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## ICTs in Governance – A case study of GHMC in Telangana

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### ABSTRACT

*The developments in Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and with potential benefits resulting out of these applications led to a new possibility for governments in carrying out its programs and services in their State and Country. India, even while carrying on with its stiff bureaucracy and a rigid governance structure, has been distinctly at the forefront of this new development of putting in to use ICTs. The recent Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) initiative in employing and integrating ICTs in their services in the capital city of Hyderabad in the newly formed State Telangana is chosen for the paper. The case study method is employed considering the GHMC's ICT project being vast and ever-changing services provided by the project. The paper looks at the role played by ICTs in the functioning of GHMC which had won the Swachhta Award for the year 2018.*

**Keywords**— GHMC, ICT, Governance

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The last decade of the 20th century has witnessed sweeping changes in the way governments are functioning. Governments around the world were under remarkable pressures as citizens were demanding accessible, affordable, efficient and effective governments. The developing nations like India keeping in view the competitive globalized world sought to introduce ICTs in governance.

The modern and contemporary world is related to citizen-centered, citizen-focused and citizen participation as an objective in their operations. Application of ICT in providing public services has brought about perceptible differences the way people get services and the government provided them. Usually, ICTs are technologies that allow the facilitation of communication which involves not only involves the processing of information but also the transmission of the same. The age-old radio, telegraphy, telephones, TV and Cinema may be considered as old ICT, whereas the satellite and wireless communication, the internet and computers are called as new ICT.

Governments worldwide are striving to deliver more and better services to their citizens through channels that are convenient to the public and in ways that are economical. Technology innovations have revolutionized their operations.

#### 1.1 Aim

The study aims at examining and analyzing the use of ICTs in governance with special reference to GHMC in Telangana State.

#### 1.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the present study include

- The extent of use of ICTs by GHMC in providing services to the citizens. Citizen services.
- EICT strategy of GHMC to Garner Model of eGovernance.
- To review some best practices of GHMC

### 2. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

There is almost one-to-one correspondence between the growth phases of civilization and the state and the breakthroughs in ICT. The pre-civilization roots of ICTs can be traced to the development of organizational language; a trait that distinguishes humans from animals. It allowed one generation to easily transmit its experiences and knowledge to the next generations. A common knowledge base of the human race also began to develop. Civil or History is considered to have begun when humans learned to employ written words for communication. It took a long time to build on this great advance - to build the instruments of writing and the material on which to write. Then came the invention of printing in 1445. Fast forward: telegraph, telephony and then the

broadcast media that really put the masses at large in touch with everybody, however, there remain a thousand barriers for the free flow of information to and among the public. The exchange of Information within and among the human groups were progressively removed, each step cleared the way through to the next barrier.

But the new ICT transcends all constraints. Earlier, the question was what technology could do for better information and organizing communication. With Internet-based ICTs we speak of what there is left to be done. The ICT framework will no longer limit the application of Physical resources. It now gives them the maximum opportunity to deliver.

### 2.1 Unique features of ICT

- It is limitless in its speed and joins all information and all users together. It joins all in a single wrap, and in real time
- All information can remain distributed wherever it naturally resides. It need not be compiled separately for each user, and yet anyone can access any information any time as per need.
- The medium is not one dimensional of the flat platform; it has infinite dimensions and is perfectly malleable. It is like clay for communication and information organizing possibilities. The medium can be moulded into shapes and properties as varied as the real outer world of its users.
- It allows it to replicated and support any process in the real world
- Any amount of data and any number of applications can be carried on this medium.

### 3. GHMC

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation came into existence in the year 2007 with its head office located at liberty in the heart of the city. GHMC has four zones, and is headed by a Commissioner who is an IAS officer and some of the major works undertaken by GHMC include, maintenance of health and sanitation, garbage collection and disposal, city planning, maintenance of public places and lakes, issue of birth and death certificates, property collection and issue of trade licenses, etc.

Gartner (2000) a consultancy and research organization proposes four stages for a successful implementation of eGovernance in a phased manner. They put forth the eGovernance model which begins with presence and moves towards transformation. The graphic representation of the model is as follows.



**Fig. 1: Process**

An effort is made in this section of the paper to map the Gartner's model of eGovernance to that of the functioning of GHMC and its use of ICTs in its operations.

#### 3.1 Presence

GHMC generate huge volumes of information, much of it is potentially useful to individuals and businesses. Through their official website [www.ghmc.gov.in](http://www.ghmc.gov.in) a user can access and download various documents, rules and regulations, application forms and important Government Order (GO) and other. The online presence of GHMC provides the citizens ready access to much-required government information without hassles of travelling to offices, and standing in ques or bribing to obtain information.

#### 3.2 Interaction

One of the means to strengthen citizen's participation is that GHMC should allow two-way Communication. This is addressed by encouraging citizens to air their grievances through email. Providing important contact details of officials. An official Facebook and as well twitter account are maintained by GHMC wherein they post and tweet about news informing developments under its jurisdiction. An APP, 'My GHMC' is made available and the citizens can download it through google play store and interact with GHMC. Various services like the status of applications, property tax payment details, birth and death certificates etc can be availed. Feedback and comments can be submitted using the APP.

#### 3.3 Transaction

GHMC goes further, by allowing the users to conduct transactions online. Payment of property tax, fines imposed by GHMC, payment for granting and renewal of trade licenses and other payments can be done online through the official website. In the past, for making such payments required long waits and confrontation with designated official, and with the advent of online transactions has saved time to citizens and brought about transparency in the working of GHMC.

#### 3.4 Transformation

The fourth and final stage of the eGovernance model is transformation. After thoroughly implementing the earlier three stages with success, the final aim is to integrate the ICTs in its full potential. This stage redefines the way GHMC conducts its business to the individual and trade community, wherein the users have enhanced accessibility, and interaction increases manifold. Transparency and efficiency are reached and ultimately citizens get empowered.

### 4. INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

In order to bring in accountability amongst the sanitary workers who are involved in sweeping of the roads, GHMC had introduced biometric attendance system. This has curtailed the practice of the sweepers outsourcing their work to others at the very low prize and later claiming their salaries.

Garbage is manually collected from bins installed at various locations. In view of ensuring that the garbage thus collected is disposed at the designated garbage dumping yards, GHMC has installed GPS in the garbage collecting trucks. Over 500 trucks can be tracked over GPS and the garbage bins are tagged with RFID.

Off late GHMC has come with some practices like putting up of community refrigerator, wherein people can stock some food and ingredients and people who wish to consume can do so. The initial pilot project received a great response and GHMC is going to replicate this in 10 different localities in Hyderabad city. People who are in need of food can pick it up from these community refrigerators.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The application of ICTs in the functioning of GHMC in delivering citizens services appears to have dramatically improved the interaction between citizens and government departments through quick and convenient access to automated services. And above all the customers save time and they can avail the services that suit all type of citizens and it can be availed even on Sundays & holidays. In order to create greater awareness about the bouquet of the services offered by GHMC, newspapers, radio and television and social media should be aptly used. When it comes to the Gartner's Model we can conclude that GHMC has successfully completed the implementation of three stages and since the transformation is an ongoing process, GHMC should strive to maintain its consistency in effectively delivering services by totally integrating the ICTs.

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