

PREFACE

As E-Government continues to evolve from dream to reality, it is to be expected that there will be an increasing focus on technology, implementation, and operational issues. Implicit in such a focus is the axiomatic assumption that E-Government projects and the technologies underlying them will necessarily succeed and will result in the desired outcomes. This explains the need for introspection and periodic re-orientation of E-Government strategy.

Although governments in many countries see E-Government as a tool for administrative reform and fighting corruption, outcomes in this regard convey a mixed picture. It is necessary to understand, why E-Government succeeds in checking or eliminating corruption in certain cases, whereas it fails in others. Equally concerning are a number of challenges which threaten to stall the growth of E-Government services. Discourse on E-Government generally focuses on the citizen. But government agencies cannot provide better services, unless their internal efficiency is improved significantly. Also, the delivery of certain services requires inputs from more than one government agency. Further, there are numerous interfaces between government and businesses, where inefficiencies continue to persist. Ready examples in this regard are licenses, permits, and statutory compliances, which eat up businesses' precious time and resources. So, issues related to inter-governmental and government-to-business transactions are also important. It is necessary to address these issues, if E-Government is to meet the aspirations of all stakeholders.

This book represents a timely effort in bringing together researchers' and practitioners' views spanning a range of issues, which are vital to the success of E-Government initiatives.

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