

*Meeting of the MENA Working
Group 2 on
E-Government and
Administrative Simplification*

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Dubai, U.A.E.*

*"Progress in Public
Management in the Middle East
and North Africa: Case Studies
on Policy Reform
Case Studies on Policy Reform"*

**OECD-MENA
GOVERNANCE
PROGRAMME**

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Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Mena Region

- 1st Progress Report
- MENA-OECD Governance Programme
- More than 40 case studies in the fields of:
 - Public finance and employment, integrity, regulatory policies, e-government and administrative simplification, public-private partnerships, gender issues and territorial development.
- 9 countries:
 - Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, UAE (Dubai), and Yemen.

Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Mena Region

“ Since 2005, MENA Countries have taken on, much more vigorously than in the past, the difficult governance challenges that have impeded progress so far. ”

Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Mena Region

Main Drivers:

1. Improvements in public governance identified as central element to accelerate economic growth;

Real GDP growth per labour force (%) in MENA and Developing Countries

	1996-1999	2000-2004	2005	2006	2007
MENA (excl. Iraq)	-0,1	1.2	2.4	2.1	2.8
All Developing Countries	2.3	3.2	5.0	5.7	5.6

2008 MENA Economic Developments and Prospects, World Bank

2. The need to end corruption and its debilitating effects on society and public sector performance;
3. The challenges of nation building.

Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Mena Region

Chapter 7: ACHIEVEMENTS IN E-GOVERNMENT

OECD definition of e-government

“The use of information and communication technologies, and particularly the Internet, as a tool to achieve better government.”

Source: *The e-Government Imperative* (OECD, 2003)

Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Mena Region

Chapter 7: ACHIEVEMENTS IN E-GOVERNMENT

The use of ICT applied to PA has been widespread in the MENA Region for more than 2 decades.

Recently we have seen concerted efforts to apply these technologies systematically to improve governance.

E-Govt is seen as integral to both economic and social development and to policy reforms.

Progress Report on Public Governance Reform in the Mena Region

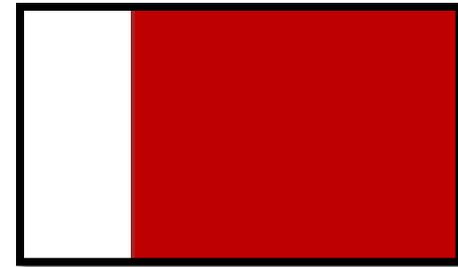
Chapter 7: ACHIEVEMENTS IN E-GOVERNMENT

• Within MENA there is a broad range of experiences: some are trying to overcome the legacies from the past while others are focusing on user-centric approaches and Web 2.0 applications.

• In our chapter we have focused on the following five MENA countries (from each of the three MENA “sub-regions”):

- Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, UAE (Dubai).

For each country a case study illustrates: Successful implementation strategies, transactional G2C and G2B services, Administrative simplifications, horizontal and vertical coordination policies, back-office transformations and cases for connected governance.



Chapter 7: the case of Dubai (UAE)

Initiatives

- The Dubai government has a number of highly developed e-government services (by 2007, more than 1500):
- Transactional institutional websites (i.e. MoL).
- Tejari e-procurement platform
- Agreements with universities to provide career development opportunities for in information technology

Challenges

- Dubai faces challenges in developing the infrastructure necessary to improve e-government. Improvements are needed to remedy problems in approach and system inconsistencies between departments in horizontal and vertical integration and collaboration.

Case Study

- Registering a company and completing all the administrative tasks involve numerous steps (12 ministries and separate entities) and is co-ordinated by the Department for Economic Development, which licenses companies to conduct business and administrative procedures involving labour, visas, property, insurance, health care for workers, housing, etc. Dubai's approach to co-ordinating numerous highly differentiated official functions shows the transformative potential of e-government services.



Chapter 7: the case of Egypt

Egypt launched a broad e-government programme in 2001 involving three tracks: service delivery, enterprise resource planning, and national databases. At the end of its first phase (2001-2007), the *UN e-Readiness Report* ranked Egypt 28th.

E-government was co-ordinated by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology between 1999 and 2004, when it was moved to the Ministry of State for Administrative Development as a sign of growing importance in the reform agenda.

While these achievements are substantial, the programme still faces various challenges as well as opportunities.



Chapter 7: the case of BAHRAIN

Country's size, growing economy and coherent ad hoc policies have created the conditions for an expansive ICT development.

Bahraini underlying incentives are to maintain activities of international business while increasing G2G and G2C services.

Political leadership and support seems to be ensured but the limiting factor is the reluctance of the private sectors to by in.



Chapter 7: the case of BAHRAIN

Initiatives

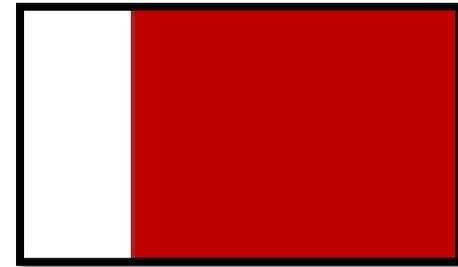
- Many ambitious new services designed and implemented since 2005. Public uptake has been defined as enthusiastic with a rapid roll-out of new services such as the mobile service to provide school exam results. Its first use attracted over 5 000 hits even before it was widely marketed.

Challenges

- Good e-government practices within the GCC raised expectations of citizens and businesses. Civil servants found it difficult to keep up with rapidly changing priorities, especially where inter-ministerial co-ordination is required with issues in the ownership of projects. High expectations drive new ambitions, these include: the use of “push” and m-services and reorienting the role of civil servants towards “customer-centric outreach” approach.

Case Study:

- Intermediaries from cultural change
- An expanded kiosk programme with technically qualified, sympathetic and enthusiastic young officials to guide citizens in the hands-on use of many functions. Almost every citizen lives within 2 Km. of a kiosk, which are provided for free. The goal is at least 50% increase in up-take in 2 years. The extensive use of intermediation is a good practice for many countries aiming to boost citizen uptake of services.



Chapter 7: the case of Dubai (UAE)

Dubai has forged ahead with a structured and extremely well-funded mission to bring e-government practices into all branches of PA and to ensure that the UAE leads e-government readiness in the world. It has extensive department websites and far-reaching e-government G2C and G2B services, 80% of which transactional.

Dubai's legal framework for e-government has only recently been put in place. In fact, in March 2009, Sheik Al Maktoum issued a law to establish the Dubai e-government office.

E-government initiative suffers from low uptake by citizens and businesses, which in recent months has been addressed by new efforts to roll out additional services and to meet the highest standards expected by companies.



Chapter 7: the case of Egypt

Initiatives

- Egypt has launched several e-government initiatives since the 1990s. It pioneered the *Cash on Delivery* model that helped build trust in the portals. G2C services have always been a priority also through the citizen-relationship management (CRM) services. Citizens can interact directly with over 10 different government entities through the national portal.

Challenges

- Egypt faces a variety of obstacles to the success of its e-government development. These range from insufficient physical infrastructure to inadequacies in its legal framework and the digital divide. Until recently, there was no comprehensive e-government strategy, which caused co-ordination problems, low penetration of PCs and of Internet access and a high rate of computer illiteracy. Another factor in the current poor levels of e-participation is low public awareness and trust of e-government services.

Case Study

- A project to modernise Montaza District of Alexandria started in 2003. It focused on using ICT to simplify and speed up services to citizens and to access services remotely. In 2003, some online services were provided. By 2009, the same system was deployed in several governorates, to reach 47 sites in 21 governorates by mid 2009. It reduced service time to 40-70%. This case demonstrates how PA services delivered at the municipal level can move ahead of national plans in piloting delivery and take-up practices and offering opportunities prior to broader roll-out.



Chapter 7: the case of Jordan

E-government initiatives have been a priority for Jordan for almost 10 years. However, political commitment has been undermined at times by private corporations, donor countries and international organisations, operating in a fickle and uncoordinated manner.

To manage the ICT infrastructure and to co-ordinate implementation, in 2002 the government created the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, which is responsible for the policies, regulation and operation of ICT initiatives.

Legal restructuring has accompanied Jordan's evolving e-friendly infrastructure, but the a



Chapter 7: the case of Jordan

Initiatives

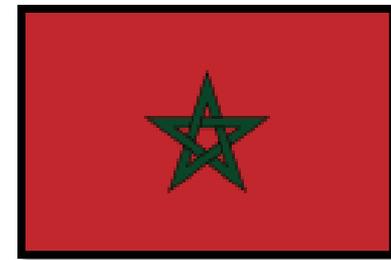
- Jordan is ranked at number 28 in the world in the UN Web Measurement Assessment Index, reflecting its notable successes in e-participation initiatives and in the e-decision making applications and. This feature connects governments and citizens directly. The webpage for the Ministry of Education of Jordan is an example of active government engagement with citizens.

Challenges

- The biggest challenge facing Jordan's e-government initiatives is affordability of and accessibility to an electronic infrastructure and telecommunications services for its citizen, coupled with low internet penetration, PCs availability and computer literacy. Jordan also faces challenges in ensuring horizontal co-ordination and developing a collaborative approach for shared ICT infrastructure among government departments.

Case Study

- The Government Financial Management Information project aims at supporting the financial management and accounting functions of all government ministries. The GFMS will allow for a complete budget management and accounting cycle. Once it is fully operational it will be among the most advanced in the MENA. It initially made little progress but it now seems to be fully on track. It shows the importance of governments ensuring continuity and the fundamental role of front runners, i.e. Ministry of Finance of Jordan.

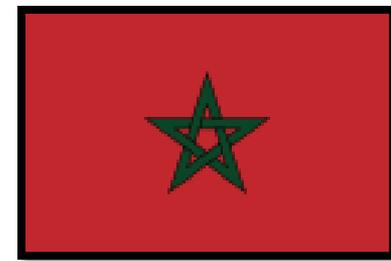


Chapter 7: the case of Morocco

Morocco's e-government initiative began with an online administration programme in 1997 co-ordinated by the Ministry of Administrative Modernisation. In 2008 responsibilities were moved to the newly renamed Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies

This ministry, under the presidency of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, developed a five-year national ICT strategy in 2008: *Maroc Numeric 2013*.

The current five-year plan brings e-government into the context of broader ICT industry support, including a push to make Morocco an attractive location for ICT offshore activities and new support for research and development.



Chapter 7: the case of Morocco

Initiatives

- Initiatives coordinated by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies include:
- 89 government websites offering interactive service;
- Civil Registration Computerisation in more than 1500 locations;
- On line payments of VAT and taxes.

Challenges

- While infrastructure has improved, according to the 2008 UN e-Government Readiness Survey, Morocco still needs to overcome significant difficulties, such as the illiteracy rate, in order to raise its relative standing. The implementation of horizontal inter-governmental projects (like interoperability) is another big challenge for Moroccan e-government.

Case Study

- Ahead of the broader national development strategy, the Ministry of Finance has moved forward with introducing e-government services and hosts sites for five other ministries. By tackling implementation internally first and building standard packages piece-by-piece, they offered major services to their key constituents, but at the expenses of coordination and standardisation. This is changing with the new plan of the MITNT.



THANK YOU!

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