Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Economic and Social Impact of Open Government

Policy recommendations for the Arab Region

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UNITED NATIONS
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Shared Prosperity Dignified Life
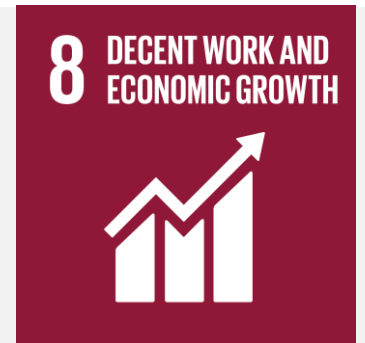
OECD
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Impact of Open Government / Government

- **Improve accountability** through increased transparency, thus supporting anti-corruption efforts

- **Increase efficiency** by enhancing public services and resource allocation.

- New **public value** creation because government-owned data:

  - Generating Revenues from Open Data

  - Increased Tax Income from Commercial Usage of Open Data

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
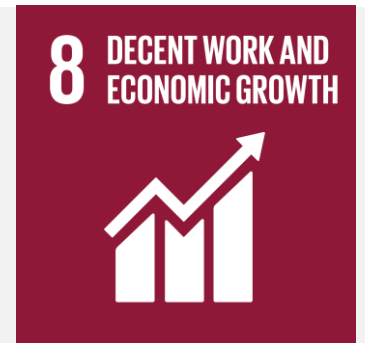
Impact of Open Government / Private Sector

- Open government has positive impact on **economic growth.** Opening-up data will enable:

  - **new firm creation**: through reusing government data freely in novel ways,

  - **new products and services:** SMEs with products and services based on open data

  - **supplementing existing roducts**: A path to innovative solutions such as data as-a-service

Impact of Open Government / Citizens

Open government :

- Facilitates the **creation of new job opportunities** through the creation of new start-up and SMEs (based on the re-use of data)

- Enables **free access to data** and thus citizens are INFORMED…..

- Allows **time and costs saving (**in traffic or using public transport)

In European Union countries, the open data market size was estimated at €184 billion in 2019, and was expected to reach more than €250 billion in 2025, employing 1.09 million employees in 2019 with an up to 80 per cent forecast increase in jobs in the upcoming six years under the optimistic scenario.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Social Impact of Open Government / Society

- The public access to information on <u>health services</u> helps people make **informed decisions** and could improve systems, **hold authorities accountable** and garner investments in **clinical research**.

- Open government initiatives in <u>education</u> seek to provide **equal and equitable access** and quality education to children, adolescents or adults.

- The provision of <u>sex-disaggregated data</u> could raise the **visibility of inequalities** in all activities.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

Policy recommendations

for the Arab countries
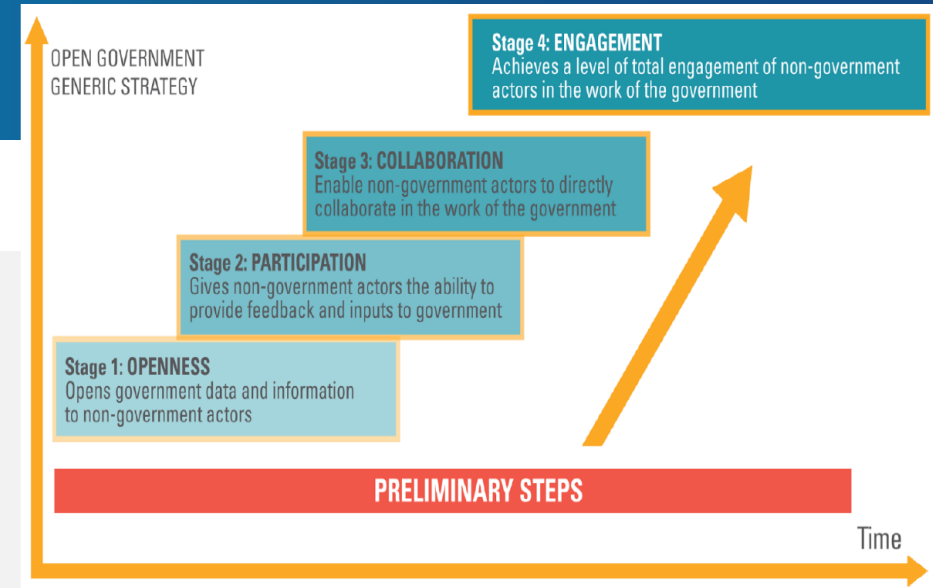
Legal Framework

- More Arab countries should <u>develop and enact modern Access to Information legislation</u>, in line with the highest international standards.

- There is a need to enact <u>other necessary legislations</u> on transparency, personal data protection and privacy, civic space, fundamental freedoms and anti-corruption.

- Arab countries should also <u>enforce and implement adopted laws</u> to guarantee the achievement of their objectives.

Policy and strategy for OG

Arab Governments should:

- develop specific <u>policies or strategies</u> for open government to promote open data and transparency, and to foster citizen participation and engagement.

- strengthen <u>institutions</u> to implement open government,

- appoint <u>a body in charge of coordination</u>, monitoring and evaluation of open government initiatives.

OG reforms should be designed and implemented <u>in collaboration with all stakeholders</u>.
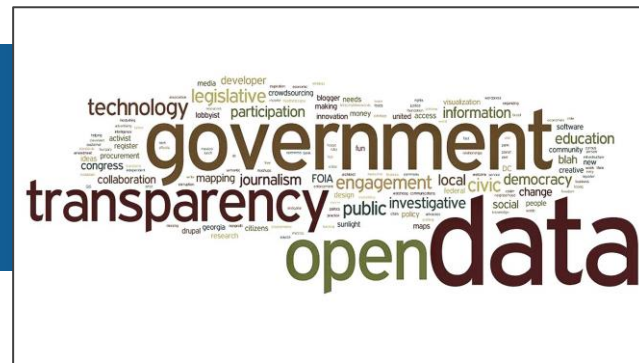
Cultural changes and awareness raising

- Governments should encourage and support public officials to <u>embrace open government principles</u>.

- Conducting <u>awareness-raising</u> campaigns to public.

- Drafting <u>guidelines and codes of conduct</u> and providing training to staff members in public institutions.

- Public communication and <u>sensitization initiatives</u> targeting citizens, civil society organization, and the private sector are also crucial.

Open data and transparency

- Arab countries should :

  - <u>pursue their efforts</u> in open data and add relevant data to their portals

  - develop and implement <u>open data strategy</u>.

  - align the open government initiatives with <u>international standards</u> and Open Data Charter adopted in 2017.

- <u>Technical Capacity-building programmes</u> on open government data are needed for government officials.

- Open data portals are <u>important mechanism</u> for enhancing transparency and accountability.

Participation, collaboration and engagement

- Arab governments need to :

  - hold <u>public consultations</u> and economic and social dialogues on public policies and their challenges

  - <u>encourage citizens to contribute</u> their views, and ideas to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and services.

- New approaches are needed to develop <u>participatory mechanisms</u> on key issues of the business environment and socioeconomic development.

- <u>Portals are powerful tools</u> to engage citizens and allowing them to comment on draft laws, suggest new policies, discuss among themselves about a public initiatives.

Open government for local development

- The <u>local level should be strengthened</u> as it is where citizens interact the most with authorities.

- <u>Municipalities and local authorities</u> in Arab countries should consider designing and implementing open government initiatives <u>at the subnational level</u>, in line with the UN-Habitat New Urban Agenda.

- <u>The principles of open government</u>, namely transparency, accountability, participation, collaboration and engagement with individuals, enterprises, social and economic associations, <u>should therefore be applied at the local level.</u>

Regional partnership on Open Government

- In parallel with the commitments of few Arab countries in the OGP, a <u>specific regional partnership should be initiated</u> to develop regular action plans, under a United Nations mandate, on specific open government-oriented issues.

- Action plans could address the <u>most relevant challenges for Arab countries</u>, with proper measurement and evaluation methodologies.

- This regional partnership would <u>support the achievement of SDG 16</u> in Arab countries.

Thank you

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