the least developed area in the country. Poverty incidence in the area is two (2) times higher than the national average. During the conflict years, citizens did not enjoy government services that were relatively inaccessible for the vast majority of the people. Vulnerable groups, including the poor, women and children, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities, in particular, faced exclusion.

The solutions

Within this context, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Philippines agreed to support a set of capacity development activities for the Bangsamoro Transition Authority. A core part of UNDP's support is to strengthen the institutions of local government, including the development of a Local Government Code. The Local Government Code transfers the control and responsibility of delivering basic services to the hands of local government units

(LGU). It aimed to enhance the provision of services at the grassroots level as well as improve the efficiency in resource allocation. To inform and guide UNDP's support, an agreement was reached with the BARMM Ministry for the Interior and Local Government (MILG) to learn from the extensive experience of the UNDP-supported Aspire to Innovate (a2i) programme, the flagship programme of the Digital Bangladesh agenda implemented by the Government of Bangladesh.

4. <https://www.acaps.org/country/philippines/crisis/mindanao-conflict>

Under the facilitation of the South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI), a team of experienced staff from a2i visited BARMM in 2019 on a pre-feasibility mission. The mission highlighted the following objectives-

- Identifying the potential areas of risk in BARMM
- Understanding the basic readiness for the transformations
- Understanding the local context of BARMM

The a2i team from Bangladesh facilitated several workshops and meetings with various Ministries/Departments of the Philippines. One of the major goals of the workshops was to facilitate knowledge sharing at different levels (both government and society) and discussing to share the insights obtained from the practical implementation of public service innovations in Bangladesh. Several field visits were also conducted by the team. They visited several remote places to understand more about the citizens' needs in order to better respond to solve the problems ensuring citizens' satisfaction.

The response from various departments on using technology to deliver effective public service was overwhelming. Public services offered by BARMM Ministries were thoroughly analyzed and opportunities for digital innovations were explored from several perspectives. The counterparts agreed to implement the "myGov, One-stop solution" platform from Bangladesh to the BARMM region. The initiative was named the "Digital Bangsamoro Portal".



Figure 19: Digital Bangsamoro Portal

The Challenges

While implementing the initiative in the BARMM context, some setbacks were experienced due to a lack of readily accessible services, including access to the internet, interoperability among the

Potential for adaptability or replication

The platform is a replicable model of the Government of Bangladesh's successful initiative called myGov-one stop solution service. The UNDP Philippines, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Local Governance (MILG), adapted the platform with knowledge and technical support from the Aspire to Innovate (a2i) Programme. As there was no previous one-stop solution for government services, the new service brought

ministries, a dearth in required appropriate technology, and technological literacy. In addition, accumulating all government employees participating in the capacity-building session was challenging for the provider's team.

immediate benefits to citizens. These included reducing the number of visits to access services thus saving time and costs. Under this initiative, a strong information and service delivery ecosystem has been established. The target of this platform is to ensure accessibility, accountability, sustainability, scalability, and reliability of information and services from the government using their hand-held devices accelerated user satisfaction. Similar adaptation of the good practice in any other interested partner/country is possible, however, local infrastructure is needed.



Figure 20: Workshop on digital Bangsamoro Portal

Lessons learned

Securing funding from the Bangsamoro government and gaining support from the various offices/Ministries is tedious but necessary. The support is vital for

institutionalization to ensure the sustainability and scalability of the project, as well as the support from government and other non-state actors including private companies.

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Bangladesh



National Helpline 333

An overview of the development challenges

Bangladesh's Internet & Smartphone penetration is less than 30%, therefore the majority of the citizens are not privileged with correct and timely information, even though 96% of the citizens have a mobile phone. Furthermore, the existing online platform called web-based Grievance Redress System (GRS) and Service Application Platforms are only accessible through the internet. The grievances are related to social problems like child marriage, food contamination, narcotics sale and consumption, gambling, eve teasing, and environmental pollution. Therefore, the government of Bangladesh has

developed an initiative named "national helpline 333" to respond to this challenge. This solution allows access to anybody with a phone even if they do not have internet access to the service throughout the day (24*7).

The 333 Helpline is intended to offer better quality citizen services on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh, by offering and adopting business innovation, quality, responsiveness, high standards for a sustainable operation and cost reduction towards the delivery of efficient and effective delivery, gradually building towards an SDG model, thus ensuring an everlasting model.

The solution

The National Helpline 333 a Voice Platform for Information and Grievance redress. The platform was developed by the Aspire to Innovate (a2i)-Government of Bangladesh. The helpline is intended to consist of (1) a Centralized Helpdesk and Information Center: Information channeled through a centralized service point, creating less hassle, (2) Efficient Complaint Resolution: Complaint resolution with the help of a Contact centre and complaint management & ticketing system, (3) Better Transparency: Availability of transparent and regularly updated government information, and (4) Better Governance: A single access point

allows for an efficient and effective address to the citizens' concerns.

The helpline provides information on the process of getting government services with contact details of government officers and emergency phone numbers. Other information includes tourist spots, health, agriculture, livestock, fishery, and education. The simplified data is accessible to all people in the country. Furthermore, citizens' with no internet access can simply dial 333 to complain. Currently, as of August 2022, an average of 45,000 calls per day are handled. These also include cases related to COVID-19 Pandemic Support through Food Relief Services and Telehealth platforms.

Furthermore, the 333 helpline can easily be integrated with all government offices to support their service, initiatives and complaints on their management systems. These other initiatives include the universal push-pull SMS and the USSD

platform which facilitate all government agencies to disseminate their information, service delivery through a self-service mode and make payments for services and utilities, as well as notification of service status.



Figure 21: Specific numbers to dial for the necessary assistance on National Helpline Number 333

The way it works is that when a citizen calls 333 and complains about any social problem, there will be a call-answering agent registered in the call-in log with specific information of concern. Upon registering the problem, it automatically redirects to concerned officers who take action. They then update the status including the action taken details in the “complain dashboard” that is

monitored by the central authority of government.

The 333 helpline also has a monitoring system, which includes regular checking of the service quality, status checks of complaints filed through the Grievance Redress System (GRS), agents' service quality and, requirements for better service.



Figure 22: All the services provided by National Helpline Number 333

The challenge

The biggest challenge was achieving the citizens' trust and belief in the positive changes that the 333 helplines could bring about. The positive and effective impacts created, addressing the social problems of the citizens, seemed too good to be true.

During the Pandemic, 333 were utilized as Corona Relief Support. Food Relief information was provided alongside the usual grievance redressal services. The citizens turned to 333 for support, from the 1st of March to the 5th of April 2020. The number of incoming calls increased by 12 times per day,

(from 5,000 calls/day to 64,000 calls/day). Overnight, the team had to increase the capacity to support the incoming requests from the citizens. Telehealth support was integrated into the platform and, doctors who could answer to Covid-19 related queries and provide guidance and solace over the phone were included. Over 5 million citizens were provided with health Services.

The government of Bangladesh allocated BDT 1,000 million (USD 11.76 million) to provide food support to the worst affected people by COVID-19. For this, 333 virtually connected 100+ volunteers remotely, for a period of 3 months, and ensured proper delivery of Food Relief all over Bangladesh. The 333 helpline is now a trusted service and reliable representation of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Potential for adaptability or replication

Partnership with a private company has allowed a2i to tap into the expertise which helped actualize the vision the organization had. Through this Public-Private Partnership, a2i could access the technology which facilitated the integration of all the Government bodies and brought them under

one umbrella thus providing a single point of access to the Citizens of Bangladesh.

The public-private partnership model could be replicable. The objective is to create a self-sufficient sustainable model, which can run on its own accord and once a successful case study has been created, it can be adopted in many network partner countries.

Lessons learned

A lesson learned from the Helpline implementation is that integration of technology can bring about a monumental impact, provided careful progress and assessment of each progress is made. Proper Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be maintained in order to ensure fallback or Plan B Scenarios in case of setbacks. Raising awareness of the potential benefits to citizens themselves is also vital for the success of such a helpline.

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Figure 23: The number of phone calls during the lockdown on 333

Azerbaijan



“ASAN Appeal” information system

An overview of development challenges

The “ASAN Appeal” information system (AMIS)- is a platform that allows citizens to convey complaints about public utilities, roads and transport problems,

current maintenance, improvement and cleaning of infrastructure, to the relevant government agencies on an electronic map and to monitor the results of these complaints. AMIS addresses the following challenges:

- Timely resolution of public utility, road, and transport problems, current repair, improvement and cleaning of infrastructure and other problems;
- Ensuring civic participation in identifying, resolving and monitoring problems;
- Ensuring direct communication between government agencies and citizens through the mobile application;
- Ensuring citizen satisfaction by solving problems promptly by relevant agencies, and
- Providing cities, the means to advance from analog to analytics-driven decision-making.

The operating principles of the system are ease of use, freedom and continuity, functionality and sustainable development, efficiency and, transparency.

The solution

The Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the establishment of the information system “ASAN Appeal” was signed on August 21, 2020. The order reflects the formation of the “ASAN Appeal” information system and its mobile application by the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The purpose of establishing AMIS is to ensure citizen participation in the solution and management of public issues, timely and on-site resolution of problems by the relevant agencies, improving the population's social welfare and making cities and regions more livable. Government agencies ensure that information on the status of complaints received through AMIS, as well as documents on the outcome of complaints, are entered into the system.

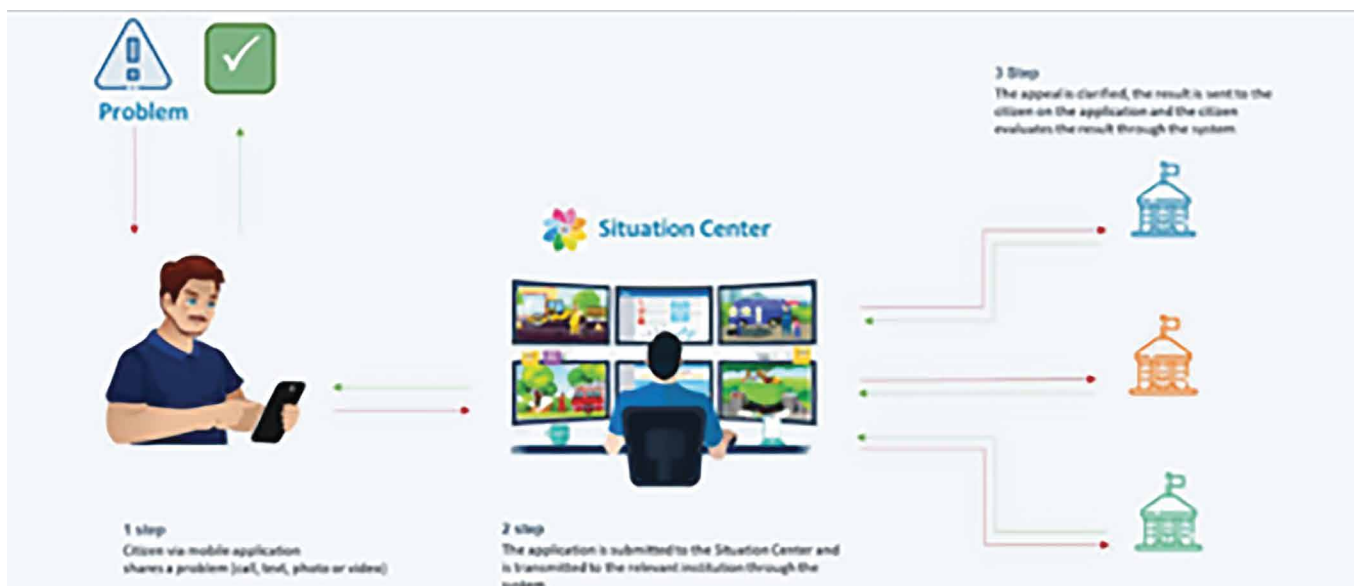


Figure 24: Description of the process in the “ASAN Appeal” system

Citizens add socially significant problems they face directly to the platform via a mobile application and computer, without having to think about which official body to apply to. To do this, the user must select a category that reflects the problem, select a location on the map, add a picture of the problem, make a short description, or send a voice message. It is possible to follow the appeals on the map and to

leave feedback. The operators acknowledge the reception of the complaint and the selection of the relevant district and executive bodies to respond to it. Then the application is accepted by the relevant organization. An executor is appointed to solve the problem. Finally, citizens are informed about the results.



Figure 25: Examples of solved problems

On April 5, 2022, the test phase of the “ASAN appeal” information system was launched in Baku and Sumgayit cities the Absheron region, Azerbaijan. The application statistics from 2021-2022 are as follows:

- Number of applications sent to the programme: 2674
- Number of applications sent to organizations: 1693
- Number of ongoing applications: 724
- Number of applications provided: 982



Figure 26: App Download information of “ASAN Appeal” information system’s

Lessons learned

Awareness-raising and promotion activities are necessary for making the application more user-friendly and more convenient to use, both by the service organizations and users. Information and videos about the application process, application

results, problems and challenges to the AMIS programme are frequently published on social media platforms, news websites and, television channels, and meetings are organized to inform citizens’. AMIS users provide feedback on operations and how well requests are answered by institutions.

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NON-STATE ACTOR BEST PRACTICES

THE SOUTH-SOUTH
MATCHMAKER

Sustainable fishing in the Maldives

Country Context

The Republic of Maldives has one of the most sustainable tuna fisheries sectors in the world, which is the backbone of the economy and the most important economic activity in many island communities. For a nation that is 99% sea, fishing is not just an economic activity but a way of life.

The Maldives is a country of 26 coral atolls and 1,200 islands, and the livelihood of all the communities depend largely on income from tuna fishing. After tourism, tuna is the nation's primary export. It remains a key contributor to employment generation: around 70% of Maldivians are fishermen and over 15% of the population is directly employed in the fishing sector.

An overview of the development challenges

Promoting a sustainable fishing industry that avoids overexploitation of marine resources, minimizes damage to aquatic habitats and promotes social inclusion is one of the greatest challenges facing the global community. Over time the mechanization of the fishing sector and the provision of harmful subsidies contributing to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU)⁵ fishing has led to over-exploitation of marine resources and imperilled the sustainability of global fish stocks. In 2017, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned that an estimated one-third of global fish stocks were overfished, an increase from 10% in 1970 and 27% in 2000.

Over-exploitation of fish stocks has created challenges for the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities that rely on artisanal fishing. It threatens the food security of low-income coastal communities and the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable fishermen, who must travel further from shore only to bring back a smaller catch. Apart from the food security challenge, the long-term unsustainable management of fisheries impedes achieving SDG target 14.7, which envisages increasing the economic benefits to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

5. The amount of IUU is estimated to surpass USD \$35 billion
(<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24056/9781464809194.pdf>)

The solution

Although technological developments over the past decades have transformed the global fishing sector in many ways, Maldives has maintained its traditional approach⁶. Its pole-and-line tuna fishery follows the world's most sustainable fishing practices, with an inherent respect for the environment and oceans. Put simply, fishermen

catch tuna one by one, using a pole, line and hook (Photo A). This selective approach ensures that no other marine species like sharks, rays, whales, turtles, dolphins, seabirds or any other marine life are caught or harmed as by catch. Annually, purse seine fleets using Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) or destructive long lines cause billions of tons of by catch⁷.



Figure 27: Fish capture (credit photos: The International Pole and Line Foundation-IPNLF)

Other important features of sustainable fishing practice in the Maldives are:

- Modern mechanized approaches are not used, resulting in lower carbon footprints. Pole-and-line fishing is, in fact, more fuel-efficient than net fisheries that use fuel-intensive fishing techniques.
- Fishing vessels are operated at a household or family level and profits are equally shared at the end of a fishing trip. Fishermen are well paid and that ensures a good livelihood for individuals.
- The Maldives does not lease its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to other countries for exploitative or unsustainable fishing. Only Maldivian nationals may use the natural resources and no foreign fishing vessels are licensed to fish in its EEZ or the high seas.

6. The ancient fishing practice in Maldives are keeping alive:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6V9osqTHG44>

7. <https://www.fao.org/3/a1338e/a1338e10.pdf>

While the environmental benefits of this practice are well recognized, its social impacts are relatively less understood. Catching each fish individually engages many people. In this male-dominated sector throughout the world, women have always participated in producing smoked fish and the fish-based product called “rihaakuru”, a Maldivian delicacy. Women make up most employees at the fish processing plants and are responsible for selling, purchasing and

preparing fish for household consumption, which gives them a unique understanding of the quality and market conditions (Figure B). They are also actively involved in tuna vessel construction facilities, holding managerial positions. The processing plants use co-operative-like structures, generating local employment and ensuring that the benefits flow throughout the local economy.



Figure 28.a: Women sorting out smoked fish known as “Rihaakuru”



Figure 28.b: Women's engagement in cleaning and cooking

In 2012, this sustainable fishing practice received certification from the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the first one in the Indian Ocean fishing

sector. Greenpeace has also recognized this selective technique as the world's most sustainable and equitable way of catching tuna.

Challenges

The preservation, continuity and dissemination of these fishing practices are becoming a challenge because Maldivian fishermen do not feel their efforts are being adequately rewarded. The Maldives graduated from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category in 2011. Since the end of the transition period in 2014, their fish exports have faced the most favored national tariffs in their major export markets, namely the EU (24%) and the UK (20%). These high tariffs

have placed Maldivian exporters at a competitive disadvantage over the countries that enjoy duty-free market access because of a trade agreement or preference scheme for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This has led to a drop in export earnings and, a shrinking market share for the Maldives. These commercial realities could trigger debate to reconsider the ongoing practice and adopt more mechanized methods to maintain and grow market share in key export markets.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is assisting the Maldives to seek duty-free tariff preferences for its tuna exports. However, in the absence of any specific precedent, securing tariff concessions merely on the grounds of sustainability is a big challenge. It requires either negotiating a trade agreement with the main trading partners or overhauling the existing system of trade preferences in developed economies to incentivize and encourage sustainability (for example, by enhancing the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+) approach). This would reward the Maldives and promote sustainable sourcing of many more products from small states, LDCs and other developing countries.

The Secretariat works closely with the Maldivian High Commission in London to understand and highlight this unique fishing practice. We aim to get this sustainable fishing practice widely recognized,

What makes the practice more effective?

Positive environmental and social considerations of pole-and-line fishing make it more effective than the commonly prevalent mechanized fishing. Maldivian vessels use around nine times more labour per unit of tuna caught than purse seining, thus creating jobs for local communities. Moreover, the bycatch of pole-and-line fishing is much lower than that of other approaches. While mechanical trawlers have large carbon footprints, Maldivian fishing practices are largely artisanal in nature, making them highly

Potential for adaptability or replication

Being a small country with less than 500,000 people and around USD \$300 million in merchandise exports, Maldives is illustrative of the economic situation of many small states, including small island developing states (SIDS)⁸. There is merit in

adequately rewarded, and disseminated. We have held several in-person and online meetings with relevant authorities in London and Male (capital of the Maldives) to document this practice, which we intend to highlight at the international level in the future.

The Secretariat is supporting the Maldives government in seeking trade preferences for its tuna exports on the grounds of sustainability. This includes preparing a policy brief on the evolution of Maldives' trade with the UK and the EU in the post-graduation period in 2011, helping in identifying and preparing a suitable legal instrument that complies with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) requirements and providing feedback and advice regularly in this ongoing process.

environment-friendly. Finally, women manage several boat manufacturing and fish processing operations, making the whole practice more gender inclusive.

A strong national commitment and regulatory support of the public sector have helped to make it successful. The Fisheries Act of the Maldives, Act no. 14/2019 prohibits purse seine fishing, gillnet fishing, trawl net fishing, any other form of commercial fishing using a net and fishing using explosives or chemicals. Authorities use Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) tools to ensure compliance with the regulatory framework.

examining the potential of replicating this practice in Pacific Island countries, which mainly rely on tourism and fish exports. However, adopting this practice would require a system of incentives and rewards, most importantly 'positive discrimination' in the form of tariff preferences in export markets where they do not already obtain duty-free access under trade agreements.

8. Gillett, R. 2011. The promotion of pole-and-line tuna fishing in the Pacific Islands: Emerging issues and lessons learned. ISSF Technical Report 2011-08. International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, McLean, Virginia, USA

This traditional practice has been deployed in the Maldives for centuries. The Maldivian boat-building craft and skills have been passed down for generations.

A few Pacific islands such as the Solomons Islands, Palau and Hawaii also use some variants of this approach. The replication of the pole-and-line fishing

practice is certainly not an easy task. It requires investment in training and capacity building along with support to coastal communities for weaning away fishermen from established mechanized approaches. Despite these operational challenges, this practice can be introduced in several small states and SIDS with similar production and export structures.

Lessons Learned

While the international community is striving to check the depletion of global fish stocks, promoting and rewarding these kinds of sustainable practices can help in making considerable progress in this direction. Unfortunately, Maldivian fishermen are slowly losing confidence in their entire system because tuna that is not sustainably sourced is rewarded with relatively better market access and

obtains a higher premium because there are no import tariffs. This could force them to switch to mechanized fishing to maintain competitiveness in the global market.

It is important to recognize and support these kinds of sustainable sourcing practices. Tariff preferences for tuna and other sustainably sourced products can encourage wider adoption of these techniques and help in making progress on SDG 14.

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UNESCAP

Catalysing Women's Entrepreneurship in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Vietnam, Samoa, and Nepal

An overview of the development challenges

Women's economic empowerment is critical to sustainable development. When women are empowered economically, they are able to take control of their own lives, and meaningfully participate in economic decision-making at all levels. Closing the gender gaps in hours worked, participation and productivity could also result in GDP gains of up to 48 percent in South Asia (excluding India) and 30 percent in East and Southeast Asia (excluding China) by 2025⁹.

Women's entrepreneurship is recognized as a key catalyst for advancing women's economic empowerment in Asia-Pacific. However, women entrepreneurs face

specific challenges, including (1) policies and legislation blind to the specific circumstances, needs and interests of women; (2) restricted access to finance, credit and information and communication technology (ICT); (3) limited opportunities for capacity development; and (4) discriminatory sociocultural norms. Such barriers jeopardize the capacity of women to grow and develop their businesses and prevent them from fully participating in the economy. COVID-19 has further exposed widespread inequalities, with women more adversely affected by business closures, financial distress, increased violence, and increased unpaid care responsibilities¹⁰.

9. UNESCAP (2017, "Fostering Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN", page3)
https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP-FWE-ASEAN-full_0.pdf

10. <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/report/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en-1.pdf>

The solution

The Catalyzing Women's Entrepreneurship (CWE Programme) aims to foster women's economic empowerment, reduce poverty and increase gender equality by supporting women's entrepreneurship in select countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The programme is structured around three interconnected pillars of work to address fundamental barriers hindering women entrepreneurs:

Policy and Regulatory Environment: Through in-depth national and sub-national research, the programme assists governments to develop gender-responsive and evidence-based policies, laws, national SME strategies and programmes, and governance mechanisms.

Innovative Financing: The programme leverages public and private capital to pilot, test and scale financing models that support women entrepreneurs from start-up to growth-stage businesses. The programme engages with policymakers and regulators to support the creation of an enabling policy and regulatory financial ecosystem for women entrepreneurs.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Capacity Building: the programme enhances the capacity of women entrepreneurs to adopt and utilize ICT tools and platforms to support and manage their businesses, alongside strengthening the capacity of policymakers to create an enabling environment for ICT-empowered women entrepreneurs.



Figure 29: Capacity Building Conference for Women Entrepreneurs

Key Achievements

A total of 43,291 women entrepreneurs have directly benefited from the programme through access to finance and enhanced digital skills. In addition:

- Innovative financing initiatives have unlocked almost USD 65 million in capital to women entrepreneurs and are supporting 14 innovative financing start-ups.
- Five policy instruments have been reviewed and targeted provisions for women entrepreneurs recommended, impacting more than 3,000 women entrepreneurs directly.
- Three countries have undertaken initiatives to improve business registration processes and service delivery for women MSMEs.
- One-stop hubs increasing access to services for women entrepreneurs established in two countries.
- Over 2,000 women benefitted from training, strengthening ICT and business skills.
- Inclusive governance mechanism for policy reforms established and operational in five countries. More than 60 policymakers are now championing reforms for women-led businesses across seven Ministries.
- Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms have been established in three countries to enable policymakers to measure the impact of policy reforms on women entrepreneurs.
- SME Agencies in 10 countries have been influenced to replicate the CWE approach through an ASEAN Policymakers toolkit, developed in partnership with ESCAP.

The challenges

A key challenge was the absence of mechanisms to measure the impact of policy interventions. This was exacerbated by COVID-19, which upended the standard M&E practices the CWE Programme relies on. In response, M&E mechanisms were established in three countries and new approaches, including virtual monitoring visits with women entrepreneurs

in rural locations, were implemented. These mechanisms proved beneficial and will continue to be used.

Many women entrepreneurs operate in the informal sector, which is difficult to reach. Going forward, there will be an increased focus on assessing the interventions needed to support women entrepreneurs in the informal economy.

What makes the practice more effective?

The CWE Programme centers on the premise that to advance women's entrepreneurship, different barriers need to be tackled simultaneously. The Programme applies an "ecosystem" approach, structured around three interconnected pillars: (1) policy and advocacy; (2) innovative financing; and (3) ICT capacity

building. It is a unique initiative that brings together expertise from different divisions of ESCAP to implement the programme and ensures solutions are designed from the bottom-up and developed in consultation with national stakeholders and women entrepreneurs. This integrated approach is building a strong foundation at the country and regional level to see a much greater impact in the future.

Potential for adaptability or replication

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Coordinating Committee on MSMEs (ACCMSME), a dedicated group of SME Agencies from the 10 ASEAN countries, have been influenced to replicate the CWE

approach through the development of an ASEAN Policymakers toolkit, which will enable policymakers to generate evidence on women-owned businesses, identify priorities and actions for advancing women's entrepreneurship, and measure progress achieved by improved policies.

Lessons Learned

- An increased focus is needed on the informal sector, where there is a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work, and domestic violence.
- Programme advisory committees proved useful in steering a coordinated dialogue and responses during the pandemic.
- Engagement with the details of the innovative financing equity investment enabled the Programme to rapidly understand and respond to challenges.
- It may be necessary to engage with partners in the later phases of projects to ensure sustainability beyond the life of the funding.
- Monitoring mechanisms led to increased capacity amongst SME ministries to recognize challenges related to data collection and monitoring efforts.

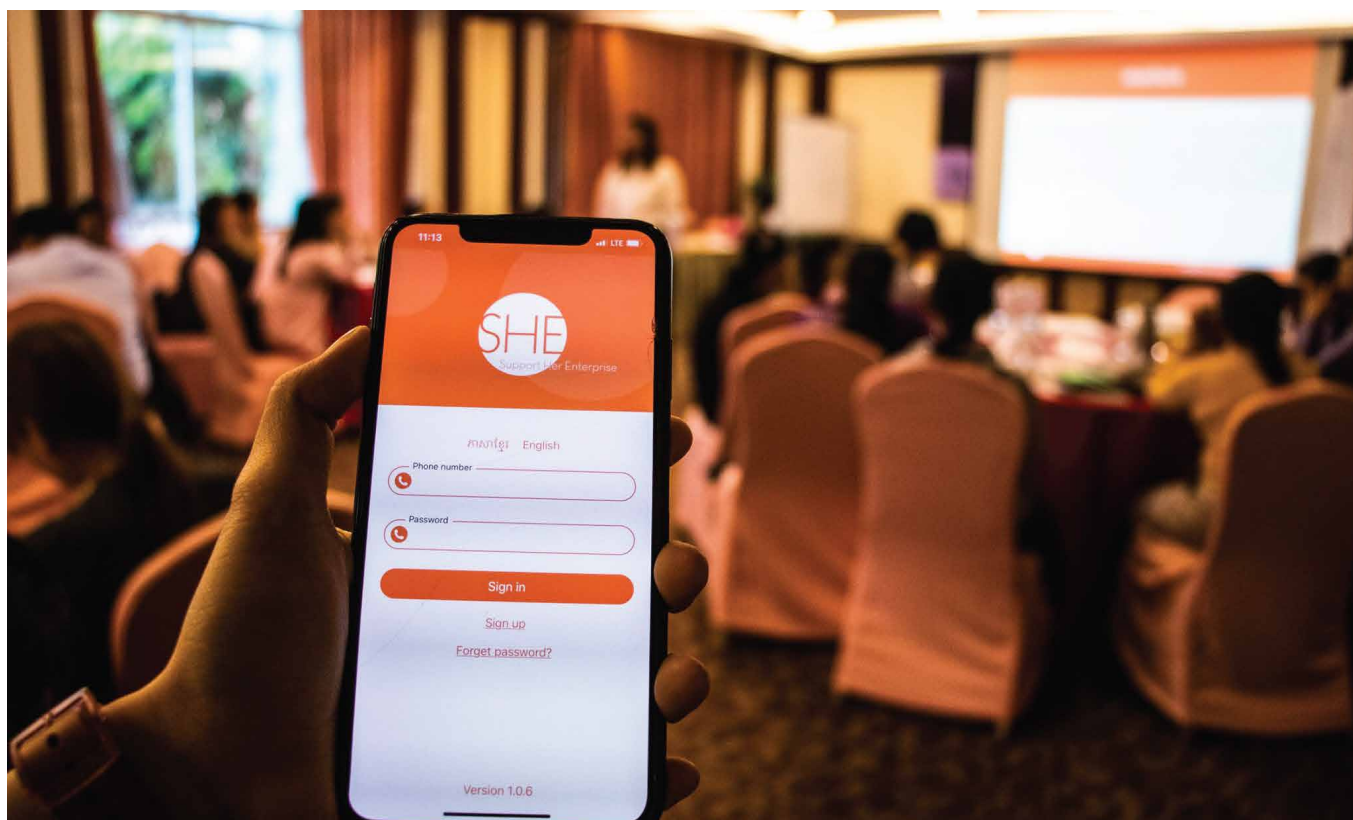


Figure 30: A bookkeeping app KOTRA- Riel developed by SHE Investments with the help of the CWE programme



Figure 31: CWE programme supports local innovations such as Aeloi, a Kathmandu-based digital start-up, which allows platform users (women entrepreneurs) to subscribe to 'Mobility as a Service' tokens for operating green energy commercial vehicles.

Figure 32: iFarmer, a crowdfunding partner, a beneficiary of the Women MSME FinTech Innovation Fund.



About the Catalyzing Women's Entrepreneurship

The Catalyzing Women's Entrepreneurship programme aims to advance women entrepreneurship and market participation in the Asia-Pacific region, resulting in poverty reduction, improved livelihoods and economic

growth. The project covers Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Viet Nam, Samoa, and Nepal and is implemented by UN ESCAP and relevant SME and Women's Ministries in the above-mentioned countries.

The programme contributes to accelerating the achievement of SDG 5, SDG 1, SDG 8 and SDG 10.

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UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries: Hear, Listen and Speak Programme in Bhutan using a Public-Private Partnership model

An overview of the development challenges in the country

Although the statistics showed two percent (2%) of the Bhutanese population have hearing loss, the actual number is likely higher, especially the number of hearing loss cases in young children. The discrepancy results from gaps in knowledge, attitudes and practices around hearing loss in Bhutan. In addition, a wide range of ear disorders need to be accounted for, if not detected or attended to early on, they can result in acquired hearing loss. Since hearing loss is not visible, it often remains undetected and untreated in infants and children. As the acquisition of listening and spoken language skills in children is directly related to their hearing ability, such unaddressed hearing loss can cause

irreversible and permanent negative impacts. For example, it can further develop into more adverse implications for many aspects of children's lives and their futures including cognition, education, mental health, interpersonal relationships and employment later in life.

Currently, only a relatively small population in Bhutan receive comprehensive screening, intervention, monitoring and evaluation. The programme aims to bring the needed technology and knowledge via an innovative public private partnership model to address this public health challenge and sustainably fill this gap in Bhutan's public health system.

Concepts

This project provides an innovative and comprehensive solution to address the urgent needs of hearing care for children in Bhutan using a public private partnership model to harness comparative advantages from both public and private sectors for achieving collective social benefits. By leveraging this innovative model, the public health sector in Bhutan can strengthen their hearing care capacities with the support of private partners pertaining to knowledge, capacity building and technology. The role of the Technology Bank is to coordinate multi-sector project partners from the private sector and the Government to facilitate the access to the technologies and ensure the resources are mobilised at all stages. This includes the close collaboration with local UN agencies, especially the UN Resident Coordinator Office and UNICEF to ensure the alignment of the development needs and priorities for the country.

The model provides both knowledge and technology transfer needed to address the current gaps in hearing care in Bhutan. In this case, Medtronic Labs has provided technology transfer and its technical assistance to Bhutan; MED-EL/Austrian Development Agency have provided knowledge transfer by capacity-building training to the local medical workers and awareness raising in the local communities and schools. For the sustainability of its outcomes, the project design focuses on the direct provision of equipment, training of care and maintenance providers, training of trainers, and establishment of mechanisms for sustained provision of care across the continuum. This also includes hearing screening equipment for instant screening, specifically the ViviSonic Diagnostic ABR and the REM Device Model Verifit 2 as seen below, professional development to strengthen Bhutanese capacity and expertise, and the establishment of early intervention and therapy services that ensure the continuum of care.

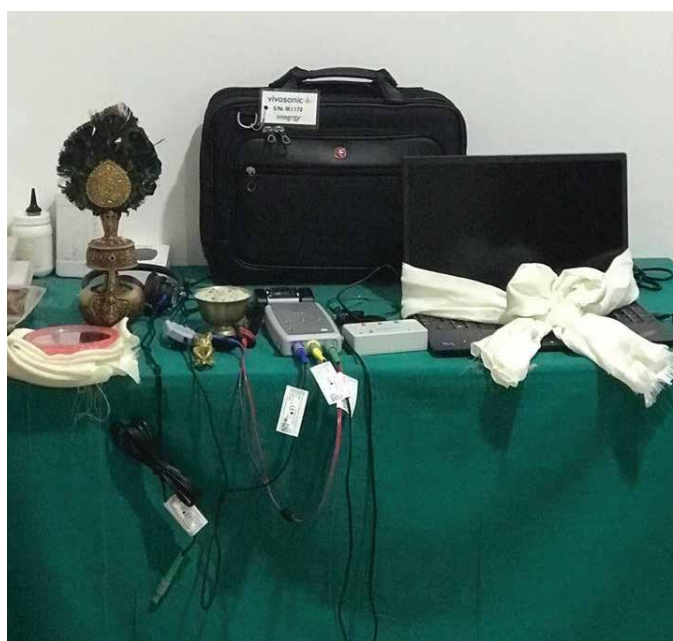


Figure 33.a: Receiving hearing screening device, ViviSonic Diagnostic ABR, in Thimphu Hospital, December 2021



Figure 33.b: Receiving hearing screening device, Vivisonic Diagnostic ABR, in Thimphu Hospital, December 2021

The project is also designed to strengthen the health system in Bhutan to ensure that the enhanced local technical and knowledge capacity can sustain the ongoing prevention and treatment of hearing loss in children of Bhutan upon the programme's completion. This project is also aligned with and can be integrated into the national policy of Bhutan, such as the Gross Happiness

Plan 2018-2023 and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities. The project aims to provide the interventions required to address hearing loss and preventive ear disorders across the whole continuum of care for all Bhutanese children. The expected outputs of the projects by the end of 2024 are:

- All 110000 Bhutanese children aged 0-14 will be screened for hearing
- The establishment of the first earmold lab in Bhutan for the local production of ear molds for hearing aids
- Technical capacity building for healthcare workers, ENT specialists and clinicians with a focus on rural areas
- Capacity building in hearing loss knowledge and awareness raising for schools, communities and parents
- Development of rehabilitation capacity and empowerment for healthcare workers and families with children with hearing loss.

Challenges

The project began its implementation in 2021 and due to the COVID-19 lock down measures that were in place in the country, the implementation was slowed down, such as facilitating in-person training and the importation of equipment into Bhutan with appropriate authorisations. Regular and active communications between project partners are the key to addressing these challenges. The design of a Consortium has also helped the communications, joint advocacy and effective decision-making in this large-scale, complex private-public partnership on implementation in the least developed country.

Furthermore, on the project implementation, initially, there is an unequal distribution of technologies and systems (audiological equipment and hearing screening technologies) in Bhutan. Thus, the project aims to have these systems accessible to all, helping to diagnose conditions and measure the prevalence of paediatrics hearing loss and ear disorders more accurately, which in turn helps to support policy evaluation and development.

There is also currently a limited capacity of trained technicians and availability of screening, audiology and diagnostics equipment and hearing aids as well as a lack of capacity to produce ear molds and fit hearing aids for children aged 0-14. The programme has commenced with the training of audiologists and health workers to conduct screening and operate the diagnostics equipment. The main challenge for Bhutan is the limited capacity of the specialists and the programme enables specialists to and interpret the digital data once uploaded, thus expanding the reach of their service and contributing to a better quality of life for the children. Challenges encountered in some areas are limited connectivity for the data to be transmitted immediately to the specialists. The programme was implemented both in hospital and school settings, and both Ministries of Health and Education had to integrate the programme into the existing comprehensive school programmes. The Technology Bank and Medtronic Labs had to organize a multi-stakeholder meeting to ensure the alignment of roles and responsibilities.

Potential for adaptability or replication

The public-private partnership model is replicated as the evidence of the current work of the Consortium on the 'Beyond Bhutan' project. The

objective of this is to expand and replicate this model in the other least developed countries. The initial focus is on Malawi and a subsequent country-specific approach will be adapted to other LDCs.

The solution is an adaptation from another case study?

This is the first partnership between the UN Technology Bank and private sector entities addressing hearing care in the least developed country focusing on

technology and knowledge transfer. The programme strengthens the Bhutanese public health service in using technology to empower and support people with disabilities and attain SDGs 1, 3, 4, 10 and 17.

Lessons learned

Since the project is currently in the first phase of its proposed activities, the lessons learned are seen to be the inequity of services available in Bhutan for hearing screenings, a reality that was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, early detection and intervention are key aspects of this project, which is further strengthened through high-end standard equipment that could be utilized. Capacity building is also seen to be one of the main factors that could inform higher audiological management, while the establishment of the ear mold lab and the subsequent plan for providing cochlear implants which have substantial potential to bridge the existing gaps within Bhutan. Close partnerships and coordination with the relevant government

counterparts have also proved effective in ensuring the smooth implementation of the project activities on the ground, while also displaying ownership and responsibility for the project's success. Integrating the programme into the national health and education programmes reinforces sustainability and complements existing child-related programmes in Bhutan. The role of private-public partnerships has enabled Bhutan to leverage technology transfer for inclusive healthcare.

About the UN Technology Bank

UN Technology Bank was born from the Istanbul Programme of Action adopted at the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries. It was then established in 2016 as a subsidiary organ to the General Assembly, and has been operational since 2018 in Gebze, Turkey. The establishment of the UN

Technology Bank marked the completion of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target 17.8. Our mandate is to help the world's 46 least developed countries build science, technology and innovation (STI) capacities, ecosystems and regulatory frameworks to propel inclusive economic transformation and leave no one behind.

Contact person

Moshe N. Kao

Programme Management Officer

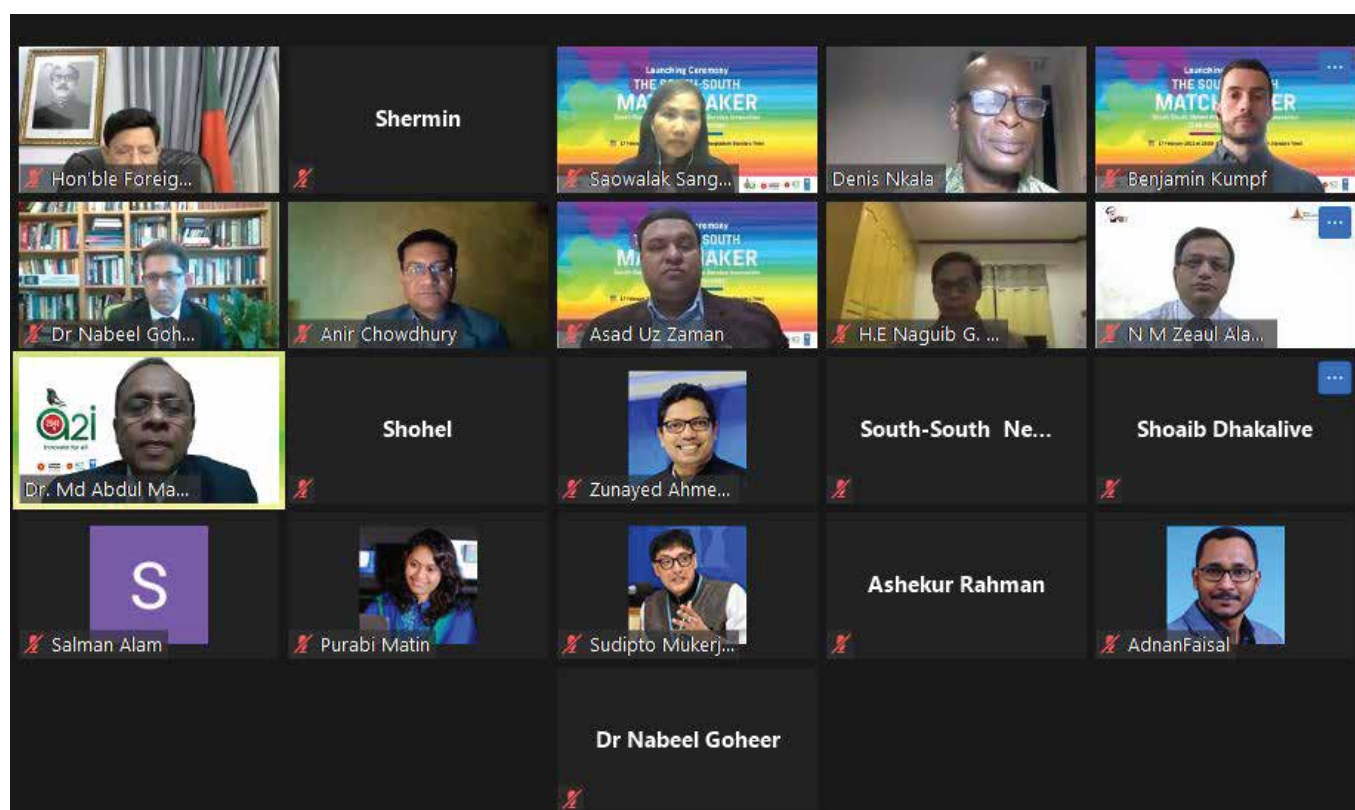
Email: moshe.kao@un.org

Website: <https://www.un.org/technologybank/news/leveraging>

[-technologies-help-children-bhutan-hearing-loss-and-ear-disorders-hear-listen-and](#)

Key moments during 2021-2022

1. The South-South Matchmaker, 2019-2020 Best Practices was launched on 17 February 2021, to promote the best practices in the South and encourage innovating and adopting innovative solutions for a better world. Dr AK Abdul Momen, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh joined the event as the Chief Guest while Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP, Honorable State Minister, ICT Division; Naguib G Sinarimbo, Minister for the Interior and Local Government, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Philippines; Adel Abdel Latif, UNOSSC Director ai, Sudipto Mukherjee, UNDP Resident Representative of Bangladesh and other officials also attended.



A group photo of the launching and panel discussion

2.

Dukkan- Freelance Working Platform, is a replication of Bangladesh's established e-commerce model ekShop, a2i, Government of Bangladesh and UNDP Bangladesh, was launched on June 24, 2021

with an event informing all relevant actors on the newly established freelance working platform developed by UNDP Turkey and a2i, UNDP Bangladesh.



A list of speakers of the event

3.

The mini session held on October 3-6, 2021 brought governments, Development Partners (DP)s, UN entities, the private sector, and academia together to share best practices and exchange views on how to respond to COVID using a collective,

resilient and agile data platform and create scope for collaboration among nations as well as to boost the taking of timely actions through data intelligence system.

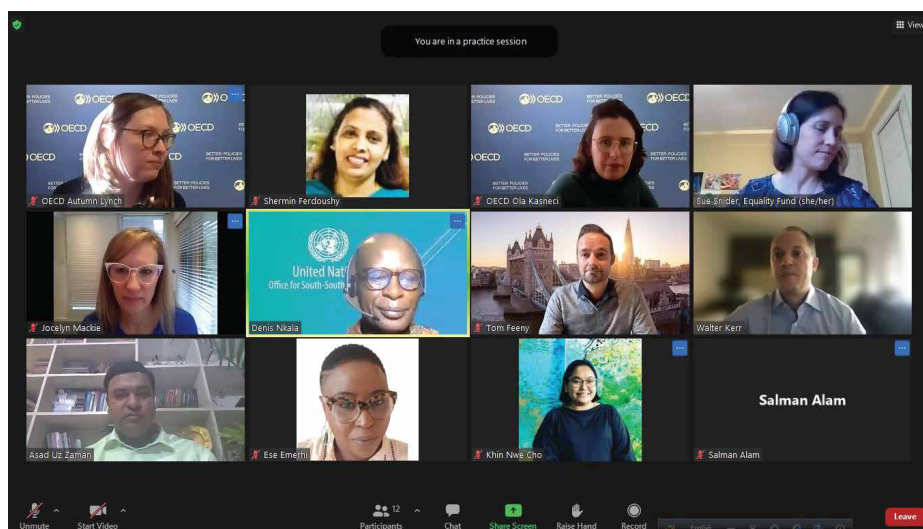


A photo of the panel Discussion of the World Data Forum mini session

4.

The event on innovation in low and middle-income countries: Innovation for Development: Towards New Forms of Partnerships, 2021 was co-organised on the 5th of October 2021 in collaboration with the OECD Innovation for Development Facility, the South-South Network for

Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) and International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA), highlighted innovations and the work of innovators across sectors from low income and middle-income countries.

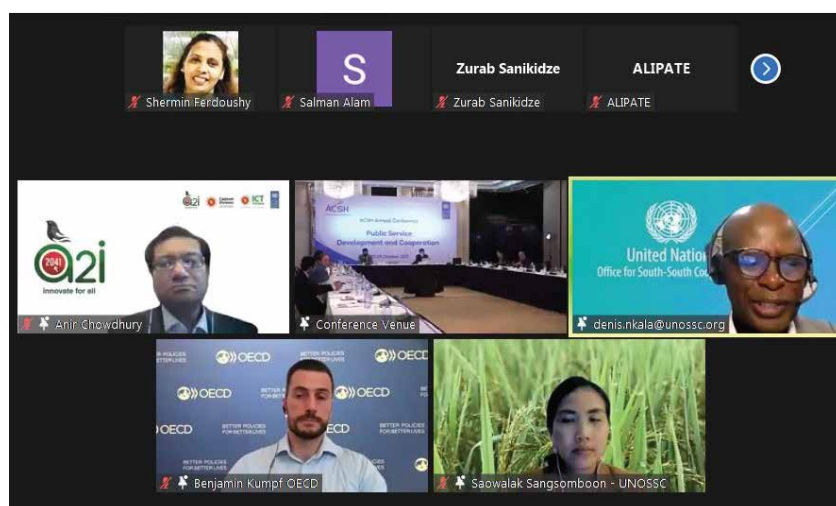


A photo of the panel discussion

5.

The South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) co-organized a virtual Matchmaking Workshop in collaboration with Astana Civil Service Hub (ASCH) and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) on the sidelines of the Astana Civil Service Hub annual

conference on 29th October 2021. The workshop was conducted in the hybrid mode under the theme "Public Service Delivery in the Era of SDGs.". 15 Matchmaking opportunities were generated from the workshop with Astana.



A photo of the Matchmaking session

6. Digital Bangsamoro platform, which is a replication of the myGov platform of a2i, Government of Bangladesh and UNDP Bangladesh was launched on the sidelines of the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) 2021 in Dhaka, Bangladesh on the 11th of November 2021 by H.E. Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP, Honorable State Minister, ICT Division and H. E. Ambassador Alan L. Deniega, Embassy of the Philippines, Dhaka

Bangladesh. At the Launching Ceremony, H.E. Sajeeb Wazed, MP, Honorable ICT Adviser to the Honorable Prime Minister joined virtually with H.E. Dr. Frank C.S. Anthony, Honorable Minister, Minister of the Health Cooperative Republic of Guyana; and Dr. James H. Poisant, Secretary-General of the World Information, Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA).



Launching of Bangsamoro Platform in WCIT 2021

7.

On 11th November 2021, the Shaqo Abuur platform which is a replication of the National Intelligence for Skills, Education, Employment & Entrepreneurship (NISE) platform of a2i, Government of Bangladesh and UNDP Bangladesh was launched at the World Congress on Information

Technology (WCIT) 2021 in Dhaka, Bangladesh by the Hon'ble Minister for Communications & Technology of Somalia H.E Abdi Sheikh Ahmed and the Hon'ble ICT State Minister for Information and Communication Technology of Bangladesh H.E Zunayed Ahmed Palak, MP.



Launching of Shaqo Abuur in WCIT 2021

8.

The High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development in 2022 was assembled under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council which was held from 5th of July to 15th of July 2022. On the sidelines of the High-Level

Political Forum 2022 (HLPF 2022) an event titled "Digital Transformation of Agriculture Supply Chain Management to Ensure Food Security in the New Normal" convened on 5th July 2022.

HLPF 2022 Side Event on

Digital Transformation of Agriculture Supply Chain Management to Ensure Food Security in the New Normal

Date: Tuesday, 05th July, 2022 Time: 7.30 - 9.00 hrs. (EDT)

 H.E. Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP Honorable State Minister Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	 Mr. Masud Bin Momen Senior Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Moderator)	 H.E. Cheikh NIANG Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations	 Mr. Robert D. Simpson Representative in Bangladesh Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations
 Ms. Xiaojun Grace Wang UNOSSC Deputy Director for Programme and Operations	 Mr. Anir Chowdhury Policy Advisor a2i Programme ICT Division/Cabinet Division/ UNDP Bangladesh Advisor, SSNAPS	 Dr. Benjamin Kwasi Addom Advisor Agriculture and Fisheries Trade Policy Commonwealth Secretariat	 Mr. Avinash Mishra Managing Director Global Innovation Fund
 Mr. Joseph Ogwal Executive Director Agro Supply Limited Uganda	 Mr. Rajvir Rathi Director Public Affairs Science and Sustainability South Asia Bayer's CropScience Limited		

Organized & Supported by:

Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations | a2i | Government of Bangladesh | The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Senegal to the United Nations
United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) | United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) | South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) | The Commonwealth Secretariat | Global Innovation Fund | Agro Supply Limited | Bayer CropScience Limited | Public Digital



Speakers of the HLPF 2022 side event

9.

A high-level delegation from the Philippine government, heads of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) ministries visited Bangladesh on Jul 12th, 2022 for a learning exchange visit to know more about Bangladesh's Aspire to Innovate (a2i) program and replicate them in their country. The delegation was led by Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism Deputy Minister Sukarno Abas together with UNDP Philippines led by Maria Luisa Isabel Jolongbayan,

Team Leader, Institutions and Partnerships Programme. The delegation met with Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP, The Honorable State Minister of ICT Division of Bangladesh and asked for cooperation. UNDP Philippines also signed an MoU to receive technical and Advisory support for Localizing e-governance for Accelerated Provision of Services (LeAPS) project to replicate a2i's framework and best practices.



Head of the delegation, BARMM, Philippines receiving a token of appreciation from The Honorable State minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP ICT division. H. E. Alan L. Deniega, Ambassador, Embassy of the Philippines, was also present during the session.

10.

UNDP Yemen introduced the first of its business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-customer (B2C) platform, 'Yemeni Dukkan', a replication of the e-commerce model ekShop, a2i, Government of Bangladesh and UNDP Bangladesh in Yemen at a virtual event held on Monday, May 23, 2022.



Virtual launching of Yemeni Dukkan

Annex 1: Template for Best Practices: The South-South Matchmaker

Country submitting	
Institution	
Solution Title	
Relevant SDGs (can be more than one)	
Project coverage (if more than one country)	
Implementing entities	
Funding partners if any	
Project Status (please indicate completed or ongoing)	
Project period	
Submitted by	Name: Email:
Website or URL (if available)	
Relevant high-resolution photo depicting implementation activities	

1. Describe the challenge the “best practice” is addressing/addressed? This section should provide an overview of the development challenges in the country or region (half a page)
2. Describe the solution - In this section, ensure the following ‘questions’ are addressed in the submission (what the project aims to achieve, the methodology used that led to successful outcomes, outcomes achieved? (One page)
3. What are the challenges of implementation of this practice? And how did or would you overcome and address them? (One paragraph)
4. What makes the new practices more effective than traditional ones? (If applicable) (paragraph)
5. Is it replicable? (One paragraph)
6. Please explain if idea of the solution is an adaptation from another case study (which one); explain if solution adapted by another partner and outcome (half a page)
7. What are the lessons learned? (One paragraph)

Note: the case study will be no more than 4 pages including photo



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