

# THE BUSINESS STANDARD

## ‘Digital transformation can improve governance, dev outcomes’

Researchers, practitioners and policy actors from around the globe shared their experiences and insights on a wide range of issues on digitalization and development

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Photo: Courtesy

**The digitalisation process can initially be chaotic but a more systematic introduction of digital technology has a real potential to improve governance and development outcomes, say researchers and policy actors at a conference.**

The three-day long conference titled "Digitalisation and New Frontiers of Service Delivery: Opportunities and Challenges" started at the BRAC Centre Inn in the capital on Monday.

The BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University, organised the programme.

Researchers, practitioners and policy actors from around the globe shared their experiences and insights on a wide range of issues on digitalization and development.

Prof Vincent Chang, vice-chancellor of BRAC University, gave the opening speech.

Stefan Dercon, a professor from the Department of Economics at the University of Oxford, presented the first keynote titled

"Digitalisation for inclusive Development: Lessons from Global Experience" in the conference.

Prof Dercon said, "The opportunity of digital transformation is not only for service delivery, but it changes how goods and services are produced, capital is exchanged, and how production and distribution are organised."

He also supported his statement by saying that the readymade garment sector became profitable due to the digitalisation of the port management and transportation.

In his introductory speech, Imran Matin, executive director of BIGD, said there was a real potential to improve governance and development outcomes in Bangladesh through digitalization.

Speaking about the achievements, future challenges and opportunities of digitalization in Bangladesh, Anir Chowdhury, policy advisor to a2i, said after the declaration of digitization, Bangladesh had halved its poverty rate, and 65% of the population had been brought under internet connectivity.

He pointed out that Bangladesh started with 10 digital services, and now it has turned to 1,500.

In the second session of the day, speakers talked about the digitalisation of service delivery from the perspective of power, institutions and economics.

Issues of digital literacy and e-government service were discussed in the third and fourth session.