United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

E-GOVERNMENT AND THE INTEGRATION OF SERVICES IN THE ARAB REGION

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06/10/2014
The development, adoption and use of e-government in the Arab region has been steadily evolving in the past years in most countries.

The growing number of Internet users, improved access to broadband, the rapid uptake of smartphones and mobile devices and the use of social media improved the use of e-government services.

However the political instability has negatively affected the development of e-government in many countries.
• ESCWA member states have great differences in EGDI

• **Bahrain**, one of the world’s leaders in e-Government

• **Sudan**, one of the world’s least developed countries in e-government

• Both countries are members of ESCWA.

• The political crisis negatively affected the eGovernment development in Syria, Yemen,…..
e-Government in the Arab Region, 2014
- Based on EGDI -

- Europe is today's world leader in eGovernment
- In terms of eGovernment ESCWA member states can be classified as GCC and Non-GCC countries
- GCC countries are only 4% behind Europe

EGDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>EGDI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCC</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Non-GCC</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GCC: Golf Countries Council
Components of the EGDI, 2014

- GCC countries score more in the OSI than European countries
- Non-GCC countries achieved almost half the TII and OSI scores achieved by GCC countries

- HCI: Human Capital Index
- OSI: Online Service Index
- TII: Telecommunication Infrastructure Index
Components of the EGDI, 2014

- Arab Non-GCC countries achieved less than the World score in HCI, TII and OSI.

- Arab GCC countries achieved a higher average than the World average in all the e-Government indices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>HCI</th>
<th>TII</th>
<th>OSI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCC</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Non-GCC</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E-Government in Bahrain

- **Availability of services** on e-Government portal in Bahrain
- In the last 7 years the portal achieved
  - 6 Million visits
  - 800 000 financial transaction through the portal with a total value of 150 Million$
  - 280 eServices on the Portal
  - 50 eServices on Mobile Gateways

### Bahrain e-Government Portal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>General</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laws</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directories</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistic Info</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downloadable Forms</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e-payment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online account</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>Ar/En</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citizen Participation</td>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Recommendations for advancing eGovernment in the Arab region

The ESCWA document “Regional Profile of the Information Society in the Arab Region 2013” recommendations:

• Mobilize the proper resources to implement e-Government initiatives

• Designate a national coordinating authority in some countries

• **Raise awareness** among staff and citizens on the importance of e-government as part a change management

• Improve government multi-channel service delivery, and provide citizen-centric and interactive e-services

• Promote collaboration among ESCWA member countries
Integration of Services for enhancing regional collaboration and developing smart governance in the Arab region
Regional Integration

• Strengthens the global competitiveness of regions
• Adopts regional solutions and positions vis-à-vis global matters and on policy issues
• Exchange of best practices and experiences

Challenges

• Uneven levels of e-Government in the Arab countries
• Insufficient frameworks for cooperation and weak mechanism for integration
Regional Cooperation in E-Government

SOFT APPROACH

• Promoting success stories
• Exchange of experience
• Organizing regional workshops and meetings

CHALLENGING APPROACH

• Implementation of harmonized legal and regulatory framework for E-Government
• Interoperability of platforms and services
• Implementation of regional services
Examples of Regional Integration Worldwide

• European Commission proved a successful implementation of its effective action plan

• CARICOM achieved 20% decrease in government expenditure at the end of its action plan 2010-2014

• GCC showed the opportunity in the Arab region for regional cooperation and integration
Impact of European Union Regional Frameworks

- The “Once-only” registration principle, which is well represented across Europe, could generate a total net to around €5 billion/Y by 2017

- In Denmark, electronic invoicing save taxpayers 150 M€/y. If introduced across the EU, annual saving could exceed 50B€/y

- In Italy, e-Procurement systems cuts over 3B € in cost.

Regional GCC Framework Goals

**Achievements:**
- Regular coordination meetings
- Exchange of best practices
- GCC eGovernment Awards
- GCC eGovernment Conferences

**Future:**
- Ensure that e-Government is used as a tool to ensure socioeconomic and cultural development
- Define Interoperability frameworks and standards
Service integration and smart governance

SERVICE INTEGRATION

• Places citizen at centre in service delivery
• Requires collaboration, communication, interoperability and common standards
• Interoperability: Technological, Semantic and Organizational and legal

IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE INTEGRATION IN SMART GOVERNANCE

• Provides a citizen-directed government
• Allows for personalized government-pushed information
• Make possible 360 citizen services
Case Study from the Arab Region -
1- Oman National Registration System

- **Focus on the development of base registries**
  - Fundamental for interoperability
  - Helps to avoid unnecessary updating and duplication of work
  - Updating information takes place once and in one place

- **Electronic identification smart cards**
  - Contains biometric data & driver’s license
  - Serve as a debit card
  - Provides access to public services

- **Success dependent on the integration and linkage of various government systems**
2- Morocco Government Gateway

- **Purpose**
  - Maximize integration of services through one-stop-shop
  - Step-by-step approach starting with one entity and extend to others

- **Actions**
  - Building base registries
  - Standardizing data handling and associated services

- **Interoperability between levels**
  - Effective delivery of customized services at the municipal level
3- SADAD - Bill Payment and Revenue Collection

• **Electronic Bill Payment System in Saudi Arabia**
  - The result of public-private-partnership
  - Companies send bills to customers & receive payments electronically
  - SAMA acts as transaction clearinghouse

• **Advantages**
  - Saves time, no more long queues
  - Saves money of customers and enterprises
  - Builds trust by guaranteeing payments to banks
  - Positive impact on the economy
Proposed strategic framework for service integration in the Arab region

STAGE 1: BACK-OFFICE INTEGRATION OF SERVICES
- Interoperability and standards
- The ‘once-only’ principle and base registries
- Data exchange, quality and protection
- Implementation of interoperability and standards

STAGE 2: FRONT-OFFICE INTEGRATION OF SERVICES
- Access, affordability, usability and inclusiveness
- Multi-channel service delivery
- Service simplification and personalization
- Process simplification and reduction
- Personalization
- User-centred design

STAGE 3: IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE
- Availability of ICT systems, e-services and ICT skills
- Digital by default strategies
THANK YOU

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