A Project Report

on

SWAGAT PLUS

prepared by

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1.0   <u>Introduction</u>

Delivering services to citizens is the core job of most government agencies. The government provides services to the citizens and therefore services are critical in shaping trust in and perceptions of the public sector. Citizens expect more transparent, accessible, and responsive services from the public sector. Citizens do have grievances of all kinds. If genuine expectations from the Government are not duly met then they become grievances. Grievance redressal is the key to Good Governance; more so in a democracy. Efficiency, transparency and speed in redressal is the key to citizen satisfaction.

An expectation from the citizen for solving the genuine complaint should ideally be met duly. It should not convert into a grievance and if it does, it should be redressed at the local level as soon as possible. If it is not solved at the local level then through a mechanism it should be solved or addressed at the highest level. The accountability at each level must be fixed so that the lower levels can be sensitized for a faster resolution next time.

2.0 Overview of the SWAGAT project implementation in Gujarat

The Chief Minister's Office in Gujarat operates an ICT (Information and Communication Technology) program for the effective, transparent, and speedy redressal of the citizens' grievances at various levels of the Government throughout the State. It includes cases that need direct interaction with the Chief Minister.

"People's voice is the key driver of a democracy, and listening to that voice is the key test of Good Governance." - with this belief, the Gujarat state devised a practical, transparent, and accountable grievance redressal program for citizens of Gujarat through an online public portal and video-conferencing connecting the Chief Minister and all District and Sub-District Level Officers.

On April 24th, 2003, Gujarat became the first state in India to launch a combination of digital and communication technology in a program named SWAGAT- State Wide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology. SWAGAT in the local language means 'Welcome.' Thus, SWAGAT welcomes citizens to seek satisfactorily redressal of their grievance through an online public portal and video-conferencing.

The Honorable Chief Minister of Gujarat envisioned the objectives of the SWAGAT, and the officers of the Chief Minister's Office and experts of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) worked out the strategy to implement the SWAGAT Program. The overall mandate of the SWAGAT is:

- Attention on grievances to strengthen good governance.
- Analysis of the nature of grievances submitted to the Government at all levels.
- Activate administration to solve public grievances at State, District, and Sub District levels.
- Concentration on the quality of redressal of the grievances at all levels.
- Monitoring the quality of grievance redressal by the local administration.
- Solving the grievances from the top when they need such intervention.

2.1 Public Grievances Redressal Portal in other States/UTs

Similar public grievances redressal solutions like the SWAGAT project in Gujarat are working in various States/UTs. In Andaman & Nicobar Island the A & N Police is efficiently addressing the grievances and complaints of the citizens through a portal. There are various applications e.g. Police Helpdesk, HLG Helpdesk, Lost Article Report, Cyber Dost, Third Eye etc are enabled citizens to send their

complaints online to the Police Department. Unlike SWAGAT Project, there is no facility for Video Conferencing in this type of solution.

In Andhra Pradesh, Prakasam district SP has introduced Spandana Project. This project facilitates citizens of the district living outside the district, state or abroad to interact with the SP through video conferencing and register their complaints and seek redressal of grievances. A citizen visits a Spandana centre in the district and submits his/her complaint or connects with the District Superintendent of Police through video-conferencing and if the complaint is criminal, an FIR would be immediately lodged or district police will conduct an inquiry and initiate action. All complaints have to be closed within 15 days. Prakasam district has 84 Spandana centres having 3-way video conference solutions within the premises of all police stations, offices of Inspectors, Deputy SPs and the SP office.

In CISF organization, for speedy and systematic redressal of grievances of personnel, an online system called e-grievance portal has been in operation since September 2016. This online system is widely used by the personnel, has integrated the addressing of grievances at each level in the organizational structure. Grievances lodged in the e-grievance portal are monitored centrally at CISF Headquarters.

In Uttarakhand State, CM Helpline Web Portal cmhelpline.uk.gov.in is operational since February 2019. All the complaints are received, filtered and processed by a call centre. The complaints are uploaded and processed at 4 levels.

1. First Level (L-1) – SHO (Station House Officer) of Police Station
2. Second Level (L-2) – SSP/SP of the District
3. Third Level (L-3) – Range
4. Fourth Level (L-4) – Secretary

Apart from this, another portal, CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress And Monitoring System) by the Government of India, is operational since June 2020 for the quick redressal of the complaints of the citizens.

The government of Uttarakhand has launched GAURA Shakti App and Public Eye App on 9th September 2021. These mobile-based applications provide a facility to register a complaint by phone call, text message, photo, video or WhatsApp message. These complaints are received at DCC (District Coordination Centre). These complaints are processed and further sent for action to the officer in charge of the Women Help Desk at the concerned police station. The police station takes action and uploads the report on the App.

In Kerala, the Chief Minister's Grievance Redressal Cell (CMO Portal), which is a Government of Kerala web portal (www.cmo.kerala.gov.in) facilitates the citizens to register and review the status of petitions registered, which needs the special attention of the Government. The petitions from the public are received by the Chief Minister directly or through Call Centre, e-mail, Fax, etc. Monthly reports on the position of petitions received during each month and action taken on each of them are being prepared and submitted to the Chief Minister.

2.2 SWAGAT Plus project for the Police Department and CAPF

In DGsP/IGsP conference 2020, it was deliberated that SWAGAT online program may be replicated with modifications for the Police Department to solve grievances of citizens. This program can be also used as welfare measures to listen and solve grievances of police personnel in Police. In CAPF this program in a modified way can be used to a faster and more accountable way of grievance redressal in force personnel.

2.3 Vision

The top functionaries of the state police force and heads of the central armed police force cannot redress all the grievances on their own due to a large number of

complaints. Moreover, the citizens need not come to the head of the department for their routine grievances. Such grievances should be redressed at the level they belong to or they originate at. Hence, accountability at all levels of administration particularly the local levels is a must. This program aims for a faster solution to complaints with the use of information and communication technology. The use of video conferences for a meeting of complainants and officers creates a sense of urgency to solve the long-pending grievance.

2.4 Objective

- Empower ordinary citizens through an online public portal and video-conferencing connecting the Head of Police Force.
- Enable rural people to have easy and fast access to the highest level through an online public portal and video-conferencing connecting the Head of Police Force.
- Voices of police personnel having service-related grievance and welfare-related grievance can reach to Head of Police Force regularly.

3.0 Project

The proposed SWAGAT Plus project is the modified and upgraded version of the SWAGAT project focusing on the police department and CAPF.

3.1 Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to give attention to grievances to strengthen good governance and good administration. The analysis of the nature of grievances submitted to the Government and administration at all levels will be helpful for policy formation and changes. Attention to the quality of redressal at all levels is given at all levels. Police Department is activated to solve public grievances at

State, District and Police Station levels. The quality of grievance redressal is monitored by the higher office. Whenever such intervention is needed for solving the grievances from the top, this project is useful. This project has the demonstrative effect, to fix accountability at various levels.

3.2 Benefits

- Ordinary citizens can access the highest authority of the Police Force to resolve their most challenging grievances.
- Reduce the response time & cost of redressing grievances and consequently benefiting both Government and citizens.

4.0 Features

- The SWAGAT Plus Program would be able to filter anonymous complaints. It would also sieve frivolous and false complaints.
- It would send the complaints received at the higher level to the SP level or the Police Station level for their comments.

- It would verify all the complaints with identity proof of the complainant, e.g., Adhaar Card and Driving License.
- It would also directly connect with the Police Station through video conference.

- SWAGAT Plus program for CAPF can be modified to use a mobile-based application instead of a video conference-based solution.

4.1 SWAGAT Plus Project implementation difference in Police and CAPF

The proposed project can have many differences in implementation in the Police department and CAPF. The police department in States/UTs has dual use of this. They have been used for the grievance redressal of citizens as good governance and police personnel as a welfare measure. In CAPF this project has limited usage for its personnel as a welfare measure only. Already as a welfare measure, grievance redressal is handled via *Sainik Sammelan* at various officer levels. These routine congregations are held once a month and provide a forum or a platform where the jawans can air their difficulties, grievances or suggest improvements that are general and beneficial to the troops of that company or a unit. There is an 'Orderly Room' on any particular day of the week for airing the grievances of personal nature to the Commanding Officer. If a video conference-based solution is not suitable due to mobile/data coverage issues or operational issues then mobile app/web-based SWAGAT Plus may be implemented.

5.0 Implementation

SWAGAT Plus project is an ICT- (Information and Communication Technology) based project. This project requires basic infrastructure as described below to

function effectively. Various components may be changed as per the field or organization-specific requirements.

5.1 Infrastructure

The SWAGAT Plus Program will use the ICT to have an efficient, paperless, transparent, accountable, and time-bound grievance redressal system. It may also use regional language to redress the citizen's grievances.

In the states and organizations where Wide Area Network is available as an end-to-end IP-based Backbone solution there, this network will be used for video conferencing. This network should support Voice, Video, and Data on the same Bandwidth from the State capital to all Districts and Taluka centres. In-state and organizations where connectivity is limited, a mobile data-based network can be used for video conferencing.

5.2 Financial and Human Resources

Software and web-based application are required in this project. A web-based interface is required for application registration. Video conferencing software is required to connect the units. Staff familiar with computers are required to process the applications. Senior-level staff is required for regular follow-up of the complaint resolutions.

Office	Number of Staff	Work
DGP/HoPF Office	2	To download the applications, filter and

		process the applications and help in scheduling the video conference
Range Office	1	To download and process the applications
SP Office	1	To download and process the applications
Police Station	1	To download and process the applications

If the offices and police stations will be using Wide Area Network already established in the state then there will be no extra cost of using this solution. If the network is not available and a mobile phone network is used then the data cost will be borne by the user. If OEM software with a video conferencing unit is used then there will be no extra cost of video conferencing software otherwise Video Conferencing software like Zoom and Webex etc have to be purchased by the department.

For the SWAGAT project, NIC had developed the software for the Government of Gujarat. Thereafter GIL (Gujarat Informatics Limited), the nodal agency for IT development in the state took over the functioning and maintenance of the SWAGAT project. For the customized implementation of the SWAGAT Plus project, a web interface-based solution with a database has to be prepared by the department. Essentially video conferencing software and software for handling applications will be sufficient for this project.

6.0 Needs of SWAGAT Plus Template for Police Functioning

The DGsP/IGsP conference 2020 discussed the SAWAGAT Program. Having seen its advantages, the Conference decided to study the Program further to extend it to

state police forces and CAPFs. BPR&D has studied the SWAGAT Program to design a flexible and adaptable template for police forces and CAPFs. The following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) regarding the structure and functioning of the grievance redressal program for the state police and the CAPFs are suggested: -

6.1 Frequency of the hearings

For State Police

SHO	SP	Range (DIG/IG)	DGP/HoPF
Every Week	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	Once a month
Every Thursday of the month.	Every second and fourth Monday of the month	Every second and fourth Monday of the month	Every fourth Thursday of the month

This program can include the hearing of grievances of police personnel just before or after the citizen hearing.
CAPFs

Commandant	DIG/IG	DGP/HoPF
Every Week	Fortnightly	Once a month

Every Thursday of the month.	Every second and fourth Monday of the month	Every fourth Thursday of the month

(The CAPFs may decide the frequency of the   functioning and the days/dates as per their requirements)

7.0 Application of the Project

The adapted SWAGAT Plus Program would be an information and communication technology (ICT) initiative to redress ordinary citizens' grievances. It would also redress the grievances of the personnel of the state police forces and CAPFs.

The program's primary aim is to redress the grievances of public and police personnel in a practical, transparent, and speedy manner at the highest level through direct interaction with senior officers and heads of Police/CAPFs. It would use both online and offline processing of complaints to redress people's grievances. The program would use the ICT optimally to create a practical, transparent, and accountable grievance redressal system to enhance ordinary people's trust.

7.1 Functioning

1. On a prefixed day of every month, the applicants would be heard through video conference by the DGP office. If an applicant doesn't have the needed equipment, he may join the video conference through his nearest police station. However, the applicants who wish to arrive at the DGP Office would report to the concerned office at the time and date fixed by the concerned office.

2. Grievances received would be scrutinized, registered, and instantly transmitted online to the concerned police authorities for their comments/replies at the range, district, and police station levels. After which, the concerned authorities would submit their comments/replies to the DGP at least three days before the day of the hearing of the grievance redressal.

3. Before starting the online/physical listening, the last hearing's complete correspondence/documents and the reply would be available with the DGP office before starting the online or physical hearing.

4. The grievances and the replies of the concerned authorities would also be available through the system on a screen.

5. The DGP would personally listen to the applicants one by one on the pre-decided day.

6. The other concerned officers would be either physically present with the DGP or available online for direct interaction with the aggrieved citizen and other authorities connected through video conferencing.

7. DGP would give necessary instructions to redress the grievance after listening to all the aspects of the case.

8. The SWAGAT Plus database would maintain all records of the grievance redressal. It would also preserve separate logs for each case.

9. The SWAGAT Plus Program would also monitor the follow-up issues of the grievance redressed according to the DGP instructions.

10. The SWAGAT Plus Program would enable citizens to view the status of their grievances online.

11. The DGP would hear only such grievances which have not been resolved at their lower levels.

12. The DGP would select cases pending for an extended period, humanitarian issues, complex issues, and topics having policy implications.

8.0 Monitoring and Impact

- The monitoring system would focus on unresolved cases.

- It would bring transparency as all stakeholders would be present in real-time, and the complainant would be able to view his status online.
- Through this process, the highest-level authority would become aware of grievances and obstacles in their resolution.

8.1 Audit

A third-party audit of the original SWAGAT program was conducted and the project was found to be very effective. Similarly, on implementation, a third-party audit of the SWAGAT Plus Program should be conducted periodically to get feedback on the system's functioning for better service delivery. Feedback from the complaints should be taken after some time to know about their experience, status of the resolution of a complaint. This will result in knowing the percentage of the issues resolved through this solution.