

	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"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>				
<b>12. Amounts concerned</b>	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			
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>13. Type of financing<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Indirect management</b> 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