

## Effects of Public Procurement Reforms on Service Delivery in the Kenyan Judiciary

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of public procurement reforms on service delivery in the Kenyan Judiciary. Procurement planning, public procurement practices, technology adoption, contract management and service delivery were the specific variables of the study. Resource-based theory was anchored in the study. A descriptive research design was adopted with a target population of 120 respondents and a sample of 42. Primary data was collected from respondents using a structured, closed-ended questionnaire. The study rejected the null hypotheses that procurement planning and contract management do not have effects on service delivery in the Kenyan Judiciary. The study accepted the null hypotheses that public procurement practices and technology adoption do not have effects on service delivery in the Kenyan Judiciary. The study concluded that participatory planning, top management commitment, and proper needs assessment contribute to timely delivery, cost efficiency, and quality service provision. Formal adherence to procurement laws alone does not guarantee improved service delivery. Policy frameworks are not fully operationalised or monitored effectively within judicial procurement systems. Procurement processes are not fully automated through IFMIS and e-GP platforms. The study recommended that service delivery in the Judiciary be improved by strengthening procurement planning, contract management, and technology integration, adopting participatory procurement planning, providing regular staff training, and enforcing clear contract monitoring systems with electronic tracking of performance and payments. Procurement processes are not fully automated through IFMIS and e-GP platforms, supported by continuous digital training for officers and reliable ICT infrastructure to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability. The output of this study will guide policymakers and public sector managers in strengthening procurement systems and practices, benefit procurement professionals, auditors, and regulatory agencies such as PPRA and EACC in enhancing compliance and accountability and contribute to scholarly discourse on governance and public sector reform.

**Key terms:** Contract management, procurement planning, public procurement practices, service delivery, technology adoption.

## INTRODUCTION

Public procurement is the acquisition by purchase, rental, lease, hire purchase, contract, construction of works and services by the public sector entities. Patrucco et al. (2017) define public procurement as the overall process of acquiring goods, civil works and services, which includes all functions from identification of needs, selection and solicitation of sources, preparation and award of contract, and all phases of contract administration through the end of a service contract or the useful life of an asset. Public procurement has continuously evolved both conceptually and organizationally. The evolution accelerated since the 1990's as governments at all levels came under increasing pressure to do more with less (Panya & Awour, 2023). Public procurement is effected by using state funds; national budgets, county budgets, state development funds, domestic loans or foreign loans guaranteed by the state, foreign aid, as well as revenue received from the economic activity of commercial state corporations. Public procurement is a cornerstone of public sector governance and development. In Kenya, it accounts for over 70 per cent of national and county governments' expenditure, making it a critical lever for achieving national development goals (World Bank, 2020; Mutangili, 2024).

Due to the huge amount of money involved, public procurement remains one of the most vulnerable enterprises to corruption across the globe. The failure of the public procurement system in Africa has been attributed to several factors, including weak commitment to fight corruption, ineffective implementation of the reformed procurement system, lack of transparency in the award of government contracts, lack of accountability on the part of government, both national and local governments, in the use of public funds, among other factors (Panya & Awour, 2023). Various studies have been carried out globally to determine what governments have undertaken to reform public procurement. In the Asian tigers, Indonesia's public procurement programme has been strengthened to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability of the national procurement system (Attstrom & Ismail, 2010; Telgen et al., 2016). In Latin America, Mexico, the government limits interactions between public officials and bidders. All documents arising from the

tendering process are exchanged electronically. The whole process is accessed through websites, including decisions on the awards (Panya & Awour, 2023). Once the public contracts are signed, they are posted on the procuring entity's website the same day, and a public notary certifies that the official version of the contract that has been signed is the same as the one that was posted (OECD, 2018).

In Kenya, public procurement reforms have emerged as a strategic response to systemic inefficiencies, corruption, and poor service delivery in public institutions. Historically, procurement processes have been marred by inefficiencies, opaque practices, and corruption, leading to substandard services, inflated costs, and delayed projects (Transparency International Kenya, 2021). Public procurement reforms in Kenya have evolved from a regulatory and legally driven framework aimed at addressing inefficiencies and corruption, beginning with World Bank reforms in 1997. Key reforms include 2001 regulations, enactment of the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act of 2015 and regulations of 2020 and finally the introduction of digital tools like IFMIS and e-procurement to enhance transparency. The changes have significantly impacted transparency, accountability, competitiveness and value for money. This study evaluated the effects of public procurement reforms on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya.

Despite the ambitious reform agenda, Kenya continues to grapple with procurement-related challenges that undermine service delivery. Reports from the Auditor General and Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) reveal persistent issues such as bid rigging, conflict of interest, poor contract management, and lack of compliance with procurement laws (EACC, 2022; OAG, 2023). Moreover, the integration of sustainable procurement practices and stakeholder engagement remains limited. The study evaluated the effects of public procurement reforms on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya by evaluating the effects of procurement planning on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya, investigating the effects of public procurement practices on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya, assessing the effects of technology adoption on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya, and determining the effects of

contract management on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya.

## Theoretical Underpinning

The study is anchored in the resource-based view (RBV) theory. The resource-based view is a model that sees resources as key to a superior firm's performance. The origins can be traced back to the seminal work of Penrose (1959) on 'the theory of the growth of the firm'. Penrose viewed the firm as a set of unique internal resources through which firms are differentiated from each other and are able to excel. Fundamentally, this theory formulates the firm to be a bundle of resources. The way the resources are combined makes firms different from one another. It is considered to be taking an inside-out approach while analysing the firm. This means that the starting point of the analysis is the internal environment of the organisation (Miller & Miller, 2019).

Barney (1991) summarised the conditions for resource-based sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) through a concise framework: value, rareness, imperfect imitability, and non-substitutability (VRIN). When resources are able to bring value to the firm, they can be a source of competitive advantage. It must be rare among an organisation's current and potential competitors. Resources can be sources of sustained competitive advantage if competing firms cannot obtain them. The resource must be non-substitutable. There cannot be a strategic equivalent substitute for a valuable resource. The resource is rare and imperfectly imitable. Barney later amended the framework to combine imitability and substitutability, adding organisation (VRIO) to exploit the resource as the fourth factor (Barney, 1991).

The resource-based view of the firm enables an understanding of the resources that underpin the alternative positioning strategies that may be considered by a firm. This makes RBV a fitting theory in the current study. This is because it provides a direction for the firm's strategy, and they are the primary source of return for the firm. The RBV perceives the value derived from management skills, information capabilities, and administrative processes as scarce factors that are able to generate economic rents (Sheehan & Foss, 2017). In a recent study by Komakech et al. (2025), it was suggested that a

company's long-term advantage stems from its distinct resources and capabilities, which are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate and not easily substitutable.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Government ministries, parastatal bodies and county governments are required by the law to prepare procurement plans and have them approved before implementation. Joshua and Chege (2025) investigated the influence of procurement planning on project performance in national government constituencies' fund projects. A descriptive research design was used. The target population was all 20 NG-CDF projects in Dagoretti North Constituency that were completed between 2020 and 2024, with 45 workers who formed the unit of analysis. The sample size was equal to the target population because of the size of the target population. A questionnaire was used as the data collection tool. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were carried out. The results of the study indicated that procurement planning had a significant positive influence on the performance of NG-CDF projects in Dagoretti North Constituency. The study concluded that efficient procurement planning guarantees that financial resources allocated for NG-CDF projects are utilised efficiently. Another similar study was carried out by Nyamila and Barasa (2024) on the effect of procurement planning on service delivery in Lamu County, Kenya.

The study used a descriptive research design. A target population comprising 504 middle and senior level personnel were chosen from Lamu County's 11 state corporations, from where a sample of 223 respondents was arrived at using a stratified random sampling technique. A questionnaire was used to collect primary data, and a multiple regression analysis was used to ascertain the link between the independent and dependent variables, and a Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used to quantify the strength of that relationship. The findings indicated that all four procurement planning variables, budget allocation, procurement methodology, user needs identification and vendor selection, significantly contribute to predicting service delivery performance in Lamu County. The study underscored the importance of adhering to budgetary allocation and effective funds utilisation for enhancing service delivery outcomes in Lamu County. Effective Procurement Planning is

essential for all procuring entities in the implementation of the purchasing objectives. An effective plan saves time and money, is a conduit to achieving the entity's objectives, ensures compliance with regulatory policies and provides a framework to guide procurement officers in the achievement of their tasks and duties.

Public procurement in Kenya is regulated by the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act. In a global perspective, Hassan (2025) carried out a study on public procurement practices, corruption perception, and service delivery in the EU. A descriptive research design was utilised to collect cross-country data for 27 countries, EU member states. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were deployed. The findings indicated that the mean score for public procurement practices, corruption perception and service delivery were significantly higher than the global averages. Regression analysis indicated that changes in public procurement practices and corruption perception index combined explained 75 per cent of the variations in service delivery.

In Africa, Baptiste and Gamariel (2021) carried out a study on the relationship between procurement procedures and service quality delivery of public institutions in Rwanda. The study was carried out at the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), where the total population and sample size were 81 persons who were employees of REMA. The study revealed that procurement policies, procurement planning, buyer/supplier relationship and monitoring and evaluation after service quality delivery in REMA. The study concluded that procurement practices affect service quality delivery in REMA.

In Kenya, Machira et al. (2024) carried out a study on sustainable procurement practices and cost performance of road construction in Kenya. The study employed a correlational research design to test a non-causal relationship between the study variables without the researcher controlling any of them. The target population consisted of 47 regional directors, 47 supply chain officers and 94 pre-qualified contractors in charge of road construction projects under the Kenya rural roads in Kenya. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to

select a sample of 32 regional directors, 32 supply chain officers and 64 prequalified contractors in charge of road construction projects in Kenya. A self-administered survey questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were used. Correlation results indicated that the green purchasing and sustainable supplier management practices had a positive and significant relationship with the cost performance of road construction projects in Kenya. Bartilol et al. (2023) carried out a study on procurement practices and performance of public institutions in Turkana County, Kenya.

The research was pinned on principal-agency theory, contingency theory, stakeholders' theory and Porter's value chain analysis theory. A descriptive survey research design was used, where the target population and sample size were the same at 140. DData was descriptively analysed using means and standard deviations, and inferentially by Pearson's correlation and regression analysis to measure strength and direction. Procurement practices (procurement planning, e-procurement practices, sourcing ethics and evaluation practices) all yielded statistically significant influence on procurement practices. Kisaka et al. (2022) carried out a study on the effect of procurement procedures on the delivery of services in selected units in the Kenyan western region. The study covered 4 selected counties: Kakamega, Busia, Bungoma and Vihiga. The study was guided by institutional theory. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The study's population was 60 staff within the devolved units of leadership. Descriptive and inferential statistical approaches were used. The findings of the study were that procurement procedures had a significant positive effect on the delivery of service.

The use of technology helps governments and organisations improve efficiency. Mandala and Ayoyi (2024) in their study on the impact of information technology adoption on efficiency and transparency in public procurement processes in Kenya explored a spectrum of experiences, challenges, successes and overall implications within the procurement landscape. The study used a questionnaire to collect data. Both quantitative and document analysis approaches were adopted. The study found that IT

usage and IT reliance had effects on efficiency and transparency in public procurement and concluded that IT plays a crucial role in enhancing efficiency and transparency in public procurement processes, highlighting the importance of continued investment and integration of IT solutions in procurement practices to promote good governance and accountability. Walubengo et al. (2023) carried out a study on the effects of information technology on the service delivery of County Governments in Western Kenya Region.

The study had targeted 228 chief officers, directors, finance officers and procurement officers. A sample of 174 respondents was arrived at using a stratified random sampling technique. The study found that information technology had a significant effect on the delivery of services in the Western Region in Kenya. The study concluded that information technology is a useful predictor of service delivery. The study recommended that County Governments should view and treat information technology as a critical component and resource since its application in procurement activities improves the delivery of services.

The latest study on technology adoption was carried out by (Ohio, 2025) in Tanzania. Orio (2025), in his study on the impact of artificial intelligence on procurement management performance in Tanzania, used a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach. Data was collected using a questionnaire from 40 participants who were selected purposively and included procurement officers, internal auditors and accountants. The study applied descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis to evaluate the influence of AI technologies such as robotics, process automation and machine learning on procurement outcomes. The findings of the study revealed that all three AI technologies significantly and positively affect procurement performance. Machine learning demonstrated the strongest impact, particularly enhancing transparency and value for money, followed by process automation and robotics. The study indicated that despite a positive perception of AI integration, performance indicators such as accountability and transparency showed room for improvement, suggesting a gap

between technological adoption and its effective utilisation.

Contract management is the whole process from drafting the contract, negotiation, approval, execution and renewal of the contract. In Kenya, Kipkemoi and Makori (2021) carried out a study on the influence of contract management practices on the operational performance of state corporations in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population comprised heads of departments in state corporations in Kenya, which totalled 162. The study was a census survey of all 162 state corporations in Kenya. Primary data was collected using questionnaires as the main data collection instrument. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were used. The study found that the relationship between contract planning and operational performance was significant. It also found that contract administration has a positive effect on operational performance.

In Africa, Veikko and Dieu (2025) carried out a study on procurement contract management on organisational performance within the Gisagara district in Rwanda. A mixed methods approach combining descriptive and correlational research designs was employed. The study population was 251 people, and universal sampling was used to manage the size of the population, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the target group. Probability sampling was used, including simple random sampling techniques and purposive sampling techniques. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were used. The inferential statistical analysis validated contract management found the study that play a crucial role in driving performance. Ines and Dieu (2024) carried out a study on the effect of contract management practices on the organisational performance of the Rwanda Development Board. Data was collected from 156 employees of RDB, and they were chosen using a census sampling technique. Questionnaire, observation, interview guide and documentation were used as tools of data collection.

Data was analysed by using both quantitative and qualitative data by presenting the findings of the respondents through mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study found that there was a positive link between contract management and

organisational performance. The study concluded that the main objective of contract management is to ensure that the borrower's contractors, suppliers or consultants meet agreed project specifications and completion dates. Alex et al. (2023) carried out a study on the effects of contract management and operational performance of the road construction sector in Uganda. A cross-sectional research design was used on a sample of 108 participants, from whom questionnaires were used to collect data. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were used. The findings of the study revealed that all tenets of contract management studied were positively related to operational performance.

The study concluded that contract management positively predicts operational performance. Nduhura et al. (2022) carried out a study on contract relationship management and education service delivery in Masaka District Local Government in Uganda. The population of the study was 140, and a sample of 103 was taken. The data was collected using a questionnaire. Descriptive, correlation and regression analyses were carried out. The results indicated that contract relationship management generally exists in the operations of Masaka DLG and is carried out at a very low level, though its management is reported to have a very strong association with education service delivery at the district.

In this study, it was noted that research on procurement does not touch the major arms of the national government; the executive, the legislature and the Judiciary. The studies on the procurement world over, especially in Africa, touch on sections of the national governments, for example, the national rural boards and national government constituency development funds. Others touch only counties and regional governments. Due to deficiencies discovered, this study was designed to study a world arm of government, the Judiciary in Kenya. The results of the study are very interesting and an eye-opener to the readers.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. A descriptive research includes a survey and fact-finding enquiry (Kothari, 2004). The purpose of descriptive research is the description of affairs as they exist at

present. The target population consisted of seven courts and 120 respondents in Nairobi city in Kenya. The unit of analysis was the technical staff: accountants, internal auditors and procurement officers who were considered to have technical knowledge and capacity to participate in the study. A sample size of 42 was arrived at using a stratified random sampling technique. The sample size represented 35 per cent of the target population. Primary data was obtained from the respondents using a questionnaire.

The questionnaire was structured and had closed-ended questions. The drop and pick method was used, where the questionnaires were left with the respondents and collected later after they were filled out. This method was appropriate because the respondents were spread over seven courts in Nairobi City. It saved time because after the drop, the researcher agreed with the respondents when to pick the filled-in questionnaires. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were done, and SPSS statistical software version 25 was used to analyse the data. In the descriptive statistics, average means were computed, and in the inferential data analysis, public procurement reforms were represented by procurement planning, public procurement practices, technology adoption and contract management. Service delivery was the dependent variable.

Multiple regression analysis was done using the ordinary least squares method, where the multiple regression model was given as follows:  $Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \epsilon$ . Y represented service delivery,  $\alpha$  was the constant,  $\beta_1 - \beta_4$  represented coefficients of the independent variables,  $X_1 - X_4$  represented the independent variables, and  $\epsilon$  was the error term. A number of diagnostic tests were carried out to ensure that ordinary least squares assumptions were met. These tests were: linearity, homoscedasticity, outliers, independence, multicollinearity, and normality. The results of the multiple regression analysis were shown in a table.

In the study, consent from prospective respondents was sought before administration of the questionnaire. The questionnaire did not bear the name of the participant, and there was no link to the respondents' identifiers. Only the researcher had

access to the data, which was stored in a password-protected computer. A study of public procurement reforms and their effects on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya will provide insight to Commissioners of the Judicial Service Commission and all those involved in procurement and financial decision-making in the Judiciary on how public procurement reforms can affect service delivery, so that they can make decisions on optimal public procurement reforms for the success of the Judiciary. The study will make a great contribution to the body of knowledge in the area of public procurement reforms and service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya. It will reconcile theory to reality, while its findings will be used for further studies in the field in future. This will be of great importance to scholars and researchers in the field of procurement. This information will be useful to the government policy makers and regulators, such as the public procurement regulatory authority (PPRA) and public procurement administrative review board (PPARB), to come up with regulating policies.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data was analysed at two levels: descriptive and inferential. In descriptive data analysis, the aggregate average mean of all responses was computed. In inferential data analysis, multiple regression analysis was carried out, which involved the determination of the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ), the coefficient of determination (adjusted R-squared), the analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the testing of the hypotheses

of the study. In descriptive data analysis, quantitative questions had constructs with a Likert scale of 1 – 5. In the Likert scale, 1 represented strongly agree, 2 agree, 3 neutral, 4 disagree, and 5 strongly disagree. The first independent variable, procurement planning, recorded an average mean score of 2.55. Public procurement practices recorded an average mean score of 2.28, and technology adoption and contract management recorded an average mean score of 2.27 and 2.31, respectively. All the independent variables recorded an average of between 2.27 and 2.55. All these scores were less than 3.0, which was the borderline between agree and disagree. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statements on the independent variables.

The second level of analysis was inferential data analysis, which was performed through multiple regression analysis. In this analysis, the correlation coefficient, adjusted R-squared and testing of hypotheses were done. A standard multiple regression analysis was done for all independent variables on service delivery. The independent variables included: procurement planning, public procurement practices, technology adoption and contract management. According to Table 1 below, R computed was 0.774, and the the adjusted R-squared was 0.556. Which means combining all independent variables together explains 55.6 per cent of the discrepancy in service delivery. Other factors outside the model explain 44.4 per cent.

**Table 1: Model Summary of the Combined Effect**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.774	.600	.556	.60758

The analysis of variance results in Table 2 indicate the findings of the standard multiple regression model. The F-value was 13.857 with a p-value of 0.000, which was below 0.05. This indicates that the model was significant in predicting service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya. Hence, the study rejects the null hypothesis

that public procurement reforms have no significant effect on the service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya. In addition, this study confirms that there is a positive and significant effect of public procurement reforms on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya.

**Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Results for all Independent Variables**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.461	4	20.461	13.857	.000
	Residual	13.659	37	0.369		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>34.119</b>	<b>41</b>			

Table 3 shows the regression coefficient of the multiple regression model. The constant had a value of 0.708 with a p-value of 0.018. The p-value was less than 0.05 and therefore significant. Procurement planning had a beta value of 0.373 with a p-value of 0.018. The p-value was less than 0.05. This was significant. Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis that procurement planning does not have an effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya and concludes that indeed, procurement planning has a significant effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya. Further, it means that a unit change in procurement planning leads to a 0.373 unit change in the service delivery.

Public procurement practices had a beta value of -0.070 with a p-value of 0.780, which was greater than the 0.05 level of significance, and therefore it was insignificant. Therefore, the study did not reject the null hypothesis that public procurement practices do not have an effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya and concluded indeed that public

procurement practices have an insignificant effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya.

Technology adoption had a beta value of -0.143 with a p-value of 0.476, which was greater than the 0.05 level of significance, and therefore it was insignificant. Therefore, the study did not reject the null hypothesis that technology adoption does not have an effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya and concluded indeed that technology adoption has an insignificant effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya.

Contract management had a beta value of 0.614 with a p-value of 0.014. The p-value was less than 0.05. This was significant. Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis that contract management does not have an effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya and concludes that indeed, contract management has a significant effect on service delivery in the Judiciary in Kenya. Further, it means that a unit change in contract management leads to a 0.614 unit change in the service delivery.

**Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.708	.285		2.487	.018
	Procurement Planning	.373	.151	.404	2.467	.018
	Public Procurement Practices	-.070	.249	-.075	-.282	.780
	Technology Adoption	-.143	.198	-.140	-.721	.476
	Contract Management	.614	.237	.643	2.588	.014

From the above analysis, public procurement practices and technology adoption were not significant. Therefore, the resultant multiple regression equation was given by  $Y = 0.708 + 0.373X_1 + 0.614X_4$ , where Y = Service delivery,  $X_1$  was procurement planning, and  $X_4$  was contract management.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Conclusion:** Based on the findings, effective procurement planning significantly enhances service delivery in the Judiciary. The study concludes that participatory planning, top management commitment, and proper needs assessment contribute to timely delivery, cost efficiency, and quality service provision. Although compliance with the Public Procurement and

Asset Disposal Act (2015) is evident, the study concludes that formal adherence alone does not guarantee improved service delivery. The limited influence suggests that policy frameworks are not fully operationalised or monitored effectively within judicial procurement systems.

Technology and e-procurement tools are in use but have not yet translated into significant performance improvements. The study concludes that this may be due to incomplete automation, resistance to change, or low digital competence among procurement officers. Contract management strongly predicts service delivery effectiveness. The study concludes that consistent monitoring, contractor capacity assessment, and documentation enhance

accountability, reduce disputes, and ensure timely service execution.

**Recommendations:** To improve service delivery in the Judiciary, procurement planning, contract management, and technology integration should be strengthened. The Judiciary should adopt participatory procurement planning, provide regular staff training, and enforce clear contract monitoring systems with electronic tracking of performance and payments. It is recommended that monitoring and evaluation processes be instilled to ensure efficiency, compliance and value for money. Procurement processes should be fully automated through IFMIS and e-GP platforms, supported by continuous digital training for officers and reliable ICT infrastructure to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

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