

Successful Delivery of Bangladesh eGovernment Strategy by Australian National University



Professor Shirley Gregor, AO speaking as special guest on the inauguration of training for government officers.

Several events in Dhaka, Bangladesh marked the delivery of major project outputs to develop e-government capacity in Bangladesh government being conducted by the National Centre for Information Systems Research (NCISR) of the Australian National University (ANU). The program is supported by the AusAID Public Sector linkages Program (PSLP). Ministry of Science and ICT, Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) were the counterpart organization of this initiative where Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security (BIPSS) was the third party counter part organization in Bangladesh.

The events included:

- The launch of the 5-year eGovernment Strategy for the Bangladesh Government
- The release of “ICT Management Handbook: A Guide for Government Officers in Bangladesh”
- Three ICT Management workshops for Senior Government officers of Bangladesh
- An awareness program and poster session



Professor Shirley Gregor, AO, Mr Ahmed Imran, both from the ANU, and Mr Tim Turner, from the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA), visited Bangladesh to launch the strategy, present the workshops accompanied by the handbook, to evaluate the workshop training program. Efforts are underway to organise continuation of the training program with various government organisations such as the Public Administration Training Centre (PATC) and the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) Academy for wider dissemination of this knowledge.

1. *'eGovernment for Bangladesh: A Strategic Pathway to Success'*

On October 18, 'eGovernment for Bangladesh: A Strategic Pathway to Success' was launched at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel in presence of distinguished guests. The ceremony was inaugurated by the Honourable Special Assistant to Chief Advisor, Professor M. Tamim. Other distinguished guests included the High Commissioner of Australia to Bangladesh, HE Mr Douglas Foskett, Mr. Sahikh Md Wahid-uz-Zaman, Secretary, Ministry of Science and ICT, Maj Gen (Retd) Muniruzzaman, President, Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) and the Executive Director of Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC).

The strategic pathway has arisen from four years of ongoing academic research and an applied research project. The pathway offers strategic initiatives to guide the adoption of eGovernment in Bangladesh effectively, which also has significant potential to address some of the entrenched problems in the public sector environment of other least developed countries. A key strategy is the capacity building activities that will address the ICT knowledge gap that is seen to be the underlying cause of many of the other problems that are interfering with ICT adoption in Bangladesh. The strategy is primarily targeted at policy makers and future leaders of Bangladesh in planning and implementing e-government. Ahmed Imran and Tim Turner presented the strategy paper at the launch ceremony. Professor Shirley Gregor also spoke as special guest on the occasion.

The key strategic pathway outlined in the book includes: (1) Educate to Innovate – an education initiative to deliver needed skills and understanding immediately to Bangladesh government employees, who will be the future eGovernment drivers; (2) Lead from the front – approaches to generate commitment and championship within the government; (3) Planning to succeed – the ongoing management of the vision and strategy through careful planning; and (4) Foundations for future – implementation of selected ICT projects for eGovernment operations demonstrating the best practices and success for other programs.

The Chief Guest, Professor M Tamim, strongly endorsed the top-down approach that the strategy has adopted to educate the government officials and decision makers first in his speech.

2. ICT Management Handbook: A Guide for Government officers in Bangladesh

This important project output, and its accompanying training program, was launched on October 13 at an inauguration ceremony at Bangladesh Computer Council, BCC Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka. The program was inaugurated by Honourable Special Advisor in charge of Ministry of Science and ICT in the Government of Bangladesh, Mr Manik Lal Samaddar.



This handbook is intended to support senior government officials in Bangladesh with a good understanding of the major IT management issues they may face and to offer guidance on how to deal with them effectively and professionally. These

insights are believed to promote effective adoption and implementation of ICT. This concise handbook provides guidance on an e-government framework, the strategic value of IT, preparation of business cases for IT, the application of the PSLP eGov Project Management Methodology (PMM), and managing the outcomes of IT projects effectively. The handbook is expected to serve as a ready reckoner for day to day management of ICT and has been specially designed to suit the context of Bangladesh.

Various government organisations have already expressed their interest for bulk copies of the Handbook for the officers of their organisations. The Ministry of Science and ICT has already taken up an initiative to reprint the books in coordination with NCISR. The Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) has also come forward to support this important program by offering to publish the training materials in the form of a CD for wide distribution, again in coordination with NCISR.

3. ICT Management Training Workshop for Government officials of Bangladesh

The strategic pathway outlines as its highest priority a two-day long workshop designed to empower senior public sector officials through the introduction of the comprehensive ICT Management Handbook. A total of 107 officers including the ICT focal points of the various ministries, Joint Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners,

and other senior officers attended one of the three offerings of this workshop at the Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) from October 13 to 20, 2008.

To facilitate effective learning and understanding, the two-day intensive workshop is designed based on the ICT Management Handbook, aiming to orient and guide participants through the book. The workshop involved discussions, exercises, case studies supported by video, presentations, and web references. The workshops were conducted by Professor Shirley Gregor, AO, Mr Tim Turner and Mr Ahmed Imran. All the workshops were extremely successful and important officials including the ICT focal points of each Ministry actively engaged themselves in discussion. The response and feedback from the participants were very satisfactory. Certificates and mementos were given to the participants after the completion of the workshop. An evaluation of the training was also carried out before and after the training. In addition, some specially designed awareness posters promoting an ICT-based working environment were distributed amongst the government officers.

This short burst of training is expected to build the capacity of the key officials who will be dealing with future e-government projects undertaken by the government. This style of training is more effective in raising awareness and minimum skill levels in pace with the contemporary and modern changes in public sector management. The course is designed with sufficient indication and references of the resource materials and reading list to support later pursuit of more detailed knowledge in relevant areas. An online resource has been established to facilitate discussion and consultation for regular update and further knowledge. The whole training package including the associated workbook will soon be handed to the Bangladesh government for wider dissemination among the government officers through a Train-the-Trainer program. It is expected each officer of the Bangladesh government will possess a copy of the ICT Management Handbook and will make use of it to embrace the challenges of 21st century's ICT environment.

For more <http://www.ictforltdc.com/PSLP/p1.htm>



A glimpse of training session.