A Survey of Public Service Delivery and Digital Governance in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: Emerging from a brutal and long civil war by 2008, Sri Lanka’s governance infrastructure was shattered, and civil service provision was not in a very good shape. Thus, getting a reprieve from the war and war spending, the government was able to turn its attention towards better administration and service delivery. A populace exhausted by the direct and indirect effects of the war also desired better and efficient governance. People also expected a better explanation of government spending, as all could no more be explained in terms of war and security of the state. As a result, successive governments in Sri Lanka have attempted to overhaul and restructure the administrative and public service infrastructure in the country. Two major areas that were earmarked for improving the situation were the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and enactment of business process improvement in the country. The main thrust of the efforts in both areas was towards the development of physical infrastructure in addition to the formulation of laws, rules, and procedures; it was especially so in the ICT arena. In this paper, we take a deeper look into the ICT related developments that took place since the early 2000s until more recently. Our study covers both policy and infrastructural developments in the country. We analyze the situation from an analytical perspective and try to understand the evolution of ICT and its use for delivering efficient public services to the populace. We expect that our findings will help researchers as well as servicemen in the country to understand the dynamics of ICT evolution in the country and thus devise even better policies and infrastructure for better service of its people.

Keywords: 1. Information Communication Technology 2. Public Service 3. Sri Lanka