Government Service Transformation Program
9 January 2017

I. Origin

In 1996, intending to improve the quality of government services, the Executive Yuan (EY) initiated the "Program of Improving Overall Quality of Government Service," incorporating concepts of "total quality management" and "customer orientation." It was part of the "New Public Management" initiative under which all agencies set up standard service models and quality benchmarks. Later in 2007, the EY followed up with the "Innovative Advanced Program of Government Services," which brought in western standards of good governance, such as accountability and efficiency, urging all government agencies to employ a variety of innovative strategies to provide services to the public. Years of implementing these strategies have yielded substantial results. A friendlier image of the government, for example, has resulted and transparency and efficiency in government have increased. Also, information and communications technology (ICT) has been introduced to improve the performance and quality of government services.

In recent years, with mature ICT environment and increased participation of civil society in public affairs, citizens have begun to demand high-quality public services to meet their changing circumstances and needs. Besides, as the global environment continues to evolve, governments face challenges caused by the changing socio-economic structures and deeper complexities of public issues. Further improvement of government services has now become imperative.

Experiencing the changing environment, most countries emphasize the principles of fairness, participation, and openness when providing public services, and these values are in line with Taiwan's governing concepts. Serving as a master plan for all agencies to enhance effectiveness in delivering their services, on top of existing values such as efficiency, quality ,and innovation, this program adopts the core concepts of the "New Public Service," namely "fairness and sharing," "participation and cooperation," and "openness and transparency." This program also should motivate all agencies to continue reviewing its policies over time in the hope of enhancing the overall effectiveness of public service delivery.

II. Objectives

1. Demonstrate that government services can be delivered promptly, efficiently, and fairly, to meet varying needs of different client groups.

   Expand social participation, value clients' feedback, and provide quality services to satisfy the clients.

   Promote open governance, establish a transparent environment of cooperation and mutual trust, and promote innovative and value-added services.

III. Agencies Required to Implement the Program

1. The program applies to the Executive Yuan and its subordinate agencies, as well as state-owned enterprises, public schools, special municipality, county/city governments, and their subordinate agencies, and township/city/district offices.

An agency normally falls into either service-based type or project-based type, depending on its mandates and objectives. All agencies are encouraged to develop their capacity to provide top-quality services.

IV. Implementation Measures

1. Agencies provide basic services while adjusting to the needs of individual clients
   (1) Develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for streamlining service delivery and ensure that information requested is provided, questions are answered, and service is delivered properly, and that SOP's are reviewed and improved as frequently as deemed necessary.
   Improve transparency by providing clients with information that is easy to read, understand, and accessible service requests and progress tracking.
   Monitor the staff's manners toward their clients, increase the level of convenience for them to request services in person or online, and foster a friendly work environment.
   Respond to differences in mandates and objectives, agencies should try to identify all possible ways to improve their service quality.

   Agencies attach great importance to clients' feedback and participation and make sure that the service provided meets their needs.
   (1) Involve clients in service design by inviting them to work with the agency, with a goal that the service provided meets their needs.
   Make use of all possible surveys to identify clients' needs and suggestions and modify their service accordingly.
   Conduct satisfaction surveys to collect clients' comments, and then improve their service accordingly.
   Listen and respond professionally to solve clients' problems.

   Agencies increase the level of convenience for clients' lives by improving service delivery methods.
   Expand the scope of public service served by one-stop service, and eliminate redundant paperwork to speed up case handling.
   Upgrade online applications and cross-platform services, increasing clients' willingness to use.
   Integrate services across departments and agencies and promote information- and resource-sharing.
   Pay attention to socio-economic development trends and continue to streamline service delivery procedures using innovative strategies, to increase service effectiveness.

   Agencies work to decrease the urban-rural gap, care for clients with special needs, and foster fair use of social resources.
   (1) Learn the differences among various client groups, tailoring services to those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, and lowering clients' cost of requesting services.
   Use appropriate strategies to extend their service network so people living in remote areas or in areas with poor transportation infrastructure can have proper access to services.
   Consider the digital gap among various client groups, and develop online services or provide service through other proper channels.

Agencies increase government transparency and openness and promote service innovation.

(1) Build a user-friendly, open and secure environment, where data transparency, sharing and application are facilitated.

Encourage clients to participate in decision making through both physical and virtual channels, and strengthen their policy making by communicating with their clients in effective ways.

Review periodically internal operating procedures and reduce redundant ones, and focus on promoting service innovation.

Agencies include socio-economic factors in their planning for the next-generation service.

(1) Explore critical issues and anticipate future service project strategies and act beforehand.

Modify regulations, apply information and communications technology (ICT), simplify service procedures, and keep agency and other first-line agencies resilient in carrying out service measures.

Solve service-related and public problems with multiple strategies, such as integrating resources across boundaries, using proper resources from the private sector, eliciting innovative strategies from the public sector, and partnering with local communities.

Consider the necessity and cost-effectiveness of various service measures, and strengthen their institutional service delivery.

V. Implementation and work division

Competent authorities: plan and work with subordinate agencies to implement this program

The lead authorities put forward a plan with priority actions to be taken to improve service delivery, after considering such factors as their mandates and objectives, clients' needs, service capacity and resource allocation.

Based on the approved plan, the lead authorities supervise and guide all agencies to implement the program, review and correct their performance on a regular basis if needed.

National Development Council (NDC): coordination and unified actions.

In order to integrate resources across agencies and increase overall service effectiveness, the NDC, after reviewing public concerns and future socio-economic developments, works with peer agencies to implement resources integration plans, modify regulations and design a future service model.

The NDC cooperates with all relevant agencies to improve the overall government service standard and reduce the gap of service quality among all agencies.

Government Service Award (GSA)

The GSA is introduced to motivate all government agencies to implement this program to provide quality service to the public.

In principle, the GSA is awarded to no more than 30 agencies annually. The award-winning agencies will receive a trophy from the Executive Yuan with a bonus of up to NT$80,000.

The NDC, as the lead agency, is in charge of selecting winners, and, for this purpose, establishes rules and regulations governing the selection process and designs benchmarking material.

VI. Expected Benefits

1. This program serves as a catalyst for transforming government services, which can lead to fostering equity in service opportunities, supporting the underprivileged, reducing the urban-rural development gap, and promoting fairer use of social resources.
2. This program enhance closer partnership between the government and the public, in that agencies are encouraged to involve the civil society in the whole procedure, from the public service design all the way to implementation.
3. This program is expected to increase the level of public satisfaction, and confidence in the government, as agencies transparency improve.
4. The government responds to the needs of the people more effectively when successfully tackle critical issues and plan ahead of time.