PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

Public Administration
Country Profile

Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)
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BANGLADESH

Click here for detailed map

Source: The World Factbook - Bangladesh

Government type

Parliamentary democracy

Independence

16 December 1971 (from West Pakistan); 26 March 1971 is the date of independence from West Pakistan, 16 December 1971 is known as Victory Day and commemorates the official creation of the state of Bangladesh

Constitution

4 November 1972, effective 16 December 1972, suspended following coup of 24 March 1982, restored 10 November 1986, amended several times (click here)

Legal system

Based on English common law

Administrative divisions

5 divisions; Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi; note - there may be one additional division named Sylhet

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League, became the first Prime Minister of the independent Bangladesh (land of Bengal). After his assassination in 1975, the country saw sixteen years of military-backed regimes.

The parliamentary elections which led to a centre-right Bangladesh National Party (BNP) government being installed in 1991 marked the start of a new era in building democratic institutions in Bangladesh.

Elections, held in June 1996 under a caretaker government, resulted in the return to power of the Awami League. The BNP emerged as the largest opposition party. The party under the leadership of Khaleda Zia formed a four-party opposition alliance in January 1999. The alliance participated in the October 2001 general election held under a Non-party Caretaker Government and won the polls with two-thirds majority. The political climate is marked by tensions among rival parties and leaders, especially between Awami League on one side and the BNP and Islamic parties on the other.

Source: European Commission - Political Context

1. General Information

1.1 People	Bangladesh	India	Myanmar	1
Population				a
Total estimated population (,000), 2003	146,736	1,065,462	49,485	
Female estimated population (,000), 2003	71,498	549,064	24,943	
Male estimated population (,000), 2003	75,238	516,398	24,542	
Sex ratio (males per 100 females), 2003	105	106	98	
Average annual rate of change of pop. (%), 2000-2005	2.02	1.51	1.28	
Youth and Elderly Population				b
Total population under age 15 (%), 2003	38	33	32	
Female population aged 60+ (%), 2003	5	8	7	
Male population aged 60+ (%), 2003	5	7	7	
Human Settlements				c
Urban population (%), 2001	26	28	28	
Rural population (%), 2001	74	72	72	
Urban average annual rate of change in pop. (%), '00-'05	4.33	2.29	2.9	
Rural average annual rate of change in pop/ (%), '00-'05	1.28	1.22	0.45	
Education				d
Total school life expectancy, 2000/2001	8.4	..	7.4	1
Female school life expectancy, 2000/2001	8.4	..	7.4	1
Male school life expectancy, 2000/2001	8.4	..	7.3	1
Female estimated adult (15+) illiteracy rate (%), 2000	69.8	54.6	19.5	2
Male estimated adult (15+) illiteracy rate (%), 2000	50.6	31.6	11.1	2
Employment				e
Unemployment rate (15+) (%), 2000	3.3[i]	..	..	1
Female adult (+15) economic activity rate (%), 1999/2000	56	34[ii]	..	2
Male adult (+15) economic activity rate (%),1999/2000	87	80[ii]	..	2

Notes: [i] Month of June; [ii] 1991, Excluding Jammu and Kashmir (the final status of which has not yet been determined)

1.2 Economy	Bangladesh	India	Myanmar	2
GDP				a
GDP total (millions US$), 2002	47,328	515,012	..	
GDP per capita (US$), 2002	349	491	..	

[1] United Nations Statistics Division:
[a] Statistics Division and Population Division of the UN Secretariat; [b] Statistics Division and Population Division of the UN Secretariat; [c] Population Division of the UN Secretariat; [d1] UNESCO ; [d2] UNESCO; [e1] ILO; [e2] ILO/OECD
[2] World Bank - Data and Statistics:
[a] Quick Reference Tables; [b] Data Profile Tables ; [c] Country at a Glance

PPP GDP total (millions int. US$), 2002	235,613	2,694,989	..	
PPP GDP per capita(int. US$), 2002	1,736	2,571	..	
Sectors				b
Value added in agriculture (% of GDP), 2003	21.8	22.2	59.9[i]	
Value added in industry (% of GDP), 2003	26.3	26.6	9.0[i]	
Value added in services (% of GDP), 2003	52.0	51.2	31.1[i]	
Miscellaneous				c
GDP implicit price deflator (annual % growth), 2003	5.5	4.9	..	
Private consumption (% of GDP), 2003	77.7	64.5	..	
Government consumption (% of GDP), 2003	5.4	12.7	..	

Notes: [i] 1999

1.3 Public Spending	Bangladesh	India	Myanmar	
Public expenditures				c
Education (% of GNP), 1985-1987	1.4[i]	3.2	1.9[i]	a
Education (% of GNP), 1995-1997	2.2[i]	3.2	1.2[ii]	a
Health (% of GDP), 1990	0.7	0.9	1	
Health (% of GDP), 1998	1.7	..	0.2	
Military (% of GDP), 1990	1	2.7	3.4	b
Military (% of GDP), 2000	1.3	2.4	1.7	b
Total debt service (% of GDP), 1990	2.5	2.6	..	
Total debt service (% of GDP), 2000	1.7	2.2	..	

Notes: [i] Data refer to the ministry of education only; [ii] Data refer to the ministry of education only and to a year or period other than that specified

1.4 Public Sector Employment and Wages						
Data from the latest year available		Bangladesh 1991-1995	Bangladesh 1996-2000	.. average[d] 1996-2000	.. average[4] 1996-2000	Low income group average[4] 1996-2000
Employment						
Civilian Central Government[e]	(,000)	446.0	463.0			
	(% pop.)	0.39	0.38	..	..	0.46
Sub-national Government[5]	(,000)	..	..			
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	..	0.46
Education employees	(,000)	211.0	360.0			
	(% pop.)	0.18	0.29	..	..	0.91
Health employees	(,000)	102.3	..			
	(% pop.)	0.09	..	..	..	0.62

[c] UNDP - Human Development Report 2002
[a] Data refer to total public expenditure on education, including current and capital expenditures.
[b] As a result of a number of limitations in the data, comparisons of military expenditure data over time and across countries should be made with caution. For detailed notes on the data see SIPRI (2001).
[d] Averages for regions and sub regions are only generated if data is available for at least 35% of the countries in that region or sub region.
[e] Excluding education, health and police – if available (view Country Sources for further explanations).

Police	(,000)	..	5.0			
	(% pop.)	..	0.00	..	..	0.30
Armed forces	(,000)	116.0	121.0			
	(% pop.)	0.10	0.10	..	..	0.33
SOE Employees	(,000)	..	261.0			
	(% pop.)	..	0.21	..	..	13.1
Total Public Employment	(,000)	..	..			
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	..	..
Wages						
Total Central gov't wage bill	(% of GDP)	3.7	2.4	..	..	5.4
Total Central gov't wage bill	(% of exp)	..	..	..	..	24.7
Average gov't wage	(LCU)	33,180	52,258			
Real ave. gov't wage ('97 price)	(LCU)	42,763	52,258			
Average gov't wage to per capita GDP ratio		3.2	3.6	..	..	4.4

Source: World Bank - Public Sector Employment and Wages

2. Legal Structure

2.1 Legislative Branch

Unicameral National Parliament or Jatiya Sangsad; 300 seats elected by popular vote from single territorial constituencies (the constitutional amendment reserving 30 seats for women over and above the 300 regular parliament seats expired in May 2001); members serve five-year terms.[f]

women in parliament: 6 out of 300 seats: (2%).[g]

The Parliament of Bangladesh (known as the House of the Nation) is vested with the legislative powers of the Republic.

Source: The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (1996)

Parliament is the apex institution in Bangladesh's accountability system. It is Parliament that empowers the government and gives it its legitimacy. It is through Parliament that the enfranchised citizens determine who is to rule. However, Parliament is also the place where the Prime Minister and the Cabinet ministers are supposedly subject to constant oversight and the actions of the Executive are scrutinized in committee.

In practice, under the present Constitution, strong ties of party loyalty make it unlikely that Parliament will become an effective instrument for holding the Executive to account. This is because the party with the majority controls both the executive and the legislative branches.

Fact box:
elections: Last held 1 October 2001 (next to be held before October 2006)
election results: Percent of vote by party - BNP and alliance partners 46%, AL 42%; seats by party - BNP 191, AL 62, JI 18, JP (Ershad faction) 14, IOJ 2, JP (Naziur) 4, other 9; - the election of October 2001 brought a majority BNP government aligned with three other smaller parties - Jamaat-i-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote, and Jatiya Party (Naziur)

Various issues retard efforts by Parliament to act independently of government. These issues include: 1) the provision in Article 70 of the Constitution barring MPs from voting against their party, 2) the first-past-the-post electoral system[h] which permitted BNP in 1991 to form essentially a single party government with 31 percent of the popular vote, and 3) weak local government which contributes to the concentration of power in the hands of the leaders of the majority party.

Source: World Bank - Reforming Governance in Bangladesh, Chapter 3 (2002)

2.2 Executive Branch

cabinet: Cabinet selected by the prime minister and appointed by the president

elections: President elected by National Parliament for a five-year term; election scheduled for 16 September 2002 was not held since Iajuddin AHMED was the only presidential candidate; he was sworn in on 6 September 2002 (next election to be held by 2007); following legislative elections, the leader of the party that wins the most seats is usually appointed prime minister by the president

The Bangladesh Constitution provides for a Parliamentary form of government with a Prime Minister as Chief Executive and a President as the Head of State with very circumscribed powers.

Source: World Bank - Reforming Governance in Bangladesh (2002)

[f] Source of fact boxes if nothing else stated: CIA - The World Factbook
[g] Inter-Parliamentary Union - Women in National Parliaments
[h] Under this system only one round of voting takes place and the candidate with most votes wins regardless of whether he has an absolute majority of the votes.

The president's duties are normally ceremonial, but with the 13th amendment to the constitution ("Caretaker Government Amendment"), the president's role becomes significant at times when Parliament is dissolved and a caretaker government is installed - at presidential direction - to supervise the elections.

Source: The World Factbook - Bangladesh

Fact box:
chief of state: President Iajuddin AHMED (since 6 September 2002)
head of government: Prime Minister Khaleda ZIA (since 10 October 2001)

The President is elected by Parliament and the Prime Minister is a Member of Parliament who can command a majority in Parliament. The Prime Minister appoints and heads a Cabinet of Ministers which is collectively responsible to Parliament.

The Executive is organized on the basis of Ministries and, within Ministries, by Divisions. The system is two tiered: the Secretariat is responsible for policy, and oversight and coordination of government departments, agencies, district administration (divisions, districts and thanas). A politically appointed Minister heads each Ministry, while a permanent civil servant (usually a Secretary) is the Ministry's administrative head and Chief Accounting Officer. There are currently 36 Ministries and 49 Divisions with close to one million public employees with a total wage bill of approximately 4.2 percent of GDP and 46 percent of total revenue expenditure.

Implementation of government programs rests primarily with the Departments and Directorates. Currently there are 178 departments, which differ greatly in size, status and character, depending on their responsibilities.

Source: World Bank - Reforming Governance in Bangladesh (2002)

2.3 Judiciary Branch

Supreme Court (the chief justices and other judges are appointed by the president).

The Constitution provides for the separation of powers with an independent judiciary, though up to now the administration of the lower judiciary has been in the hands of the Ministry of Law.

Source: World Bank - Reforming Governance in Bangladesh (2002)

The Bangladesh judicial system comprises four judicial institutions: the Supreme Court, the Subordinate Courts, the Magistracy, and the Administrative Tribunals (mainly dealing with civil service matters).

The Supreme Court of Bangladesh, which consists of the 38 judges of the Appellate and High Court Divisions, is both the court of last resort and the administrative supervisor of the entire judicial system (except the Magistracy).[i] Every District has one court with a District and Sessions Judge, and one or more courts with Additional District and Sessions Judges. On the lowest rung of the system are the numerous Subordinate and Assistant Judges, whose courts also have special jurisdiction both as commercial courts and as *Artha Rin Adalat* (Financial loan courts) which have special procedures for dealing with suits filed by banks and other financial institutions to recover outstanding debts.

0Some of the major problems with the judiciary include the lack of any strict separation between the Judiciary and the Executive, and the doubtful neutrality of judicial appointments. There are also concerns about the degree of control exercised

[i] In contrast to the rest of the judiciary the Supreme Court remains generally well-regarded as the last bastion of professionalism and honesty, reflected in the tendency to entrust Supreme Court judges with the Presidency at times of constitutional crisis.

by the Ministry of Law and Justice.[j] The promotion and transfer of lower court judges is overseen by the ministry, rather than the high court judges. The Ministry of Law and justice prepares the budget for the entire judiciary, and also has the power to oversee the activities of subordinate courts and judicial officials and their training, as well as to take disciplinary action against court personnel at the lower levels.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996)

However, The Supreme Court has shown a willingness to take the initiative in holding public authorities accountable for actions, which they judge to contravene the law or provisions in the Constitution. Opposition politicians arrested under the Special Powers Act have been quickly released by the Court with damages ordered to be paid by government. The Prime Minister was also cautioned by the Supreme Court for criticizing a court decision to release Opposition party workers on bail. The Court has ruled that the government's appointment of magistrates was ultra vires, has held hearings on its own initiative on the legality of hartals, and has intervened to deal with unfair election practices. In 1999, the Court issued an injunction to stop the Government bulldozing squatter settlements in Dhaka. The Court has very recently (2001) declared the independence of the lower judiciary, thereby asserting the higher Court's advice as taking precedence over that of the Executive on the appointment of judges.

Source: World Bank - Reforming Governance in Bangladesh, Chapter 3 (2002)

2.4 Local Government

The district administration is thinly spread across a large population as follows:

District Administration

Level	Number	Average population	Average area (in sq. km)
Division	5	26 million	29,514
District	64	2.03 million	2,306
Thana	489	266,000	302

Under the close supervision of the district administration, there is a local government system composed of elected union *parishads* and municipal *pourashavas*, and appointed *thana* and district committees. Plans are under way for establishing elected Thana (*Upazila*) and District (*Zila*) Councils. The local authorities have little capacity or authority to collect revenues and depend heavily on central government transfers. The local authority staff are hired by the central government.

The lowest level of government is the union *parishad* of which there are some 4,500. These cover a population in the region of 25,000-30,000 each. The union *parishads* have no staff (other than a guard) and few responsibilities.

Source: World Bank - Reforming Governance in Bangladesh (2002)

The constitution of the country provides for the creation of the local government bodies at every administrative level, but presently it exists only at the Union (*Union Parishad* - UP) level only (Government of Bangladesh, 1998).

In recent years, three different Commissions/ Committees were constituted in 1993, 1997 and 1999 to reform/ reorganize and strengthen the role, structure and functions of local government in Bangladesh - for details, please see source: Annex (B). However, the recommendations of the Local Government Committee 1993 were not implemented. Some of the more progressive recommendations of Local

[j] While the Chief Justice and other judges are appointed by the President under Article 95 of the Constitution, the practice requires that the Chief Justice be consulted.

Government Commission, 1997, and that of Local Government Finance Committee, 1999 did not receive a place in the subsequent Local Government Acts providing for a four tier system.

Local government in Bangladesh remained relatively weak and dependent upon central government through various means of political and administrative control. Several of the major local government reform efforts addressed secondary issues, i.e. number and level of tiers, relationship between tiers, composition, distribution/ share of functions among the tiers and central government etc, at the expense of the substantive/ core issues like devolution of authority for enabling local government to operate in an autonomous manner. For example, personnel management including mechanisms of effective accountability of deputed government officials and other personnel whose recruitment are finally approved by the national government functionaries; the other issues such as, resource generation, management and utilization remained out of the purview of the reform agenda.

Source: Centre for Policy Dialogue - Policy Brief on "Administrative Reform and Local Government" (2001)

The public administration of Bangladesh is still highly centralized with a hierarchical substructure. The administrative efficiency is questionable, and the overall seize of the administration incommensurate with the economic status of the country and the level of realized state revenue.

Source: European Commission - Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006

3. The State and Civil Society

3.1 Ombudsperson

Article 77 of the Constitution adopted in 1972 provides: (1) Parliament may, by law, provide for the establishment of the office of Ombudsman; (2) The Ombudsman shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as Parliament may, by law, determine, including the power to investigate any action taken by a Ministry, a public officer or a statutory public authority; and (3) The Ombudsman shall prepare an annual report concerning the discharge of his functions, and such report shall be laid before Parliament.

In pursuance of Article 77 Parliament enacted the Ombudsman Act, 1980, (Act XV of 1980). The Ombudsman Act, 1980, empowers the Ombudsman to investigate only such action of a Ministry, a public officer or a statutory public authority as (1) has caused injustice to any person or (2) has resulted in undue favour being shown to any person or (3) has resulted in accrual of undue personal benefit or gain to any person.

In the Ombudsman Act, 1980 only “actions” of “public officers” as defined in section 2 of the Act can be investigated by the Ombudsman. The Act also does not seem to include certain important public functionaries such as, ministers, members of parliament, etc. within the ambit of “public officers”. The main deficiency in the Act appears to be that only “action” can be investigated. “Acts of corruption”, “illegal acquisition of property” etc., by public functionaries are outside the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

The Act was passed by a Presidential form of Government. Subsequently, the Presidential form of Government was replaced by a Westminster type of Parliamentary form of Government. As such, it appears to us [Law Commission – Bangladesh] that the effectiveness of the Act should be judged in the present context.

It is observed that one of the main maladies of public administration - corruption in public life- has been kept out of scrutiny by the Ombudsman in the Act.

Source: The Law Commission - Report (#31) to Government (2000) (edited)

BNP government (elected in 2001) established the office of Ombudsman by Government Gazette on 6 January 2002.

Source: University of Rajshahi - Ombudsman for Bangladesh: Theory and Reality

3.2 NGOs

NGOs in Bangladesh have distinguished themselves by their innovation and skill in managing micro-projects. Some of them have gained international recognition, for example the Grameen Bank and BRAC.

Over the past decade, the Government of Bangladesh has become increasingly supportive of NGOs; accepting them as partners in achieving national goals, however, not adopting a broader collaborative strategy. There are several militating factors:

(1) The Government's NGO Affairs Bureau, established in 1990 regulates NGOs, particularly those which are externally funded. This provides the Bureau absolute authority to approve programs, projects and disbursements of foreign funded NGOs.

Consequently, the partnership between the Government and NGO remains an uneasy one.

(2) The Government is concerned about the accountability of certain NGOs, but it also has broader concerns about the risks of creating parallel services and turning previously integrated systems into an inefficient patchwork. It is currently trying to tighten NGOs' financial accountability by requiring all NGOs to have their books externally audited and presenting their annual accounts to the Government.

(3) There is also a risk that, over time, NGOs will turn into businesses or bureaucracies, losing their grassroots character and their original social orientation. However, if NGOs do not perform well, government's financial support for their operations can be quickly withdrawn.

(4) At present, the Government works through only a few NGOs; many remain wary of too direct an involvement with government programs due to the accompanying bureaucratic constraints, and

(5) Many NGOs are funded from abroad. This encourages efficiency since they are must compete for funds. However, it also means that NGOs may be driven by foreign donors' agendas.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996)

3.3 Civil Society

In Bangladesh, civil society includes indigenous community groups, mass organizations, cooperatives, religious societies, trade unions, and professional bodies.

Areas of involvement of the civil society in the context of Bangladesh are policy advocacy, mobilization of public opinion, demand creation, active participation in policy formulation process, bridging the gap between citizens and government, pressurizing the government with the help of the media, supporting the popular movement in favour of a given policy issue, lobbying with the donor groups/development partners, playing the role of mediator/ arbitrator between citizens and government, and policy analysis, etc.

Civil society is only emerging in Bangladesh. In recent years, civil society has made some limited but positive contributions towards ensuring executive and administrative accountability. However, it has been observed that some groups of the civil society movement are politicized and divided on political lines. Though there has been a steady and random growth of the civil society organizations, there is virtually no active network of them to look after collective interests of the people.

Source: Centre for Policy Dialogue - Policy Brief on "Administrative Reform and Local Government" (2001)

4. Civil Service

In 1997 the government constituted the Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) with the mandate to recommend policies, programs and activities to improve the level of efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency in public organizations. The Commission made three types of recommendations, interim, short term and long term for administrative reforms in different (Government of Bangladesh, 2000). The Government has implemented some of the interim recommendations of the commission. The cabinet accepted in principle the other recommendations of the commission.

Source: Centre for Policy Dialogue - Policy Brief on "Administrative Reform and Local Government" (2001) (edited)

Click here for "The experience and perceptions of public officials" (1999) World Bank.

4.1 Legal Basis

Source: Institution - Title

Structure and size

Though a unified salary grade system was officially introduced in July 1977, all government employees are, for statistical purposes, grouped into four classes. Class I employees are officers; Class II employees are mainly the supervisory staff, while Class III and IV employees are clerical and sub-clerical staff. Class I civil servants are usually recruited through open competitive examinations.

Due to a lack of effective control and monitoring of recruitment, it is difficult to say precisely how many civil servants there are. Nevertheless, available evidence from the official payroll under the recurrent budget, and the Ministry of Establishment's Personnel Management Information System, (which includes the Class 1 officers in autonomous bodies), shows that Bangladesh has around one million civil servants.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996)

4.2 Recruitment

Bangladesh largely follows a "closed entry" system where Class 1 level officers are recruited at entry level, through open competitive exams into 29 cadres, comprising functional and professional streams. At the mid- and upper-management levels, and in case of specialized positions, 10% of the positions can be filled through contractual appointments or on deputation from other public sector organizations; however this injection of "fresh" human capital is used sparingly, thereby reducing competitive pressures within the system.

In addition to the above recruitment rigidities, the current system is centralized and very time consuming. Before a department can make any new appointment, it must draft detailed recruitment rules. These must then be vetted by a series of Ministries - the Ministry of Establishment, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Law and Justice. Finally, the Public Service Commission must express an 'opinion', though in fact this is binding. Therefore, even an ordinary recruitment process can take a long time. The centralized system is also frequently overloaded, somewhat insensitive to

the particular requirements of the individual job, and is often quite arbitrary. This becomes particularly noticeable for any appointment requiring unusual skills.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996)

4.3 Promotion

In Bangladesh, as in most other developing countries, the Civil Service rules require that promotions be on the basis of both merit and seniority.[k] However, it tends to attach a greater weight to seniority. Some reforming countries are trying to link salaries and promotions to performance, but they face stiff socio-cultural resistance. And the more tradition-bound countries like Korea, Japan, and Thailand, have largely stuck to seniority. Bangladesh does, in a formal sense, have an 'efficiency bar' which civil servants must cross to ascend the salary ladder, but this is treated more as a matter of routine. In Singapore, for example, the efficiency bar can only be crossed after passing a strict examination.

The sole authority dealing with promotions of civil servants, used to be the Senior Services Selection Board (SSSB), headed by the Cabinet Secretary. However, in 1987 the ruling Government introduced the Cabinet Sub-committee on Promotions.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996) (edited)

4.4 Remuneration

Over the last decade, the cost of salaries and allowances for civil servants has increased more than three times in nominal terms, and as percentage of GDP it has increased from about 3% to 4.2%. The growth of wage bill resulted from both unwarranted increase in staff as well as salary revisions; the latter however were not an outcome of a systematic salary compensation policy, but the result of ad hoc revisions.

Many of the problems of Bangladesh's bureaucracy can be linked with poor pay - the result of a persistent erosion and compression of salaries. From time to time, the Government has adjusted compensation - by setting up National Pay Service Commissions at four to eight year intervals. In 1985, for instance, a Pay Commission doubled the basic pay, and in 1991 it increased it by about 1.7 times, and there have also been a number of increases in 'dearness' allowances. However, it is clear that government salaries, at management and policy levels, have fallen far out of line with those in the private sector. The Pay Commission Reports are not officially published, so the basis of their adjustments and revisions is unknown. Most pay revisions have tended to be biased towards lower level staff rather than officers and this has contributed to the problem of salary compression.

The salary compensation structure does not allow for differences in professional skills, educational level, or the nature of the job. Hence, doctors, engineers, or revenue officers entering Class I positions will all receive the same salary.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996) (edited)

The reward structure of the internal labor market is made up of twenty salary grades. Of these, the top nine are assigned for the higher civil service, ranging from a basic salary of Tk[l] 2,850 to Tk. 10,000 per month. This basic salary is supplemented by other benefits and allowances like housing, medical, travel, telephone, car and even servants and guards for secretaries. Those in Grade I

[k] A detailed description of the Government of Bangladesh promotion policies and delegation of this function for levels of officials is in the Report by the Four Secretaries: Towards Better Government in Bangladesh, September 1993.

[l] Tk short for Taka, the currency of Bangladesh. When the paper was produced (1996), one Taka roughly equaled to US$0.02.

receive a fixed salary with no increments, while those in each of the other grades are entitled to a series of unequal increments. New entrants in Grade IX are required to surmount a so-called 'efficiency bar' after seven increments before being entitled to further increases. No such bars affect salary advancements in the other seven grades (NPC, 1991). In reality, however, the 'efficiency bar' is no barrier at all, for most officers are able to get a very liberal assessment of their performance by their supervisors (GOB, 1993: 18).

Source: Comparative Civil Service Research Consortium - Civil Service Systems (1996)

4.5 Training

Bangladesh has a fairly elaborate civil servant training system. This includes the Public Administration Training Centre[m] (BPATC), the Regional Civil Service Training Centers, and the specialized training institutes managed by ministries and departments. The report Towards Better Government deals at some length with the deficiencies of the current system. This report just highlights three important areas for reform:

- The content of training is very traditional. It emphasizes didactic learning in contrast to human resource development (HRD). Course content includes excessive emphasis on subjects like culture, history, law and learning about rules.
- Postings to training institutes are generally treated as a dumping ground, and perceived as a punishment posting.
- Deployment and career prospects are determined by normal seniority and cadre rules: an officer who has completed a training program, for example, will have to wait for promotion until his or her senior with an undistinguished record gets promoted; and more often than not he or she will be assigned to jobs remotely connected with the training received in overseas universities.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996) (edited)

4.6 Gender

In 1992, out of total public sector employment, 78,057 or only 8.2 percent were women. This is despite the reservation of quotas (10 percent for Class I and II posts, and 15 percent for Class III and IV posts). In the period 1986 to 1991, the proportion of women taking the BCS examination increased however there was no corresponding change in the proportion of women selected.

Women are not only under-represented in the Civil Service; they also tend to be concentrated in the bottom of the hierarchy. Over 90 percent are in Class III and IV. This means that the vast majority of women in the Civil Service are low-paid, clerical staff, having no say in either making or implementing policy. This phenomenon is in large part explained by the relatively late induction of women at the professional levels in the civil service.

Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996) (edited)

Only recently has gender specific policies been recognized as an issue in the context of policy reforms in both administrative and local government arenas. With respect to administrative reform gender issues have been neglected. The recommendations of various commissions/committees do not reflect serious concern for mainstreaming

[m] Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) emerged as an autonomous organization in 1984 under the Presidential Ordinance (Ordinance No. XXV of 1984) by amalgamating: the Bangladesh Administrative Staff College (BASC), the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Civil Officers' Training Academy (COTA), and Staff Training Institute (STI)

women in the administrative process. Nevertheless, there have been some minor efforts towards these ends through government policies and affirmative actions. On the other hand, in the context of local government, women's concerns had surfaced intermittently and were highlighted in the government reform agenda as evident in the last Local Government Reform of 1997. However there are lacunas in gender balancing both in terms of governance policy and reform agenda.

Source: Centre for Policy Dialogue - Policy Brief on "Administrative Reform and Local Government" (2001)

5. Ethics and Civil Service

5.1 Corruption

2003 CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people and country analysts and ranges between 10 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt).

Corruption Perceptions Index							
		2003 CPI Score	Surveys Used	Standard Deviation	High-Low Range	Number Inst.	90 percent confidence range
Rank	Country						
1	Highly clean	9.7	8	0.3	9.2 - 10.0	4	9.5 - 9.9
133	Bangladesh	1.3	8	0.7	0.3 - 2.2	6	0.9 - 1.7

Source: Transparency International - Corruption Perceptions Index 2003

Surveys Used: Refers to the number of surveys that were used to assess a country's performance. 17 surveys were used and at least 3 surveys were required for a country to be included in the CPI.
Standard Deviation: Indicates differences in the values of the sources. Values below 0.5 indicate agreement, values between 0.5 and c. 0.9 indicate some agreement, while values equal or larger than 1 indicate disagreement.
High-Low Range: Provides the highest and lowest values of the sources.
Number Institutions: Refers to the number of independent institutions that assessed a country's performance. Since some institutions provided more than one survey.
90 percent confidence range: Provides a range of possible values of the CPI score. With 5 percent probability the score is above this range and with another 5 percent it is below.

Corruption has been and continues to be an unfortunate integral part of administrative culture in Bangladesh. But in recent times, it has taken an all pervasive form. A recent donor sponsored study reflecting on the harmful effect of bribery, corruption, kickbacks and under the table payments for various administrative decisions and actions noted that the per capita income in corruption free Bangladesh could have nearly doubled to US$700 (currently it is estimated to be US$350) (Transparency International, Bangladesh, 2000). Government officials especially, involved in development projects, service delivery, enforcement and regulatory agencies at all levels are reported to be colluding with private bidders and contractors and service seekers and consequently amassing vast illegal incomes in the bargain.

The reasons for such corruption can be summed up: Firstly, because of institutional weaknesses, civil servants involved in corrupt practices, in most of the cases, are not taken to task and they indulge in corruption with impunity. Moreover, even if found guilty, they have never been adequately punished nor compelled to return to the state their wealth. Secondly, for quick service delivery, citizens in general, now do not mind to pay bribes and kickbacks. Thirdly, there is now social acceptance of corruption. Fourthly, barring occasional public procurements, the representatives of the people, i.e. politicians especially those who are in power, are not very enthusiastic to take effective measures to curb corrupt practices in public dealings. Rather in many cases, it is alleged that they have become party to various dubious deals.

Source: Centre for Policy Dialogue - Policy Brief on "Administrative Reform and Local Government" (2001)

We [The people of Bangladesh] have the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958 and the Anti-Corruption Act, 1957, in our

Statute Book. These enactments, however, have signally failed to check corrupt practice by public functionaries.

In the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958, provision has been made for confiscation of the whole or any part of the property of an accused in the event of his conviction. (see section 9 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958). Cases of conviction under this Act read with the other two Acts already mentioned above are rare and cases of confiscation of property by applying this Act are even rarer.

A top public servant is hardly ever prosecuted under the above Acts and even in the rare event of being prosecuted, the prosecution hardly ever reaches conclusion because of innumerable procedural obstacles intentionally created by the accused. Such litigations are dragged on endlessly often defeating the object of criminal prosecution and the end results of the prosecutions of powerful public servants are that they come out scot-free becoming more powerful and more desperate.

There is corruption in execution of projects, in awarding contracts, in making purchases, in issuing licenses and permits, in making appointments, in election to various bodies and so on and so forth.

Source: The Law Commission - Report (#31) to Government (2000)

5.2 Ethics

The existing Civil Service Conduct Rules (CSCRs) contain provisions for initiating disciplinary action against officials for errant behavior, and non-performance. However, the 'due process' is cumbersome and the scope for recriminations so real that senior officials generally prefer to take the soft option of a convenient transfer.

The core public service values in the past would have been considered to be neutrality, integrity, fairness and equity, and an ethos of serving the 'public interest'. These values remain important, but citizens are increasingly demanding that they be supplemented by quality, responsiveness, transparency, and accountability.

The emerging social context that civil servants have to work may generate internal tension: the paternalistic regime (symbolized by “maa-bap”) has been replaced by a new context where the civil servants have to interact simultaneously with democratically chosen political leaders, professionals from both inside and outside the country, and a more informed and critical citizenry.

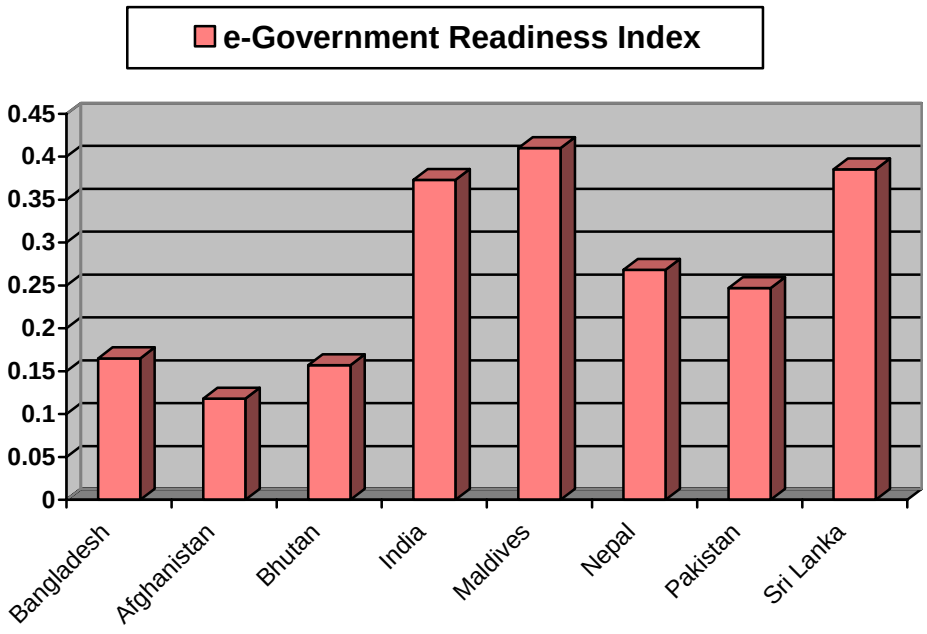
Source: World Bank - Government that Works: Reforming the Public Sector (1996) (edited)

6. e-Government

e-Government Readiness Index:

The index refers to the generic capacity or aptitude of the public sector to use ICT for encapsulating in public services and deploying to the public, high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools that support human development.

The index is comprised of three sub-indexes: Web Measure Index, Telecommunications Infrastructure Index and Human Capital Index.

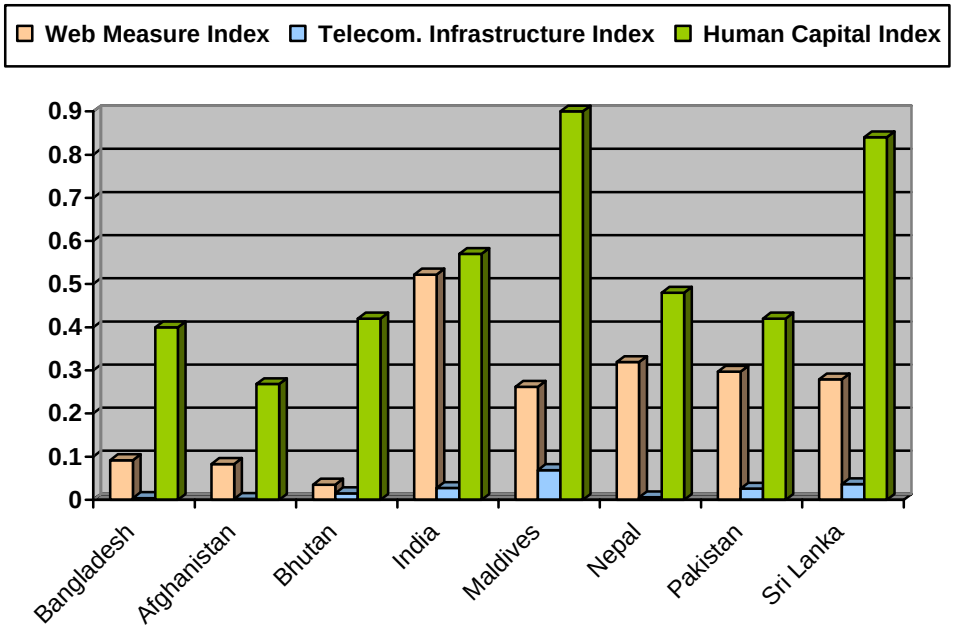


Source: United Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003

Web Measure Index:
A scale based on progressively sophisticated web services present. Coverage and sophistication of state-provided e-service and e-product availability correspond to a numerical classification.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Index:
A composite, weighted average index of six primary indices, based on basic infrastructural indicators that define a country's ICT infra-structure capacity.

Primary indicators are: PC's, Internet users, online population and Mobile phones. Secondary indicators are TVs and telephone lines.

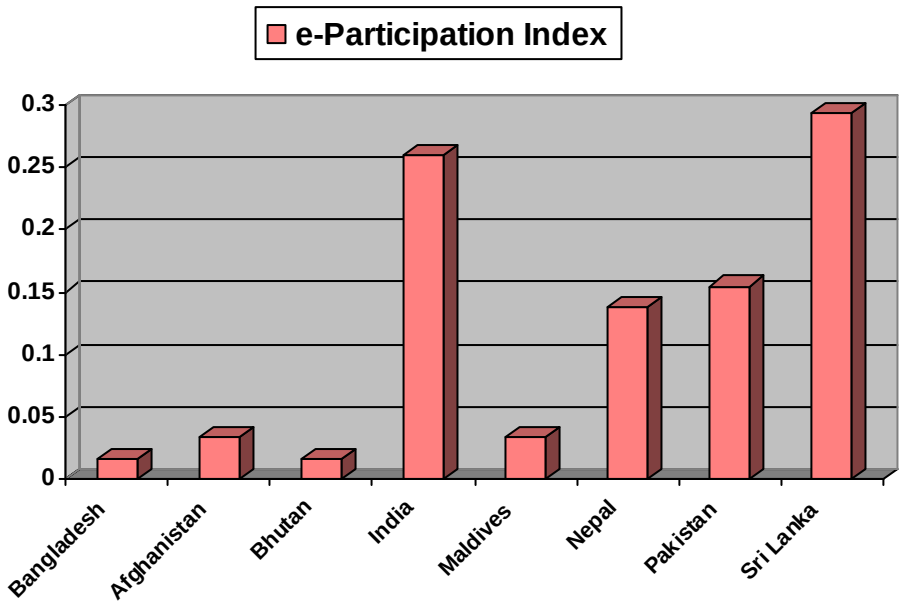


Source: United Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003

Human Capital Index:
A composite of the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio, with two thirds of the weight given to adult literacy and one third to the gross enrolment ratio.

e-Participation Index:

Refers to the willingness, on the part of the government, to use ICT to provide high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools for the specific purpose of empowerring people for able participation in consultations and decision-making both in their capacity as consumers of public services and as citizens.



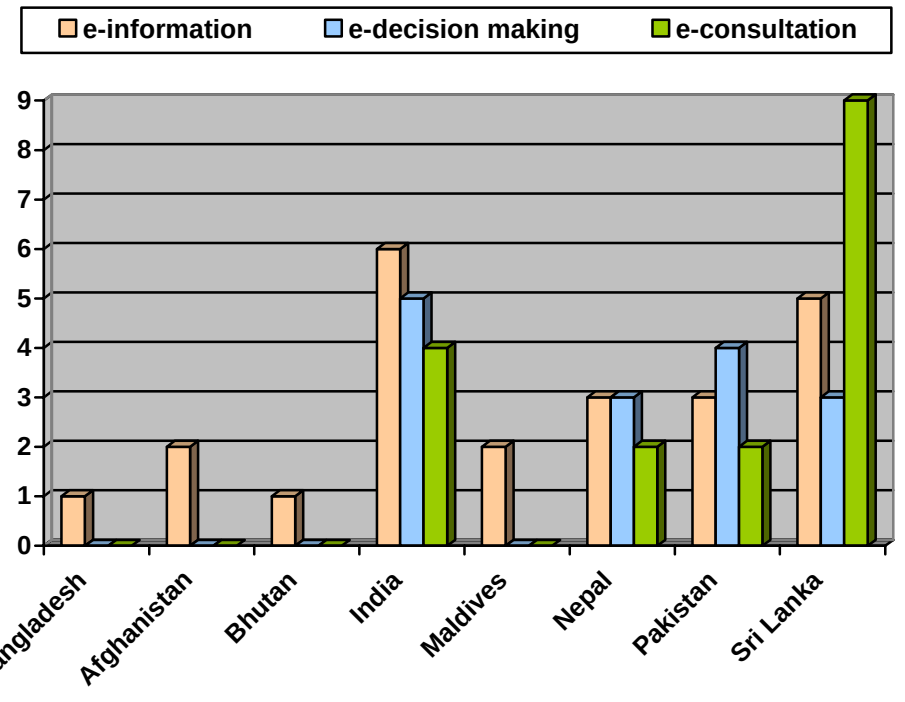
Source: United Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003

e-information:

The government websites offer information on policies and programs, budgets, laws and regulations, and other briefs of key public interest. Tools for disseminating of information exist for timely access and use of public information, including web forums, e-mail lists, newsgroups and chat rooms.

e-decision making:

The government indicates that it will take citizens input into account in decision making and provides actual feedback on the outcome of specific issues.



Source: United Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003 d

e-consultation:

The government website explains e-consultation mechanisms and tools. It offers a choice of public policy topics online for discussion with real time and archived access to audios and videos of public meetings. The government encourages citizens to participate in discussions.

7. Links

7.1 National sites

Authority	Topic
President	http://www.pmo.gov.bd/president.htm
Prime Minister's Office	http://www.pmo.gov.bd
Cabinet	http://www.pmo.gov.bd/gov.htm
Ministries	http://www.bangladesh.gov.bd/
Public Service Commission	http://www.bangladeshgov.org/bpscs/

7.2 Miscellaneous sites

Institution	Topic
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	http://www.adb.org/Bangladesh/default.asp
European Union (EU)	http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/bangladesh/sp/index.htm
International Labour Organization (ILO)	http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home
Transparency International - Bangladesh	http://www.ti-bangladesh.org
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	http://www.un-bd.org/undp/
World Bank (WB)	http://www.worldbank.org/bd