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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX V

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Bangladesh for 2023

Action Document for E-ffective Governance: Accelerating e-government and digital public services in Bangladesh

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	E-ffective Governance: Accelerating e-government and digital public services in Bangladesh OPSYS number: ACT-61723 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Bangladesh
4. Programming document	Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Bangladesh 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	The action contributes to priority area “2.3 Inclusive Governance”, specific objective 3 “Public service delivery and financial/fiscal management are improved through digital governance”.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	151 – Government & Civil Society-general
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions Target 16.5 – Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms Target 16.6 – Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels Target 16.7 – Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 5 – Gender Equality SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities

	SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals			
8 a) DAC code(s)	15110 - Public sector policy and administrative management 40% 15113 - Anti-corruption organisations and institutions 30% 15150 - Democratic participation and civil society 30%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank - 51000 Other multilateral institution - 47000			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective
Digitalisation @		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
digital governance		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital entrepreneurship		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital skills/literacy		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Connectivity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

		YES	NO	
	digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020131 (NDICI South and East Asia) Total estimated cost: EUR 10 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 10 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing¹	Indirect management through contribution agreement with entrusted entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.4.4.			

1.2 Summary of the Action

Digitalisation and the use of new technologies to improve the economy, generate sustainable socio-economic growth, and improve good governance have become a priority for the Government of Bangladesh for more than a decade. With the adoption of “Digital Bangladesh 2021” in 2009, the Government made digital transformation a vehicle for poverty and inequality reduction, socio-economic growth and human capital development. “Digital Bangladesh” successor, “Smart Bangladesh 2041”, capitalises on the already achieved progress and sets a vision and a framework of action for the country’s digital future.

As an accelerator for developing nations, digitalisation can offer many innovative solutions that can be leveraged to address persisting development challenges, by including in particular the most vulnerable and by reducing the digital divide. This is of particular importance for Bangladesh, which is set to graduate from the least developed country (LDC) status in 2026. In this context, the Government of Bangladesh has been introducing ICT solutions in key policy sectors.

Nonetheless, challenges persist, in particular due to gaps in connectivity, high computer, smartphone and internet prices and low digital literacy to inter-institutional siloes, weak inter-operability among e-government platforms and applications and missing regulatory and policy frameworks. Therefore, digitalisation in Bangladesh remains a sector that could strongly benefit from international partnerships and stronger policy and operational cooperation with the national authorities.

The proposed Action focuses on the “Smart Bangladesh” fourth pillar (i.e. the achievement of a “smart government”) and aims to support Bangladesh in accelerating digital transformation through enhanced e-governance. The proposed Action will support policy, regulatory and organisational changes so that citizens (including the most vulnerable ones such as women, people with disabilities (PWD), minorities and rural residents), public sector employees, businesses and organisations can interact with government services more easily, quicker and at lower cost at central and local levels. **The proposed Action will respond to the need for more responsive, transparent and accountable delivery of public services to citizens through increased, more effective, inclusive and more efficient use of e-government tools and processes.** By doing so, the

proposed Action will also play a role in reducing the high incidence of corruption in Bangladesh, which is pervasive in many activity sectors and undermines good governance and service delivery.

Under the general objective of improving the transparency, responsiveness, integrity and accountability in public service delivery through enhanced use of e-government tools and processes based on a human-centric approach, the proposed Action introduces three specific objectives:

- (1) (Government to Government - G2G): To improve the digital interaction, coordination and communication between government ministries, agencies and departments.
- (2) (Government to Employees - G2E): To strengthen the capacities of public sector employees for improved organisational performance and public service delivery.
- (3) (Government to Citizens - G2C): To improve the quality of public services and their delivery for all.

By supporting Bangladesh as a developing economy and society through a human-centric digitalisation process and by promoting EU digital standards, the proposed Action will contribute to the implementation of key EU priorities in the area of digitalisation forging a stronger partnership with Bangladesh in the context of regional cooperation in South and South-East Asia. Through the foreseen implementation modalities and partners, the proposed Action will strive to promote Global Gateway by helping Bangladesh address the digital divide and further integrate into the global digital ecosystem.

The proposed Action is based on the Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 priority 2.3 "Inclusive Governance" and specific objective 3. "Public service delivery and financial/fiscal management are improved through digital governance" with the aim to improve the transparency, responsiveness, integrity and accountability in public service delivery through enhanced use of ICT tools and solutions. The EUD will support efforts that focus on equal digital access to reduce intersectional disparities that affect equal access to digital public services.²

The Action is also aligned with the thematic priority on grasping the opportunities for women through digitalisation set by the EU Gender Action Plan III³, the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024, and with the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 (RPPDA).

2. RATIONALE

2.1 Context

During the last decade, Bangladesh has witnessed a remarkable economic and infrastructural growth, with significant progress in human development⁴ and on poverty and inequality reduction, which made it to graduate from its status of Least Development Country (LDC), with a delayed effect as of 2026. Inequality remains a challenge, with a Gini Coefficient Index at 32.4% (2016)⁵. **The importance of digitalisation has been acknowledged by the Government of Bangladesh through “Digital Bangladesh 2021”⁶**, a strategic document adopted in 2009 which sets digitalisation as core to the overall economic development strategy, and in particular as a means for the country’s poverty reduction, socio-economic growth and human capital development. After the launch of “Digital Bangladesh”, the Government of Bangladesh has started to introduce ICT solutions in key sectors including public finance management, taxation, health, education, public administration and social welfare.

The ICT Division of the Ministry of Post, Telecommunication and Information Technology launched in August 2019 the “e-Government Master Plan for Digital Bangladesh”⁷ with the support of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). The e-Government Master Plan’s purpose was to provide middle to long-term strategies and implementation plans for improving public service delivery.⁸ Also, Bangladesh’s programme, “Aspire to Innovate”

² [Country Level Implementation Plan \(CLIP\) for Bangladesh.](#)

³ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf

⁴ Its gross national income per capita increased by about 252% between 1990 and 2021. Human Development Report data centre, Bangladesh. <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data/#/countries/BGD>

⁵ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?locations=BD>

⁶ <https://digitalbangladesh.gov.bd/>

⁷ https://bcc.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bcc.portal.gov.bd/publications/3f9cd471_9905_4122_96ee_ced02b7598a9/2020-05-24-15-54-43f3d2b8b4523b5b62157b069302c4db.pdf

⁸ <https://ictd.gov.bd/site/view/policies/Policy->

(a2i), aims at generating innovation and improving citizens' lives, through a human-centric approach. As part of this initiative, the Government has established since 2010 more than 5,400 Digital Centres at Union level (the lowest local government administrative level) that work as one-stop information and digital public service delivery points.

As a result, **Bangladesh advanced 39 steps in the United Nations E-Government Development Index (EGDI)⁹ since the 2012 survey** and features today among the top performers in e-government development among the LDCs. It represents, in fact, the largest jump among all developing countries. Bangladesh ranked 111 out of 193 countries in 2022, whereas it ranked 124 and 150 in the surveys done in 2016 and 2012 respectively. This illustrates the ability of Bangladesh to strengthen its digital capacity in the last decade and to benefit from evolving digitalisation opportunities to achieve the SDGs. With a score of 0.5630, Bangladesh surpassed the EDGI sub-region (South Asia) average by 0.033 points, but still remains behind the EDGI region (Asia) average by 0.0863 and the world average by 0.0472 points. Despite the progress, the overall performance still indicates a significant deficiency in Bangladesh's e-readiness.

Regarding public e-participation, from 2020 to 2022, Bangladesh climbed from the 95th to the 75th place out of 193 UN Member States in the UN's E-Participation Index (EPI)¹⁰. With a score of 0.5227 points, Bangladesh was above all three EPI averages (sub-regional, regional and global) with India being the sub-regional leader (0.5909) and Japan (1.0) leading in e-participation both at regional and global levels.

The Government of Bangladesh is now aiming to deepen investments in digital for public service delivery. The current 8th 5YP (2020-2025)¹¹ describes digital transformation as a key accelerator of the Government's overall development strategy. In 2022, Bangladesh recently adopted the successor of "Digital Bangladesh" called "Smart Bangladesh 2041"¹², which focuses on infrastructure and connectivity including 5G internet, 100% smartphone penetration, 100% high-speed internet penetration and cashless transactions and capitalises on inclusiveness, equal digital opportunities and shared digital welfare. "Smart Bangladesh" is built on four pillars – Smart Citizens, Smart Government, Smart Economy and Smart Society – and aims to bridge the digital divide through innovation and upscaling sustainable digital solutions for all citizens and businesses.

E-governance has the potential to play a pivotal role in reducing the high incidence of corruption in Bangladesh, which persistently undermines good governance and effective service delivery. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which shows the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0-100 where 0 means highly corrupt and 100 means very clean, Bangladesh scored 25 out of 100, the 12th global lowest score and position in 2022¹³. It remained second lowest in South Asia, above only Afghanistan, and retained the same 147th position out of the 180 countries as 2021¹⁴. The score is lower compared to not only 2021 but also to 2020, 2019 and 2018.

In a broader context, **corruption and social, economic and political insecurity are interrelated and feed each other. Corruption leads to discrimination and injustice, which create social tensions.** By eroding trust in and legitimacy of the government, such tensions can lead to unrest and protests, which often turn violent¹⁵. Protests in Bangladesh intensified in the last months of 2022, and are set to keep growing throughout 2023 ahead of the general elections in December 2023/January 2024. Nonetheless, underneath political motivations, there lie deeper causes related to large-scale corruption in the country's public sector and financial system, cronyism, energy and commodities price hikes, lack of transparency in the disclosure of economic data, as well as shrinking freedom of expression and association.

⁹ <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/Country-Information/id/14-Bangladesh> This Index presents the state of e-government development of the UN Member States by aggregating three important dimensions of e-government: provision of online services, telecommunication connectivity and human capacity

¹⁰ <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/Country-Information/id/14-Bangladesh> E-participation is directly linked to e-government and factors in a three-tiered structure within the UN E-participation framework, i.e., e-information, e-consultation and e-decision-making.

¹¹ <http://plancomm.gov.bd/site/files/8ec347dc-4926-4802-a839-7569897e1a7a/8th-Five-Year-Plan>

¹² <https://a2i.gov.bd/a2i-missions/smart-bangladesh-vision-2041/>

¹³ <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2022/index/bgd>

¹⁴ <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/bgd>

¹⁵ <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/news/cpi-2022-disappointing-global-and-bangladesh-performances-3235351>

Finally, and with regards to relevant EU priorities, by supporting Bangladesh as a developing economy in its digital agenda through promoting EU digital standards, the proposed Action contributes to the implementation of the priority ‘Europe as Global Leader’ under the EU’s digital strategy 2019-2024 ‘A Europe Fit for the Digital Age’, to the EU Digital Agenda, the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific (priority area “digital governance and partnerships”) as well as to the Global Gateway Strategy.

2.2 Problem Analysis

According to the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) database¹⁶, which reports on the performance of over 200 countries and territories against six main governance indicators¹⁷ between 1996–2021, Bangladesh fell behind not only the upper-middle income countries (UMIC) group averages (Bangladesh aspires to become an UMIC by 2031) but also the averages in South Asia. Good governance is a critical area for sustainable trade, economy and investments and subsequently for poverty reduction, sustainable development and inclusive growth. In Bangladesh, weak and poor performance in governance is one of the key reasons that undermines better flow of capitals and delays increased foreign direct investment.

In addition, the persisting **low ranking of Bangladesh in the Corruption Perception Index** (see statistics in section 2.1 above) demonstrates limited action by the authorities to take action against corruption and contradicts the Government’s announcement of zero tolerance against corruption. Public sector corruption, often in collusion with the private sector, deepened and widened around COVID-19 response programmes, public contracting and distribution. Corruption in Bangladesh is pervasive in many activity sectors notably health, social protection, land administration, law enforcement, transport, energy and public financial management. According to Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) 2021 National Household Survey on Corruption in Public Service Sectors, though corruption decreased in education, agriculture, and power services since the last survey conducted in 2017, law enforcement agencies have topped the charts with the highest level of corruption among the 17 surveyed service sectors¹⁸. Passport services, road transport, judicial services, and the health sector were reported as being among the most corrupt services, as corruption has risen significantly compared to 2017 edition of the survey. More than 72% of households said they were forced to pay bribes in order to get public services. According to the survey, the estimated amount of bribes transacted in 2021 is almost EUR 1,1 billion. Each household paid an average of EUR 60 in bribes to get services from different sectors, which was significantly higher than the average of EUR 53 reported in the 2017 survey.

E-governance and digitalisation in Bangladesh could be considered a key-enabler to increase transparency and accountability in a country where corruption is pervasive and often a socially and culturally tolerated practice to access public services. It has the potential to empower citizens, especially women, to participate in full and benefit from the development process. For that, a number of challenges need to be addressed. In the context of increasing digitalisation, intersecting inequalities (economic, gender, ethnic, among others) which have hindered the overall development and rights agenda are also affecting equal access to digital public services in Bangladesh. There are important barriers for women and vulnerable citizens’ participation in governance in general, and in digital governance in particular.

First, there are a number of **regulatory gaps and shortcomings**. There is a clear lack of an integrated and ‘whole-of-government’ approach, with different Ministries, divisions and departments developing their own IT resources. The policy, legal and institutional framework needs a comprehensive review to allow these systems to be mainstreamed across the different departments. In addition, a data protection law is needed to safeguard citizens’ rights. In addition, in the area of public procurement, Bangladesh adopted a Public Procurement Act in 2006, Rules in 2008 and started rolling out the e-Government Procurement (e-GP) system as of 2011, but the existing legal and regularity framework does not cover the procurement of ICT goods and services, which is increasing across the

¹⁶ <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worldwide-governance-indicators>

¹⁷ The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project reports aggregate and individual governance indicators for over 200 countries and territories over the period 1996–2021, for six dimensions of governance: (i) voice and accountability; (ii) political stability and absence of violence/terrorism; (iii) government effectiveness; (iv) regulatory quality; (v) rule of law; and (vi) control of corruption.

¹⁸ <https://www.ti-bangladesh.org/beta3/index.php/en/highlights/6519-corruption-in-service-sectors-national-household-survey-2021>

public entities. The lack of common standards, guidelines and technical specifications on the procurement of ICT services and goods, in particular when it comes to large-scale ICT projects hampers the whole ICT project cycle management from planning and design to execution and evaluation as delivered ICT products and services are not fit-for-purpose. There are no rules for proper hand over of the product or the service at the end of a contract between the supplier who develops an ICT product or service and the public entity or the new contractor responsible for rollout and operationalisation. The lack of a concrete and coherent regulatory and policy framework and standards on ICT e-procurement compromises business continuity, hampers inter-operability and undermines consistency, effectiveness and efficiency at the detriment of citizens. Ineffective and inefficient ICT procurement processes and procurement practices have a direct impact on the delivery of digital services to citizens.

Second, there is a **lack of interoperable and simplified-service delivery**. Electronic transactions with public entities and government agencies start with a form. E-forms are just the interface of a more significant administrative process that includes regulations, workflows, technologies and coordination processes at both front office and back office levels. Nonetheless, digital services in Bangladesh are often neither integrated nor interoperable. Lack of technical interoperability, integration, follow-up and feedback loops mirror the lack of coordination and communication at political and policy levels. The central Grievance Redress System (GRS) is a telling example as it lacks both clear inter-agency links and referral mechanisms; inter-ministerial and inter-agency distribution of responsibilities and tasks are blurred; links and tools on citizens' feedback and evaluation are missing; service delivery standards are undefined; grievance and complaint mechanisms are inappropriate; and it lacks centralised oversight as the Cabinet Division struggles to exercise a coherent oversight and coordination role. This undermines the GRS's role as an innovative and inclusive voice platform that provides information, delivers services, addresses grievances regardless of location, literacy and accessibility and acts as a unified channel for citizens' public participation and reporting of corruption.

Digital interoperability and simplification issues affect not only e-government service platforms but also mobile applications. For instance, between 2013 and 2015, the ICT Division developed approximately 600 mobile applications under two projects related to transport, health, education, welfare and social protection etc. In 2022, only 44 of the 600 mobile applications were still available on Google Play, and even those were not functioning properly. As a result, citizens have to resort to intermediaries and incur additional expenses; provide data and information multiple times; and invest considerable amount of time and money in commuting to receive manual services.

Third, there is a **need to build the digital skills of the workforce within government**. According to the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) 2021 Digital Development Dashboard, low levels of ICT skills in the population with emphasis on the existence of digital divide (Basic skills – 25%; Standard Skills – 10%; Advanced skills – 1%)¹⁹ were viewed as key barriers for Bangladesh's digital development. To a great extent, the level of Bangladesh's civil service digital literacy reflects that of the general population. While basic digital skills are taught during training cycles offered by the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre to general and professional/technical cadre civil servants, there is neither a comprehensive digital skills and knowledge education and training cycle that can support civil servants in remaining well trained and equipped towards digital developments, nor an accreditation framework that could help civil servants use their acquired digital knowledge for vertical and horizontal career mobility. On top of the technical digital competencies that civil servants need and which are similar to those required in the private sector, civil servants need digital governance competencies that would enhance individual and organisational foresight and awareness to engage with confidence in national digital innovations and transformations, develop policies and make informed decisions. In the context of digital governance policies, e-government entails behavioural and organisational changes within the public administration at both institutional and individual level so that civil servants are trained, equipped and ready to interact digitally with citizens, businesses and organisations in an accountable, transparent and responsive manner, through as seamless as possible transactions and at a lower cost.

Finally, in the broader context of digitalisation, the level of **digital connectivity** plays the critical role of enabler and **public awareness** acts as a multiplier in digitalisation efforts. With regards to connectivity, the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) 2021 Digital Development Dashboard²⁰ reported 100% coverage by a mobile

¹⁹ <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx>

²⁰ <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx>

cellular network (3G or 4G) with 62% of the country's population owning mobile phones. When it comes to disaggregated data for cellular and smart phones, the proportion of households with a cellular phone stands at 97.4% (97% in rural areas and 98.7% in urban ones) and the proportion of households with a smart phone stands at 52.2% (46.2% in rural areas and 70.2% in urban) ones. Of note, female mobile phone ownership stands at 51% and male at 72%.

Districts and upazilas (urban areas) have broadband connection but not the next tiers (rural areas like unions and villages). As a result, only 8.7% households have a computer on average with a significant discrepancy between urban areas (25.6%) and rural areas (3.1%). As regards tablets, the only available statistics from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics refer to the proportion of individuals using the Internet by type of portable device and indicate that only 2% of the population access tablets using mobile cellular network and 1% using wireless networks (Wi-Fi etc.)

According to ITU, in 2021, 39% of the population used the internet out of which 33% women and 45% men. While mobile data coverage is strong, broadband connectivity is not up to the mark. Bangladesh ranked 125th among 139 countries in terms of mobile internet speed, according to the Speedtest global index released in September 2022 by Ookla²¹. While there are some ongoing projects that either focus on digital connectivity or have digital connectivity among their objectives implemented by partners such as the World Bank's Enhancing Digital Government and Economy Project (EDGE) or Digitalisation of Islands Beel and Haor (DIBH) by Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) there is still much scope for further international investment in digital connectivity.

While Bangladesh leads its peer nations in providing digital access to citizens through widespread device and internet penetration, it lags peers in terms of share of population using the internet. This usage gap is majorly driven by barriers like lack of awareness and perceived utility of the internet, cultural reasons, lack of permission, and perceived security concerns. A mind-mapping workshop with JICA UDFs revealed that these barriers are deeper among senior citizens, rural residents, and non-working women.²²

Despite the considerable increase in public e-participation (see UN's E-Participation Index statistics in section 2.1 above), broad, horizontal and targeted **public awareness on policy developments and public service initiatives has not reached its full potential**. Lack of public awareness implies insufficient or total lack of the public's understanding about the importance and implications of policies and initiatives, hampers public dialogue and consultation, and impedes adequate citizens' and civil society organisations' representation in policy and decision-making processes. This is particularly true for women and segments of the population in vulnerable situation including youth, persons with disabilities and minorities, among others. In the efforts to increase public e-participation but also public participation overall, awareness-raising is essential not only for information purposes but also for public action and partaking in the design of policies and service delivery.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

- **Cabinet Division:** Cabinet Division is the executive office of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. As a division of the Government of Bangladesh, it is responsible for the executive administration of the government and for ensuring smooth interaction among Cabinet Ministries. As per its mandate, Cabinet Division plays an instrumental coordination and oversight role in policy- and decision-making ensuring inter-ministerial efficiency and business continuity. It will play a key role in this Action for its strong convening, oversight and coordination role and powers.
- **Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Division:** ICT Division is a department of the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology of the Government's executive branch. ICT Division's main task is to develop ICT as means for digital transformation of Bangladesh focusing its efforts on improving the budget execution efficiency, mid- to long-term digital growth potential and administrative efficiency through e-government. The ICT Division is one of the major government authorities contributing to

²¹ <https://www.speedtest.net/global-index>

²² Smart Bangladesh: ICT Master Plan 2041 (<https://a2i.gov.bd/a2i-missions/smart-bangladesh-vision-2041/>)

the establishment of e-government. The role of ICT Division is to ensure universal access to ICT for all through research and development, successful utilisation and digital management of ICT. In this capacity, ICT Division includes a number of units under its responsibility. ICT Division and its units and agencies have been implementing a number of projects with international partners and it is an indispensable stakeholder in providing expert input and technical expertise in the design, development and operationalisation of digital products and services.

For the purpose and scope of the proposed action, ICT Division will be a primary stakeholder. As it encompasses various agencies and units and, upon preliminary consultation with ICT Division, the proposed action will seek to work mainly with:

- Department of ICT (DoICT). DoICT is responsible for ICT projects in Bangladesh that focus on human resources development, employment creation and establishment of e-services. Among DoICT's most prominent projects are the COVID-19 vaccination application (Surokha App) computer labs in schools across Bangladesh and computer education, women education through ICT technology, network connectivity among ministries/divisions, offices/directorates, district and upazila (sub-district) level offices. DoICT will be a key ICT Division department in providing expertise and coordination technical aspects of the proposed action.
- Aspire to Innovate (a2i). a2i is responsible for accelerating the inclusive digitalisation of public services through widened access and decentralised delivery. A2i main missions include among others, oversight of implementation of the "Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041"; "Civil Service 2041"; "Digital Equity" and "South-South Cooperation". a2i is set to be formally established as Bangladesh's national innovation agency. Based on its mission and position in ICT innovation in public service delivery, a2i will be a primary stakeholder in the strategic and operational planning and implementation of the proposed action.

Although not primary stakeholders, the ICT Division agencies and units below may be included in consultations during the implementation of the proposed action as relevant or needed:

- Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC)
- Startup Bangladesh Limited
- Controller Of Certifying Authorities (CCA)
- Bangladesh Data Centre Company Limited (BDCCL)
- Digital Security Agency (DSA)
- Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA)
- Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) under Ministry of Public Administration (MoPA): The Ministry of Public Administration is the government authority that is primarily responsible for the management of public administration in Bangladesh. BPATC was established in 1984 and it is a Directorate of MoPA. While the Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy is the Government's educational institute that provides training on law and administration to civil servants in Bangladesh, BPATC is the Government's formal training institute that offers various cycles of specialised, intensive, and integrated training to public servants at all levels. As the proposed action aims to build the capacities, improve the skills and increase the knowledge on ICT of civil servants, it will seek to work closely with the BPATC for the development and accreditation of a formal ICT training curriculum and its integration into the BPATC official training programme for civil servants. In addition, BPATC will be instrumental in identifying training needs and target civil servants to participate in the new ICT training programme activities.
- Ministry of Planning: The Ministry of Planning formulates middle- to long-term national development strategies, reviews budget plans, and manages public projects. Planning Division in particular, coordinates development activities of individual ministries, divisions and agencies; publishes guidelines for national and regional development projects; cooperates with international organisations on matters related to the operations of the Planning Division; and reviews budget plans of individual ministries and agencies. The Ministry of Planning's Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation (IME) Division collects and analyses information on the results of projects and programmes from various organisations to monitor and assess their profitability and development outcomes; analyses the project performance of different ministries and agencies; and deals with

matters relating to Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU) and the public procurement regulations. CPTU is responsible for developing, owning and operating the national e-Government Procurement (e-GP) portal²³.

Since the proposed action focuses on supporting the Government in developing harmonised regulatory rules and standards to ensure that the existing and/or new ICT goods and services are properly developed under a consistent and coherent framework, the proposed action will look to work closely with the Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU) and the IME Division. The proposed action will seek to build on the progress achieved through the public procurement reform in Bangladesh²⁴ and the e-GP system already in place since 2011. The regulatory framework on public procurement of ICT goods and services of public agencies and entities proposed through the action will be in line with the provisions of the 2006 Public Procurement Act and the 2008 Public Procurement Rules. With the introduction of ICT-specific public procurement regulatory framework, the proposed action will seek to identify – and possibly remedy – gaps and shortcoming in the public procurement rules and system in view of improving the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of public procurement of ICT goods and services.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective of this Action is to **improve the transparency, responsiveness, integrity and accountability in public service delivery through enhanced use of e-government tools and processes** based on a human-centric approach.

The Specific Objectives (SO)/Outcomes of this Action are as follows:

- **SO/Outcome 1:** To improve the digital interaction, coordination and communication between government ministries, agencies and departments (*Government to Government - G2G*). The proposed action will support GoB in developing harmonised regulatory rules and standards to ensure that the public procurement of new ICT goods and services is properly developed under a consistent and coherent framework and in line with the key European digital rights and principles of putting people and their rights at the centre of the digital transformation; solidarity and inclusion; freedom of choice; participation; safety and security; and sustainability²⁵. This should in turn facilitate inter-operability, business continuity and improve organisational performance of government institutions. In addition, the proposed action will seek to support the development of a policy, regulatory and operational framework that will improve connectivity and bridge the digital divide. Enhanced and continuous cooperation and coordination among all targeted public entities is crucial in achieving this objective.
- **SO/Outcome 2:** To strengthen the capacities of public sector employees for improved organisational performance and public service delivery (*Government to Employees - G2E*). The proposed action will build and support the development of digital knowledge, skills and capacities of male and female public sector employees with a needs-based and demand-driven approach. Capacity-building and further capacity-development with focus on specialised knowledge and skills, including on the outputs to be produced under SO1. Capacity-building is not only a key work strand of the proposed action but a key element in sustaining the expected results of the proposed action as a whole.
- **SO/Outcome 3:** To improve the quality of public services and their delivery for all (*Government to Citizens - G2C*). The proposed Action will support the provision of one-stop, straightforward and decentralised access to public services and information through human-centric digital tools so that public

²³ <https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>

²⁴ <https://cptu.gov.bd/about-cptu/public-procurement-reform.html>

²⁵ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-principles>

services come closer to citizens, enable quick and easy access and encourage public participation, effectively integrating gender approach and inclusion of groups in vulnerable situation. Digital interoperability, simplification and re-engineering of public services is a prerequisite for addressing existing gaps across the whole service delivery cycle and increase the public service providers' capacities to provide transparent, effective and efficient public services in a seamless manner.

The expected outputs to be delivered by this Action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

For SO/Outcome 1

- **Output 1.1:** Procurement rules and standards on ICT services and goods in line with the legal and digital architecture frameworks in place are developed;
- **Output 1.2:** Policy, regulatory and operational coordination on improved connectivity and reduction of digital divide is enhanced;
- **Output 1.3:** Inter-ministerial and inter-service coordination arrangements for implementation and monitoring of the newly developed regulations and standards are established and sustained.

For SO/Outcome 2

- **Output 2.1:** Digital skills and knowledge-specific capacity-building programmes for civil servants are developed and piloted;
- **Output 2.2:** A specialised public e-procurement capacity-building programme on ICT goods and services for civil servants is developed and piloted;
- **Output 2.3:** Specialised capacity-building curricula are accredited and integrated into the official public administration training programme.

For SO/Outcome 3:

- **Output 3.1:** The digital inter-operability of public service delivery is streamlined and strengthened;
- **Output 3.2:** Citizens' access to and use of centralised and digitalised public services is enhanced through targeted actions for women, PWDs, indigenous people and groups in vulnerable situation;
- **Output 3.3:** Web-based applications/platforms for easier access to public services that reduce the digital divide are improved.

3.2 Indicative Activities

SO/Outcome 1

Indicative activities relating to **Output 1.1**

- 1.1.1. Development and implementation of procurement rules and standards on ICT services and goods in line with the legal and digital architecture frameworks.
- 1.1.2. Analysis of existing Public Procurement Act (PPA 2006) and Public Procurement Rules (PPR 2008) to identify customisation for Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES).
- 1.1.3. Expert stakeholders consultation to identify gaps in ITES projects (e.g. end-to-end requirement analysis, interface design, system development, progress monitoring, user acceptability test - UAT, system agility, handover, bug fixing, customisation).
- 1.1.4. Design of customised procurement rules and standards of ITES and their implementation modalities.
- 1.1.5. Upgrading of existing procurement management system and integration of the new rules in Government's e-Procurement system.
- 1.1.6. Dissemination of and awareness on the new rules to targeted audiences.

Indicative activities relating to **Output 1.2**

- 1.2.1. Design and establishment of policy, regulatory and operational coordination on improved connectivity and reduction of digital divide.
- 1.2.2. Analysis of the existing Bangladesh National Digital Architecture (BNDA) to incorporate connectivity rules and end-to-end project life cycle management.
- 1.2.3. Development of standard procedures for upgrading selected non-compliant ITES to comply with BDNA.
- 1.2.4. Selection and migration of key ITESs to the central interoperable system.
- 1.2.5. Collection and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned on better connectivity and reduction of digital divide.

Indicative activities relating to **Output 1.3**

- 1.3.1. Development and rollout of inter-ministerial and inter-service coordination arrangements for implementation and monitoring of the newly developed regulations and standards.
- 1.3.2. Establishment of standing and ad hoc inter-ministerial and inter-service coordination working groups and committees.
- 1.3.3. Mapping of international donors and implementing organisations involved in digital sectors and establishment of coordination fora and mechanisms.
- 1.3.4. Development of terms of reference and procedure rules for all targeted coordination working groups and committees.
- 1.3.5. Development of standard operating procedures and operations for the implementation of the newly developed rules, standards and specifications.
- 1.3.6. Design of operations manual, review and reporting mechanisms for ITES monitoring system (by Central Procurement Technical Unit - CPTU and Cabinet Division) on the newly developed standards and specifications.

Outcome 2

Indicative activities relating to **Output 2.1**

- 2.1.1. Development and piloting of digital skills and knowledge-specific capacity-building programmes for civil servants.
- 2.1.2. Digital skills training needs assessment.
- 2.1.3. Design and development of a detailed training plan, training curricula and training cycles.
- 2.1.4. Drafting of lists of targeted public sector employees to participate in the digital skills training programme.
- 2.1.5. Preparation of a continuous professional development plan and integration in the annual training plan of the Bangladesh's Public Administration Training Centre.
- 2.1.6. Rollout of the digital skills training programmes.
- 2.1.7. Establishment of a pool of trained trainers on digital skills and knowledge.

Indicative activities relating to **Output 2.2**

- 2.2.1. Development and piloting of specialised public e-procurement capacity-building programme on ICT goods and services for civil servants.
- 2.2.2. ICT e-procurement training needs assessment.
- 2.2.3. Design and development of a detailed training plan, training curricula and training cycles.
- 2.2.4. Drafting of lists of targeted public sector employees to participate in the ICT e-procurement training programme.
- 2.2.5. Preparation of a continuous professional development plan and integration in the annual training plan of the Bangladesh's Public Administration Training Centre.
- 2.2.6. Rollout of the ICT e-procurement and updated e-GP training programmes.

- 2.2.7. Establishment of a pool of trained trainers on ICT e-procurement within CPTU, NAPD (National Academy for Planning and Development), ESC (Engineering Staff College), BPATC (Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre).

Indicative activities relating to **Output 2.3**

- 2.3.1. Accreditation and integration of specialised capacity-building curricula into the official public administration training programme.
- 2.3.2. Establishment and streamlining of certification and accreditation procedures for the new specialised capacity-building programmes.
- 2.3.3. Establishment and mainstreaming of procedures linking the certification and accreditation of the new specialised capacity-building programmes with career mobility and development.

Outcome 3

Indicative activities relating to **Output 3.1**

- 3.1.1. Streamlining of digital inter-operability of public service delivery.
- 3.1.2. Feasibility and “as-it/to-be” studies on the current digital interoperability status of targeted public services.
- 3.1.3. Establishment of an inter-ministerial and inter-service steering committee and technical expert working groups on public services digital inter-operability.
- 3.1.4. Assessment and gap analysis of the status and current of the digital central Grievance Redress System and Citizens’ Charters as key social accountability tools linked to effective and efficient public service delivery.
- 3.1.5. Drafting of Job Description (JD) and Service Level Agreements (SLA) for the services of the central operating teams.
- 3.1.6. Development and rollout of digital interoperable features for key services including beta versions and minimum viable products (MVPs).
- 3.1.7. Development of digital monitoring and reporting systems for targeted public services and online linkages with grievance redress system.
- 3.1.8. Publication, public communication and mass dissemination of enhanced GRS and digital Citizens Charters’.

Indicative activities relating to **Output 3.2**

- 3.2.1. Migration of existing/remaining manual/semi-manual processes and data to a centralised digital platform.
- 3.2.2. Public awareness campaigns on the accessibility and use of platforms with centralised and digitalised public services, reaching the most vulnerable.
- 3.2.3. Provision of training to Union Digital Centres’ operators on the accessibility and use of platforms with centralised and digitalised public services.

Indicative activities relating to **Output 3.3**

- 3.3.1. Test-run and SWOT assessment of web-based applications/platforms offering public services with focus on access enabling features for vulnerable and socio-economically disadvantaged citizens.
- 3.3.2. Alignment of newly developed digital public service modules with BNDA and Citizen Core Data Structure (CCDS).
- 3.3.3. Establishment of a central operations, monitoring and troubleshooting team to provide support to all web-based applications/platforms enabling digital service delivery.
- 3.3.4. Development of web and smart device versions of newly developed digital public service modules for the citizens.
- 3.3.5. Facilitation of data migration from existing to new systems.

- 3.3.6. Development and dissemination of guidelines and operations manuals for the central monitoring and troubleshooting team and end-users on usage, change management and maintenance.
- 3.3.7. Development and rollout of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and training curricula for the central operations, monitoring and troubleshooting team.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the SEA screening (relevant for budget support and strategic-level interventions)

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that no further action was required.

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is at no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

The proposed Action will strengthen Bangladesh's resilience against climate-driven emergencies, as the Government of Bangladesh will be able to maintain its business continuity. Providing digital public services will generate energy savings by reducing electricity, transportation, and paper use across government and for citizens.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is a significant objective, as the proposed Action will promote gender inclusion. Women will benefit from the improved delivery of services, which, implemented in a simplified and digital-friendly manner will help reduce the digital divide between men and women. The Action will tap into past and existing projects led by the EU and other international donors on improving female digital literacy and increasing awareness of the right to information and public participation. The proposed Action is aligned with the EU Gender Action Plan 2021-2025 (GAP III) and its thematic area "Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation".

Human Rights

Human-centred digital transformation requires the government to recognise that people lay the foundation for digital transformation and must take the necessary steps to create a seamless experience throughout the process. Under the premise that successful digital transformation focuses on people, not technology, the proposed Action responds to the need for more responsive, transparent, accountable and participatory delivery of public services to citizens through increased, more effective and more efficient use of e-government tools and processes. The participatory approach "for citizens, with citizens" during the rollout phase of the action will be key in this regard and it will underpin the implementation of all three specific objectives. Line decision-makers and the action's implementing partners will consider:

- How are citizens going to react to this change?
- How will this affect citizens?
- How can IT be used to keep up with the evolving needs and interests of citizens?
- How can e-governance bridge the digital gap and leave no one behind?

By supporting efficient government service delivery and sustainable integration through a human-centric approach, the action will contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In particular, by expanding the scope of the programme to citizens living in the rural and remote areas, the proposed action will provide support to citizens who might have been affected by digital divide as well as lack of, insufficient or inadequate delivery of public series. Policy and regulatory reform and implementation of quality Information Technology Enables Services (ITES) will increase the transparency and efficiency in public procurement sectors

(ICT good and services; ICT connectivity) that are crucial in safeguarding citizens' digital rights. The EU, including if needed through the proposed action, will continue to advocate for and support the Government in putting forward legislative initiatives on data protection and digital matters in line with international and European standards. The EUD has been actively advocating for the improvement of the draft Data Protection Act (DPA), alongside major international development partners. In this regard, the EUD has submitted analysis and recommendations for the alignment of both the first and second drafts of the DPA, in October 2022 and April 2023 respectively, with EU standards, in particular the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Declaration on European Digital Rights and Principles.

A Human Rights-based approach by the respect of the working principles will be in all phases applied. The working principles are: i) respect all human rights, ii) participation, iii) non-discrimination, iv) transparency v) accountability and vi) personal data protection. The action will reinforce the capacities of the duty bearers/public institutions, the rights-holders and their representatives (CSO) and the private sector (ITES system developers).

Disability

The re-engineering and simplification of public service delivery cycle will imply easier, faster and cost-effective public services. The Action will ensure that rights of persons with disabilities will be respected, and the planned activities are disability-responsive and inclusive. The Action will invite to attend to organisations representing people with disabilities.

Reduction of inequalities

Bangladesh has been increasingly centralised and rural people continue to move in to major urban centres in search of employment or better jobs, better education, medical services and, ultimately, better living conditions. This results in growing income disparities and digital divide between urban and rural populations. According to the Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016 of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the monthly income per household in urban areas was about 70% higher than the household income in rural areas. Consequently, the incidence of poverty is also higher in rural areas compared to urban ones. At the same time, the proportion of people living below the lower poverty line was about 50% higher in rural than in urban areas. Greater Dhaka, the capital city, accounts for about 34% of the country's GDP and 60% of the country's industrial and service-sector employment.

Evenly distributed and well designed, internet connectivity and new technologies can drive future development; create a more inclusive society; bring new opportunities to women, young, marginalised and in vulnerable situation people; and enhance the quality of life for those who have access to them.

Smart (e-) government can act as an enabler for economic development, reduce inequalities and abuses and enable citizens to benefit from simplified, effective and efficient public service delivery. Digitalisation of public services resides on the premises of equal treatment and non-discrimination.

As per the Inequality Marker, the proposed action is labelled as I-1. The proposed action is designed in a way to implement directly the concept of digital public goods as a solution for reducing inequalities.

Democracy

The proposed action is directly linked to promotion of democracy, as the overall objective is to improve the transparency, responsiveness, integrity and accountability in public service delivery through enhanced use of e-government tools and processes based on a human-centric approach. Under this objective, the proposed action aims to strengthen public institutions by working directly with primary duty-bearers and improve their accountability and transparency. In addition, the proposed action places special emphasis on the reduction of corruption, which hampers democratic standards. Finally, the proposed action will empower citizens by improving their participation in the design of public service delivery through consultation mechanisms such as surveys and studies and enable them to better raise grievances through efficient and transparent feedback loops if services are not properly provided.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The proposed action is designed in line with the Government's strategic vision on the Bangladesh's digital transformation through "Digital Bangladesh 2021" and "Smart Bangladesh 2041" with "smart citizens", "smart

society”, “smart economy” and “smart government” at the heart of a prosperous and resilient democracy. Within this framework of action, the proposed Action helps maximise the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of e-government, which is key to achieve “Smart Bangladesh” by 2041. Sustainable digitalised and centralised service delivery and appropriate monitoring and feedback systems in place as well as public awareness on e-service delivery will help reduce the digital divide and appease societal tensions.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The proposed Action will increase availability and use of public services by citizens and strengthen the Government’s ability to share data and information in the context of disasters.

Other considerations if relevant

The proposed action will ensure that all undertaken interventions are mainstreamed and sustained by the government's regulatory, policy and operational frameworks, upon completion.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
External environment	Lack of data protection and risks of political control of sensitive data	Medium	High	The Digital Security Act gives authorities very wide-ranging powers and has become a tool to target political opponents. In this context, the EU risks being associated with Bangladesh’s digital legislation, which is not in line with international standards and EU’s own standards on human rights and data protection. The EU will take the opportunity of this Action to actively promote its standards, principles and values through continuous political and policy dialogue with line authorities, leading to an inclusive and fair digital transformation and reducing the impact of the inherent challenges and threats of digital transformation, including on data protection.
External environment	Connectivity	Medium	Medium	Optical fibre connectivity covers district, upazila and union levels but not ward (village) level with citizens still not connected through broadband internet and mobile data affordable to a few. Efforts by the Government and development partners to expand connectivity are ongoing. The proposed Action will pursue partnership

				modalities that will directly boost digital connectivity.
External environment	Digital divide and barriers to change	Low	Low	The mindset of physical, in-person service delivery is still predominant. The proposed Action will target service process simplification and easy-to-navigate user interface for e-services, it will capitalise on awareness-raising activities and using digitally educated citizens as agents of change, promoting the inclusion of women, PWD, indigenous communities and other groups in vulnerable situation.
External environment	Lack of inter-service coordination	Medium	Medium	The proposed Action will involve several ministries and a multi-sectoral management setup. Prior buy-in and agreement by the involved government authorities will be sought together with clearly distributed responsibilities. The Cabinet Division will be undertaking a coordinating role as per its mandate, as well as provide political guidance and enforcement. By supporting the right government actors in putting in place an integrated and interoperable e-services structure, the EUD's action will reduce gaps in inter-service coordination.

Lessons Learnt:

- Design and implement “targeted” policies: Policymakers need to acknowledge the diversity and intersectional needs of the targeted groups. Policies and initiatives must reflect the challenges of the digital divide caused by lack of access to technology and affordability of digital devices through a human-centric approach.
- Improve digital infrastructure and connectivity: Stable and speedy digital connectivity is a prerequisite for accessing and benefiting from the digital economy. GoB is implementing various projects to enhance connectivity in rural and hard to reach areas. Without connectivity, knowledge and skills are of no use.
- Broaden consultations: In order to take into account the specific needs of women, persons with disabilities and groups in vulnerable situation, policymakers need to adopt the “whole of society” model for co-creation of policies. Furthermore, policymakers need to undertake multi-sectoral consultations to achieve the various objectives that relate to the entire digital ecosystem (design, delivery and evaluation of policies).
- Take a whole-of-government approach: Policymakers need to adopt a whole-of-government approach in designing, implementing and evaluating policies. Collaboration with all levels of government and locally placed agencies reduces the risk of duplication, fragmentation and redundancy.
- Build partnerships: To obtain greater support in the implementation of targeted policies and programmes, the government should leverage public-private partnerships and take advantage of the synergies between different stakeholders, such as the government, private sector, civil society organisations, academics and practitioners. Furthermore, policymakers should promote the integration of available resources (such as engineers, developers,

equipment, organisations and digital facilitation points), as well as the communications opportunities offered by radio, television and the web, to support the target groups.

- Combat stigmas about using technology: Traditionally Bangladesh was hesitant to mainstream e-government because connectivity and access to devices were considered a luxury. The COVID-19 pandemic helped shift this view. Citizens, society, economy and government were forced to pivot towards using online platforms. All these stakeholders should build on this positive momentum and explore how technology can be integrated in the benefit of all sectors.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is:

At general objective (impact) level:

IF the proposed action can build on digital transformation and e-governance's strengths as enabling frameworks and transformative processes for sustained and shared socio-economic growth *AND* digitalisation remains a political and policy priority for the government *THEN* the proposed action can contribute with sustainable solutions to corruption and malpractices in public administration and improve the delivery of public services *BECAUSE* it will strengthen accountability, transparency, responsiveness, and integrity in public service delivery.

At specific objective (outcome) level:

IF an enabling policy and regulatory framework on ICT e-procurement and connectivity is established *AND* primary stakeholders remain committed to stepping up cooperation *THEN* digital interaction, coordination and communication within public entities and in their interaction with citizens and businesses will improve *BECAUSE* more effective and efficient monitoring, reporting and feedback process and workflows will be in place.

IF public sector employees are equipped with necessary digital skills and knowledge *AND* the civil service's digital literacy remains a policy priority for the government, *THEN* employees' individual and public institutions' organisational performance will increase leading to more accountable, responsive and transparent digital public service delivery to citizens through digital simplification *BECAUSE* civil servants will better and more efficiently digitally equipped and ready to perform their tasks in digitalised environments.

IF interoperable and simplified digital services are in place and widely available to and accessible by citizens, *AND* targeted public entities remain committed to uptake and operationalisation of new technologies in public service delivery *THEN* citizens can enjoy faster, easier and seamless service delivery with robust government follow-up and feedback loops *BECAUSE* they can address citizens' grievances and concerns in a comprehensive and manner and reduce grievances and complaints against poor service delivery in the longer term.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention. On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (e): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (e): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years) Year N (2024) 2023 baselines to be collected end-2023/beginning 2024	Targets (values and years) Year N+3	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To improve transparency, responsiveness, integrity and accountability in public service delivery through enhanced use of e-government tools and processes based on a human-centric approach	0.1 Score in Digital Development Dashboard (ITU) 0.2 Score in E-Government Development Index (UN EDGI) 0.3 Score in E-Participation Index (UN EPI) 0.4 Score in corruption perceptions Index (TI)	0.1.1 To be determined (Internet access, use and prices) 0.2.1 To be determined (online service index) 0.3.1 To be determined (e-participation index) 0.4.1 To be determined (corruption perception index)	0.1.1 To be determined 0.2.1 To be determined 0.3.1 To be determined 0.4.1 To be determined	0.1.1 https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx 0.2.1 https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/ 0.3.1 https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/ 0.4.1 https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2022	Not applicable
Outcome 1	(Government to Government - G2G) The digital interaction, coordination and communication between government ministries, agencies	1.1 Numbers of sectors supported to develop digital-related policies, strategies and regulations by the proposed action 1.2 Number of sectors supported	1.1.1 0 1.2.1 0	1.1.1 At least 2 1.2.1 At least 2	1.1.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports; annual and final reports from implementing organisations (e.g. governments, international organisations, private sector) 1.1.2 Regulations and policy documents	Political shifts in senior executive bodies do not trigger substantial changes in project implementation and steering Digitalisation in public service

	and departments is improved	to implement digital-related policies, strategies and regulations by the proposed action			<p>1.2.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports</p> <p>1.2.2 Decisions on the establishment of groups, terms of reference, meetings minutes, implementation plans</p> <p>1.3.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports</p> <p>1.3.2 Decisions reflecting the composition of groups, terms of reference, meetings minutes, implementation plans</p>	<p>remains a government priority</p> <p>Primary stakeholders – duty-bearers remain committed to cooperation</p>
Outcome 2	<p>(Government to Employees - G2E)</p> <p>The capacities of public sector employees for improved organisational performance and public service delivery are strengthened</p>	<p>2.1 Number of public bodies involved in digital capacity-building</p> <p>2.2 % of public entities' processes (rules, procedures, tools and methods) improved by digital capacity-building by the proposed action</p>	<p>2.1.1 0</p> <p>2.2.1 0</p>	<p>2.1.1 At least 10 public bodies</p> <p>2.2.1 To be determined</p>	<p>2.1.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports; studies, government databases, public sector employees' career mobility statistics</p> <p>2.2.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports; studies, government databases</p>	<p>Political shifts in senior executive bodies do not trigger substantial changes in project implementation and steering</p> <p>Digitalisation in public service remains a government priority</p> <p>Primary stakeholders – duty-bearers remain committed to cooperation</p>
Outcome 3	<p>(Government to Citizens - G2C)</p> <p>To improve the quality of targeted public services and their delivery for all</p>	<p>3.1 Number of people who have access to and are using digital services developed by the proposed action (disaggregated by</p>	<p>3.1.1 To be determined</p> <p>3.2.1 0</p>	<p>3.1.1 To be determined</p> <p>3.2.1 To be determined</p>	<p>3.1.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports; studies; ministries' database of users/rights-holders disaggregated by sex, age and geography (urban/rural)</p> <p>3.2.1 Baseline, midline and endline reports</p>	<p>Political shifts in senior executive bodies do not trigger substantial changes in project implementation and steering</p> <p>Digitalisation in public service</p>

		sex, age, ethnicity and disability) 3.2 Number of supported interoperable cross-sector end-to-end e-services				remains a government priority Primary stakeholders – duty-bearers remain committed to cooperation
Output 1 relating to Outcome 1	1.1 Procurement rules and standards on ICT services and goods in line with the legal and digital architecture frameworks in place are developed	1.1.1 Number of policies and regulations on e-government public service delivery supported by the proposed action 1.1.2 Extent to which the proposed action supported the definition/revision of the regulatory framework promoting digital service ecosystems	1.1.1 0 1.1.2 To be determined	1.1.1 At least 1 1.1.2 To be determined	1.1.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database 1.1.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database	Targeted public entities remain committed to inter-ministerial and inter-service policy dialogue Targeted public entities acknowledge the need to develop new rules and regulations under the framework of public procurement reform process
Output 2 relating to Outcome 1	1.2 Policy, regulatory and operational coordination on improved connectivity and reduction of digital divide is enhanced	1.2.1 Extent of support by the proposed action to facilitate projects that enable connectivity and help reduce the digital divide 1.2.2 Number of public and private sector stakeholders involved in coordination and	1.2.1 0 1.2.2 0	1.2.1 At least 1 1.2.2 To be determined	1.2.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database 1.2.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database (data disaggregated by type of stakeholder and geographic scope - union; upazila; district; central level)	Targeted public entities remain committed to inter-ministerial and inter-service policy dialogue Targeted public entities remain committed to improve connectivity and reduce digital divide

		project design at central and local levels				
Output 3 relating to Outcome 1	1.3 Inter-ministerial and inter-service coordination arrangements for implementation and monitoring of the newly developed regulations and standards are established and sustained	1.3.1 Number of government entities and donors involved in e-governance policy and regulatory framework dialogue supported by the proposed action 1.3.2 Number of standing and/or ad hoc working groups/committees supported by the proposed action	1.3.1 0 1.3.2 0	1.3.1 At least 8 government ministries, departments, agencies and international organisations 1.3.2 At least 1 standing working group/committee	1.3.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; meeting minutes; project database 1.3.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; meeting minutes; project database	Targeted public entities remain committed to inter-ministerial and inter-service coordination and communication
Output 1 relating to Outcome 2	2.1 Digital skills and knowledge specific capacity-building programmes civil servants are developed and piloted	2.1.1 Status of ICT/technical skills inclusion in public administration training curricula with the support of the proposed action 2.1.2 Number of public sector employees who have benefited from digital skills capacity-building programmes supported by the proposed action (disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity and disability)	2.1.1 0 2.1.2 0	2.1.1 To be determined 2.1.2 To be determined	2.1.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; meeting minutes; project database; notes from curricula development meetings; curricula; training schedules and agendas 2.1.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; lists of beneficiary trainees (disaggregated by level and types of digital skills; civil service grades; entities of employment)	Targeted public entities remain committed to the uptake and rollout of the capacity-building programmes developed by the proposed action Targeted public entities remain committed to allocate necessary and appropriate staff for establishing a pool of trainers and cascade further the training programme

<p>Output 2 relating to Outcome 2</p>	<p>2.2 A specialised public e-procurement capacity-building programme on ICT goods and services for civil servants is developed and piloted</p>	<p>2.2.1 Status of ICT goods and services e-procurement training curricula with the support of the proposed action</p> <p>2.2.2 Number of public sector employees who have benefited from ICT goods and services e-procurement training curricula supported by the proposed action (disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity and disability)</p>	<p>2.2.1 0</p> <p>2.2.2 0</p>	<p>2.2.1 To be determined</p> <p>2.2.2 To be determined</p>	<p>2.2.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; meeting minutes; project database; notes from curricula development meetings; curricula; training schedules and agendas</p> <p>2.2.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; lists of beneficiary trainees (disaggregated by level and types of digital skills; civil service grades; entities of employment)</p>	<p>Targeted public entities remain committed to the uptake and rollout of the capacity-building programmes developed by the proposed action</p> <p>Targeted public entities remain committed to allocate necessary and appropriate staff for establishing a pool of trainers and cascade further the training programme</p>
<p>Output 3 relating to Outcome 2</p>	<p>2.3 Specialised capacity-building curricula are accredited and integrated into the official public administration training programme</p>	<p>2.3.1 Extent of formal integration of specialised capacity-building curricula of IT course materials at different education levels thanks to support of the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>2.3.2 Number of supplementary training courses (ToT, refresher courses etc.) supported by the proposed action</p>	<p>2.3.1 0</p> <p>2.3.2 0</p>	<p>2.3.1 To be determined</p> <p>2.3.2 To be determined</p>	<p>2.3.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; Ministry of Public Administration's decision on adoption and integration of new training courses; course materials database</p> <p>2.3.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; meeting minutes; project database; notes from curricula development meetings; curricula; training schedules and agendas</p>	<p>Targeted public entities remain committed to the uptake and formal integration of the capacity-building programmes into their official training and education catalogues</p> <p>Targeted public entities are willing to accredit and certify the new capacity-building programmes according to applicable standards</p>

Output 1 relating to Outcome 3	3.1 The digital interoperability of public service delivery is streamlined and strengthened	3.1.1 Extent of integration of services (focus on back office) 3.1.2 Extent of one-stop shop delivery (focus on front office) 3.1.3 Number of public entities supported to digitally reorganise service delivery with support by the proposed action	3.1.1 To be determined 3.1.2 To be determined 3.1.3 0	3.1.1 To be determined 3.1.2 To be determined 3.1.3 At least 2	3.1.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database; meeting notes and minutes; government circulars and instructions 3.1.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database; meeting notes and minutes; government circulars and instructions 3.1.3 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database	Targeted public entities remain committed to inter-ministerial and inter-service coordination and communication
Output 2 relating to Outcome 3	3.2 Citizens' access to and use of centralised and digitalised public services is enhanced through targeted actions for women, PWDs, indigenous people and groups in vulnerable situation.	3.2.1 % increase in citizens' access to and use of public services through web platforms and applications with support by the proposed action 3.2.2 Number of citizens' grievances and complaints successfully received and processed with support by the proposed action	3.2.1 To be determined 3.2.2 0	3.2.1 At least 25% increase 3.2.2 To be determined	3.2.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database 3.2.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database	Targeted public entities implement public awareness on the availability of improved digital services Targeted public entities remain committed to share information on ICT technologies integration process and outcomes
Output 3 relating to	3.3 Improved web-based applications/platforms for easier access to	3.3.1 Number of technologies established and/or	3.3.1 0	3.3.1 At least 2	3.3.1 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database	Targeted public entities remain committed to uptake and

Outcome 3	public services that reduce the digital divide	reinforced with support by the proposed action 3.3.2 Extent to which the proposed action contributed to the integration of ICT/digital technologies for better service delivery	3.3.2 To be determined	3.3.2 To be determined	3.3.2 Project progress reports; baseline, midline and endline reports; programme database	operationalisation of new technologies Targeted public entities remain committed to share information on ICT technologies integration process and outcomes Targeted public entities implement public awareness on new digital services
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4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this Action, it is envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the Government of Bangladesh.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation of the Budget Support Component [For Budget Support only]

N/A

4.4 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures²⁶.

4.4.1 Direct Management (Grants)

N/A

4.4.2 Direct Management (Prize(s))

N/A

4.4.3 Direct Management (Procurement)

N/A

4.4.4 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

This Action may be implemented in indirect management with multiple entities and through contribution agreements, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: a) Technical capacity, subject-matter expertise, and operational experience, b) proven networking capabilities in Bangladesh and/or in the South Asia region in digitalisation and e-governance, including on policy advice and capacity building, c) Proven track record of nationwide digitalisation and e-government public service delivery development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

4.4.5 Indirect Management with the Partner Country

N/A

4.4.6 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

Should indirect management with an entrusted entity be not partially or entirely possible due to unforeseen or exceptional circumstances outside of the Commission's control and based on the nature of the envisaged action, the alternative (fallback) implementation modality will be through grants under direct management modality. In such case, the type of applicants to be targeted shall be (consortia of) international and national civil society organisations/NGOs on the basis of specific selection criteria including the expertise of the applicant(s) in the

digital sector, their presence in the digital sector in the country and/or South Asia region, previous experience with similar interventions, etc.

4.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.6 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Specific Objective 1 and 2	
Indirect management with entrusted entities - cf. section 4.4.4	4 900 000
Specific Objective 3²⁷	
Indirect management with entrusted entities (1) - cf. section 4.4.4	2 900 000
Specific Objective 3	
Indirect management with entrusted entities (2) - cf. section 4.4.4	1 900 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	300 000
Totals	10 000 000

²⁷ Budget division under SO/Outcome 3 in 2 different lines (one at the amount of EUR 2.9M and another at the amount of EUR 1.9M) reflect the requirement for parallel execution channels with more than one implementing partners through indirect management.

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The entrusted entities will implement the project. The entrusted entities will be responsible for partner coordination, joint administration of the resources allocated by development partners, the mobilisation of additional resources and project assurance.

The project will be governed by a steering committee whose composition will be further established and which will include the EU, Cabinet Division, ICT Division, implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders. For specific components of the proposed action, CPTU (SO 1 and 2) and BPATC (SO 2) will participate in the project's steering committee. The steering committee will meet at least twice a year to review progress against indicators, assess the ongoing work plan and coordinate responses to issues identified in implementation.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partners' responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (at output and outcome level) as measured by corresponding indicators and using the Logframe matrix as reference.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

The implementing partners alongside the relevant ministries and public entities can provide a simple and practicable decentralised M&E system. The implementing partners will conduct baseline, midline and endline surveys/reports in close cooperation with the EU. Furthermore, the EU regularly hosts Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) missions. The project formulation mission will further refine the performance monitoring system as well as its indicators (see Logframe).

Monitoring and reporting will assess results on gender equality and the implementation of human rights-and fundamental freedoms-based approach and working principles (applying all human rights for all; meaningful and inclusive participation; non-discrimination and equality; accountability; transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data). Monitoring and reporting will be based on indicators that are disaggregated by sex, age, disability and geography (urban/rural) when applicable. In order to monitor development and equal access, data/indicators will be disaggregated even further when applicable (e.g. education, digital literacy and ICT skills).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance and nature of the action, final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the action responds to a complex situation, directly and indirectly involving all citizens of the country.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partners at least two months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partners shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

All evaluation shall assess to what extent the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality. Expertise on human rights and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)”, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, duty bearers, grant right-holders or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention²⁸ (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

Please delete this box before submitting the document

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention is defined in the related Action Document and it is revisable; it can be a(n) (group of) action(s) or a (group of) contract(s).

- Tick in the left side column one of the four possible options for the level of definition of the Primary Intervention(s) identified in this action.
- In the case of ‘Group of actions’ level, add references to the present action and other action concerning the same Primary Intervention.
- In the case of ‘Contract level’ and ‘Group of contracts’, add the reference(s) to the corresponding budgetary items in point 4.6, Indicative Budget.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as (tick one of the 4 following options);

Action level (i.e. Budget Support, blending)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single action	
Group of actions level (i.e. top-up cases, different phases of a single programme)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#): <Present action> <Other action(s)>
Contract level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	<foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract)>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	<foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract)>

²⁸ For the purpose of consistency between terms in OPSYS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI have harmonised 5 key terms, including ‘Action’ and ‘Intervention’ where an ‘Action’ is the content (or part of the content) of a Commission financing Decision and ‘Intervention’ is a coherent set of activities and results which constitutes an effective level for the operational follow-up by the EC of its operations on the ground. See more on the concept of intervention.

	(...)	
Group of contracts level (i.e. series of programme estimates, cases in which an Action includes for example four contracts and two of them, a technical assistance contract and a contribution agreement, aim at the same objectives and complement each other)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	<foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract) 1> <foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract) 2> <foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract) #>

Appendix 2 COMMISSION DECISION & TECHNICAL and ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Please delete this appendix before submitting the document.

The template of the AD is used selectively depending on the type of financing and step of the procedure.

The table below illustrates which sections of the AD need to be used

- in the annex to the COM Decision and,
- when applicable, in the Financing Agreement to create the Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)
- The following table presents an overview of the use of the sections of the Action Document template for the Commission Decision and for the TAPs.

Action Document	Project modality (Incl. thematic and regional programmes, as well as calls for proposals)		Budget support		No activities to be implemented by, and no funds to be transferred to, the Partner country, with signature of a Financing Agreement based of the 'simplified' template	
	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)
1. SYNOPSIS						
1.1. Action Summary Table	Yes	Yes	n/a	Yes	Yes	N/A
1.2. Summary of the Action	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. RATIONALE						
2.1. Context	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A
2.2. Problem Analysis	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A
2.3. Additional Areas of Assessment [For Budget Support Actions only]	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.3.1. Pre-condition on Fundamental values (for a SDG contracts only)	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.3.2. Public Policy	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.3.3. Macroeconomic Policy	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.3.4. Public Financial Management	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.3.5. Transparency and Oversight of the Budget	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION						
3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
3.2. Indicative Activities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A

	Project modality (Incl. thematic and regional programmes, as well as calls for proposals)		Budget support		No activities to be implemented by, and no funds to be transferred to, the Partner country, with signature of a Financing Agreement based of the 'simplified' template	
Action Document	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)
3.3. Mainstreaming	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
3.4. Risks and Lessons Learnt	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A
3.5. The Intervention Logic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
3.6. Logical Framework Matrix	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS						
4.1. Financing Agreement	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A
4.2. Indicative Implementation Period	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A
4.3. Implementation of the Budget Support Component (and subsections)	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
4.4. Implementation Modalities (and subsections)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
4.6. Indicative Budget	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
4.7. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	If applicable and relevant	If applicable and relevant
4.8. Pre-conditions [only for project modality]	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	If relevant and applicable
5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT						
5.1. Monitoring and Reporting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
5.2. Evaluation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
5.3. Audit and Verifications	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY						
6. Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
APPENDICES						
Appendix 1 Reporting in OPSYS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Appendix 2 Commission Decision and TAPs	Delete and replace with Appendix for	N/A	N/A	Delete and replace with Appendix for Budget	N/A	N/A

	Project modality (Incl. thematic and regional programmes, as well as calls for proposals)		Budget support		No activities to be implemented by, and no funds to be transferred to, the Partner country, with signature of a Financing Agreement based of the 'simplified' template	
Action Document	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)	Annex Commission Decision	Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAPs)
	Blending if applicable			Support if applicable		
Other: Appendix only for Blending: List Lead Finance Institutions	To be added	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other: Appendix only for Budget Support (Disbursement Arrangements, Conditions and Performance Indicators)	N/A	N/A	N/A	To be added	N/A	N/A