# لمحة عن واقع الحكومة المفتوحة في المنطقة العربية

### Status of Open Government in the Arab Region – (Overview)

اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لغربي آسيا

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### **Presentation Schema**



- Governance Features in the Arab region
- Relationship between OG and EG
- Participation of Arab countries in OGP
- OG and key ICT indicators for openness
- OG evaluation Criteria and indicators
- ESCWA Survey and Questionnaire divisions
- Selected results from ESCWA Survey
- Conclusions

# عباءة السرية والحكومة المفتوحة Cloak of secrecy and OG



ثق بي فلاً تحتاج لأن

Government officials use cloak of secrecy to conceal what they are doing

- The open government seeks to achieve good governance,
- Openness is its most important features
- Removing the cloak of secrecy is a main issue in Open Government.

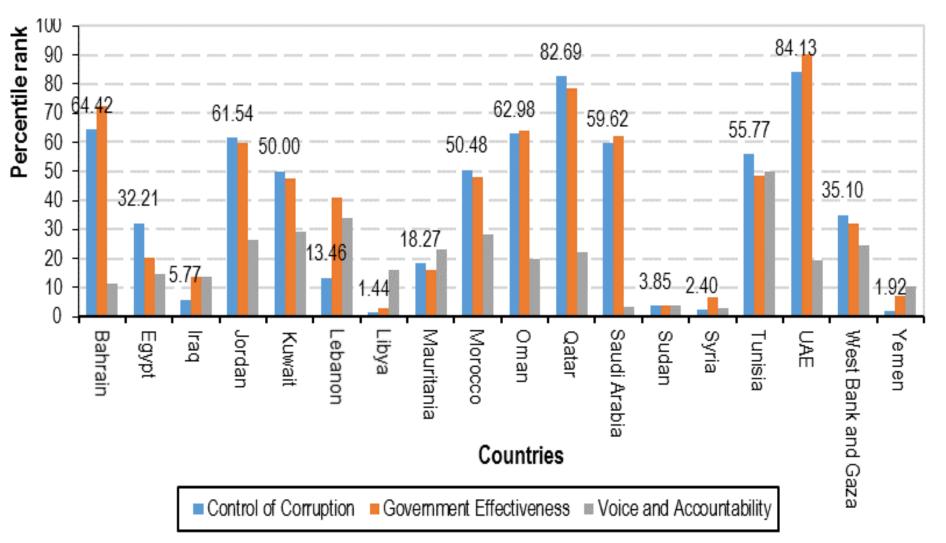
### Overview of Governance Features in the Arab region



- The success of many Arab countries in implementing egovernment encouraged them to launch Open Government initiatives
- These initiatives initially focused on open data.
- By 2015, GCC, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia had developed and implemented open data initiatives
- The implementation level, functions, included services and available data vary, from static government data on web pages available in e-government to specialized web portals

- Government effectiveness,
- Corruption control
- Voice and accountability







- "Government Effectiveness" and "Corruption Control"; percentile ranking indicators are relatively high
- As for "Voice and Accountability"; Percentile ranking indicator (one of the key open government indicators) is still weak, probably because government executives dominate public discourse and policy-making

# Interdependence between e-government and the open government



The objectives of Open Government are greatly different from those of e-government:

- The basic objective of the open government is achieving good governance
- E-government Goals: increasing the effectiveness of government procedures, reducing their costs, reengineering their procedures, submitting them electronically timely and accurately, integrating government and private sectors projects.

# Interdependence between e-government and the open government



However, there is significant intersection between e-government and open government in terms in means and data:

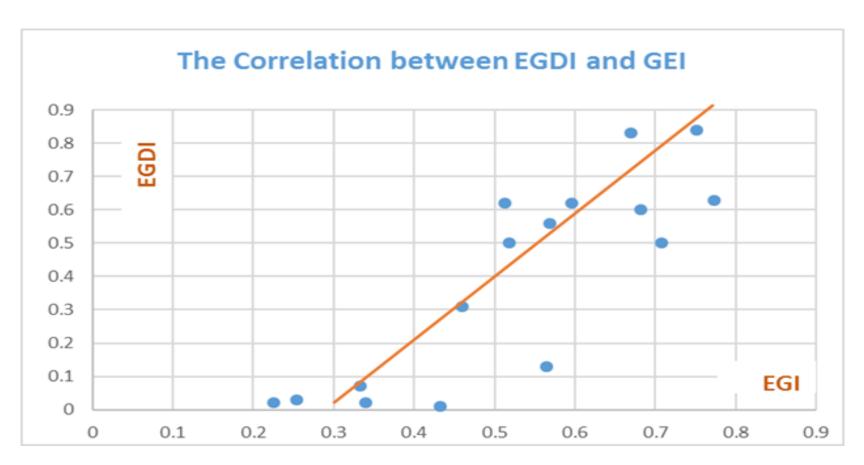
- ➤ Efficient e-government facilitates participation and open data, which are among the most important objectives of the open government.
- ➤ E-government raises the level of interaction between the government and its institutions and the stakeholders, insuring that stakeholders obtain better desired services.

### Correlation between (EGDI) and (GEI)

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(EGDI) E-Government Development Index (GEI) Government Effectiveness Index

#### The correlation coefficient is 0.848



# Participation of Arab countries in Open Government Partnership (OGP)



- The participation of Arab countries in OGP is still modest.
- Only two countries, Jordan and Tunisia, out of twenty-two, are members of the OGP; i.e10% of all Arab countries
- The participation of developing countries from comparable region, such as South and Central America, is about seven times that of the Arab region
- This may raise serious concerns regarding public awareness related to the importance and the need for government openness, and the lack of real political will for this openness.

# OG and key ICT indicators for openness



Some ICT indicators have important impact on Government openness:

- The impact of ICT on the access to basic services
- Access to digital content
- > E-participation

# Impact of ICT on the access to basic services in the Arab region (World Ranking)



Country	2015	2016
United Arab Emirates	1	4
Qatar	2	8
Bahrain	21	26
Saudi Arabia	25	33
Jordan	35	43
Oman	37	50
Kuwait	93	71
Morocco	89	95
Tunisia	79	100
Egypt	94	108
Lebanon	139	117
Algeria	125	124
Mauritania	135	129
Yemen	136	••
Libya	143	

The first five countries in the table have an indicator value higher than the regional average as well as the world average

# Access to digital content (World Ranking)



Country	2012	2013	2014	
Qatar	33	27	18	
United Arab Emirates	30	23	20	
Bahrain	19	31	38	Ac
Saudi Arabia	42	43	39	W
Kuwait	70	54	51	Fc
Jordan	50	48	54	
Oman	41	53	75	ac
Egypt	100	100	89	CC
Morocco	93	96	99	
Tunisia	79		110	
Lebanon	94	110	115	
Yemen	114	121	124	
Mauritania	129	124	126	
Syria	121		••	
Libya		131	139	
Algeria	126	137	144	

According to the World Economic Forum indicator for access to digital content

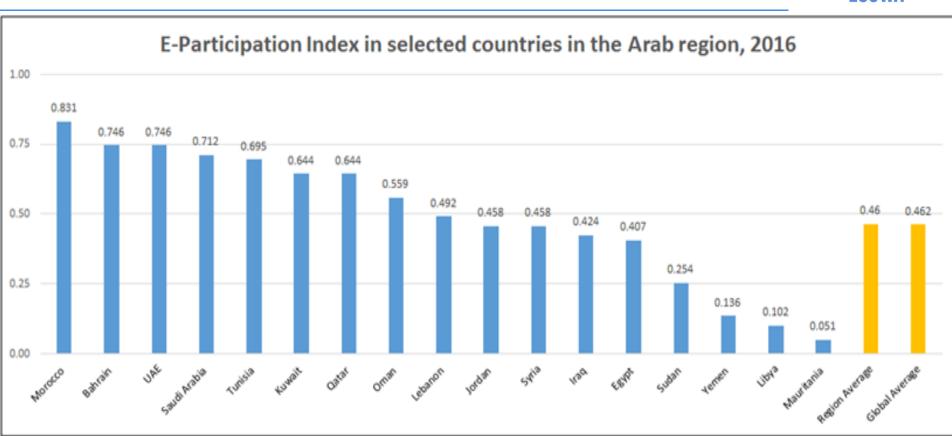
### **E-participation**



- □ E-participation is a new technology, but it plays an important role in facilitating the participatory process, because it aims at engaging citizens and stakeholders through ICT in policy-making, decision-making, making these services participatory and inclusive.
- ☐ E-participation is measured by the number of electronic channels provided by the government for citizens to participate in the public affairs and to consult with them
- ☐ The United Nations has adopted the E- participation indicator in its survey, since 2003,

# E-participation Index (World Ranking)





### **E-participation Ranking**



Country	World Rank
Morocco	17
United Arab Emirates	32
Bahrain	32
Saudi Arabia	39
Tunisia	43

According to UN survey on E-government 2016, five Arab countries ranked among the top 50 best countries

### **E-participation Ranking**



Despite the severe crises in some Arab countries, such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya, during the last few years, some of these countries achieved significant progress in its ranking in list of participation index EPI:

- ➤ Syria jumped 66 places in this ranking, moving from site 164 in the 2014 index to the site of 98 in the 2014 index
- ➤ Iraq advanced 48 positions from 152 in 2014 to 104 in 2016.

### **E-participation Conclusion**



In conclusion, Arab countries have realized, during the last few years, significant achievements in Eparticipation. These achievements can be considered as a good step towards participatory and open government.

### Open Government Evaluation Criteria and Indicators



One of the most prominent efforts in this direction is that of **OECD**, which published the study entitled "Government at a Glance 2013", using a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators, such as:

- Open data indicators
- Asset disclosure indicators
- Budget transparency Indicators
- Inclusion Indicators

### Open Government Evaluation Criteria and Indicators



- World Justice Project used in its Open Government Index 2015 a different approach to measure government openness based on the perceptions and opinions of the public and some expert in each country groups.
- ➤ Contrary to other theoretical approaches, this index highlights the views of ordinary people through their interactions with their governments
- > WJP 2015 includes six Arab countries out of the 102 listed countries.

# WJP Open Government Index 2015 (for Arab Countries)



Country	Overall Index	Ranking
Tunisia	0.51	59
Morocco	0.51	60
United Arab Emirates	0.48	69
Jordan	0.46	76
Lebanon	0.45	81
Egypt	0.42	91

# **ESCWA Questionnaire** on Open Government



- ESCWA has prepared a special questionnaire to explore the status of open government policies, strategies and legislation in ESCWA member countrie
- ➤ It was addressed to ministries, departments, public bodies and government economic institutions, to other concerned public bodies in the countries of the Arab region and to some policy and strategy experts in those countries.
- ➤ The questionnaire consists of seven parts, is related to an aspect of open government.

# ESCWA Questionnaire (composition)



- > Part I: Open government policies and strategies
- Part II: Policies and strategies for openness and transparency,
- > Part III: Open data,
- > Part IV: Open Government Portal and Technologies
- Part V: Open government legislation and regulations,
- Part VI: Open government use and spread
- Part VII: Open government challenges.

### Eleven ESCWA countries responded officially to the questionnaire distributed geographically as shown.



#### Countries participating in the questionnaire Syria Lebanon Iraq Palestin Morocco Libya Algeria Bahrain Egypt Saudi Arabia Mauritania Sudan Yemen Countries participating in the questionnaire Countries not participating in the questionnaire

### **Questionnaire Outputs** (OG policies and strategies)

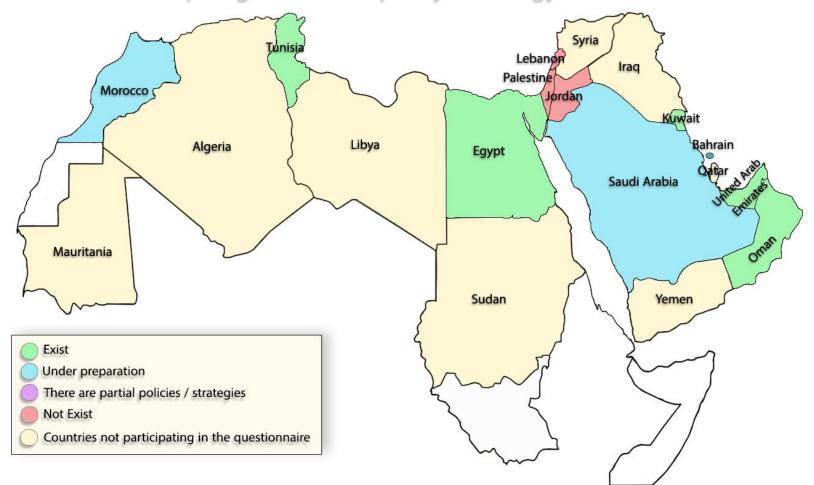


- ➤ Almost all the Arab states do not have a clear or complete OG policy or strategy, in the strict sense
- ➤ However, most of them have national plans to implement many aspects of open government.
- ➤ Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco are the countries that have the most comprehensive integrated plans

(existence of OG policies/strategies)



#### Open government policy / strategy exists



### **Questionnaire Outputs** (Concepts included in OG)



Concepts included in open government											
Concepts Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Transparency											
Government data / information management											
Open government data											
Improving the quality of public services using ICT											
Public sector modernization											
Budget transparency											
Getting information											
Participatory democracy											
Fighting corruption											

# Questionnaire Outputs (openness and transparency policies)



- ➤ All the countries participated in ESCWA questionnaire, except Jordan and Lebanon, replied that they had a transparency strategy.
- Many of these responses seem to be Inaccurate.
- However certain Arab countries have adopted remarkable initiatives in using ICT for transparency and openness.
- Dubai Smart City initiative is the best example.

# Questionnaire Outputs (transparency policies- anti-corruption)



- Jordan, Tunisia, Kuwait and Egypt have formed anticorruption entities to coordinate efforts to promote integrity.
- Egypt and Morocco have also developed anti-corruption strategies.
- ➤ Tunisia may be one of the most prominent Arab countries that have taken concrete steps in promoting integrity.
- ➤ Tunisia's new Constitution enshrines the principles of promoting public sector integrity and combating corruption.
- Citizens can report cases of corruption online as well as access through a private portal to information on anticorruption policies.



(Objectives of openness and transparency policy)

General objective	es of	this p	olicy	/ st	rates	gy / i	nitia	ıtive			
Objectives Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Могоссо	Saudi Arabia
Instilling a culture of openness											
Support the principle of transparency											
Better governance and management											
A promising and growing economy and a better life											
Administrative reform and administrative development											
Developing and improving quality of public services											
Expand private sector participation											
Fighting corruption											
Promoting participatory democracy											
Establishing a digital infrastructure											
Regional and international openness											
Building confidence											



(targets of openness and transparency policies)

The main targets of the policy and strategy of transparency and openness											
The main targets  Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Отап	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Government employees											
The civil society and its institutions											
Citizens											
The private sector											
media											

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(openness and transparency policies- Capacity)

#### Capacity that a policy or strategy aims at transparency and openness to be strengthened by government officials alestine Bahrain Morocco **Funisia** United Saudi Oman Capacity Countries Processing data from various sources Interoperability among public institutions and data crosslink in order to produce shared content, services and policies between administrations Performing data analytics in order to develop public policy and improve service delivery Other capabilities: Identify the culture of openness and the principles of transparency in administrative work Openness and participation of citizens

## ESCWA e-government-survey-2015 (Open data)



The majority of Arab countries launched initiatives to open public official information to all citizen, to a certain degree, within the framework of their implementation of e-government program.

Country	Classification according to maturity level
Tunisia	Emerging initiatives and in the process of progress
United Arab Emirates	Unilateral initiatives
Morocco	Emerging initiatives and in the process of progress
Saudi Arabia	Unilateral initiatives
Jordan	Initiatives with limited capabilities
Bahrain	Unilateral initiatives
Egypt	Initiatives with limited capabilities
Qatar	Unilateral initiatives
Yemen	Initiatives with limited capabilities

# Questionnaire Outputs (Open data- element of data)



Elements that are part of an open gov	erni	nent p	olic	y or	initi	ative	;				
Elements Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Standards/guidelines for information disclosure											
Standards/guidelines on data formats											
Standard/guidelines on licensing or publishing with respect to release/use of data											
Standards/guidelines concerning privacy											
Communications/awareness initiatives targeting data users											
Generic training for civil servants or government employees on open data											
Training for civil servants or government employees on skills for data analysis and reuse											
Engagement of data users											
Standards / Guidelines on the requirements imposed on public bodies for prospecting in texts and data											
Guidelines/rules concerning charging of fees to access government data and/or information											
Standards/guidelines for open data portals/websites											
Provide incentives for the private sector to use data											

### **Questionnaire Outputs** (OG portal and Technologies)



- ➤ According to the survey results, all Arab countries participating in the survey, except Lebanon and Palestine, have open data portals.
- ➤ However, it is likely that some of these answers are not accurate enough and that the intended portals in the responses relate to public portal gates rather than open data portals

### Questionnaire Outputs (OG portal – nature of Data placed)



The nature of da	ta p	laced (	on o	pen g	gove	rnm	ent	gate	S		
Data set Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
National elections results											
Local elections results											
National public expenditures											
Population census											
Local public expenditures											
Vehicle registration statistics											
Postal codes of cities											
Results of user satisfaction surveys on government services											

### Questionnaire Outputs (OG portal – type of Data available)



Types of data a	vaila	able or	ı gov	<i>r</i> ern	men	t ope	en ga	ates			
Types of data  Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Economics and finance											
Health											
Education											
Transport and roads											
Justice and crime											
Public projects											
culture											
Environment											
Religious affairs											
Social Affairs											
tourism											
unknown											

# Questionnaire Outputs (OG legislation and regulations)



- ➤ Tunisia is the leading Arab country in matter of legislations for open government. It has issued the following important legislations:
- ➤ The new Constitution that ensures the right to access public information, and the law on the right to access public information,
- ➤ The decree on the involvement of public administration and stakeholders in the evaluation of public services
- ➤ The decree on the participatory approach to administrative procedures governing the conduct of economic activities
- ➤ The order for the Practice and Review of Economic Activities,

# Questionnaire Outputs (OG legislation and regulations)



- Legislations on the right to access public information has been adopted in Jordan, Oman, Lebanon, Morocco Egypt and Yemen.
- ➤ Also legislations for the privacy and protection of personal data was also issued in Jordan, Bahrain and Oman.

# Questionnaire Outputs (policy level challenges facing OG)



The most important challenges facing the dev	elopr	nent of	oper	ı gov	ernn	ient i	initia	tives	at th	ie po	licy
	lev	el									
Challenges at the policy level Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
There is no open government policy / strategy											
There is no approved model or frame of reference for the open government											
Lack of a single effective data inventory for government open data											
Inconsistent application of guidelines for the dissemination of government data across organizations											
Resistance to change in public bodies						-			-		

# Questionnaire Outputs (technology level challenges facing OG)



The most important challenges facing the application and development of government
policies are open at the technological level

technical challenges  Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Могоссо	Saudi Arabia
Limited government data accessibility and re-usability											
Data are incomplete and inaccurate											$\square$
Choose the right technology in terms of cost and ease of use											
Insufficient infrastructure, packet capacity, communications equipment and software required for an open government application											
Data sets formats and standards are not harmonized											
Inadequate technical infrastructure to ensure privacy and security											
Lack of awareness among users and providers of data formats, open data and how to use and benefit from them											
Unavailability of online open government portal											

### (organizational level and institutional level challenges facing OG)



The most important challenges facing the application of open government policies at the
institutional and organizational level

Challenges at the institutional level  Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Lack of adequately skilled civil servants											
Insufficient data integration across different parts of the administration											
Insufficient culture of collaboration and sharing within the public sector											
Inadequate workflow within the public sector for data gathering,											
integration, validation, release, approval granting, update and promotion of											$\square$
Lack of incentives among government institutions to share data with other institutions											
Resistance to change in public authorities											
Lack of clear mandate for the institution coordinating open data											
Lack of robust models and strategies across the public sector to engage with data users											
Unnecessary internal barriers to access, use and re-use of data in the public sector											
Difficulty in balancing the autonomy and control of data release by the various administrations											
Lack of culture and practices of interaction with civil society organisations											

# Questionnaire Outputs (cultural level challenges facing OG)



The most important challenges facing the application and development of the government's open											
policies at the cultural level											
cultural challenges Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Могоссо	Saudi Arabia
Insufficient skills among citizens for accessing open government data and services											
Lack of budgets for implementing open government or limitations in the processes for allocating such budgets											
Lack of approaches used by government departments to estimate costs and benefits of publishing government data											
High costs for upgrading infrastructure											
High human-resource costs associated with organising, posting and updating quality data											
High costs for converting large volumes of data into re-usable formats											
Paying fees to access open data is unaffordable to citizens											
Low level of participation of civil society organisations in the											

# Questionnaire Outputs (funding level challenges facing OG)



#### of funding financial alestine Morocco ebanon **Bahrain** Kuwait United Saudi **Funisia** Egypt Arabia Jordan Arab =mirate Oman challenges Countries Lack of budgets for implementing open government or limitations in the processes for allocating such budgets Lack of solid approaches in the national administration to appraise costs/benefits of opening government data High costs for upgrading infrastructure High human-resource costs associated with organising. posting and updating quality data High costs for converting large volumes of data into reusable formats High costs for engaging data users Paying fees to access open data is unaffordable to citizens

# Questionnaire Outputs (legal level challenges facing OG)



The most important challenges facing the application and development of government											
policies are open at the legal level											
legal challenges Countries	Jordan	United Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Tunisia	Oman	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Saudi Arabia
Fragmented legislation concerning privacy and security leading to confusion and uncertainty for data providers and users											
Lack of legal clarity on who owns government data											
Inconsistent legal framework impedes data accessibility and re-use											
Absence of the regulations needed to operationalise access to information laws											
Non-enforcement of laws related to access to information											
Failure to complete the regulatory framework of open public data											

### **Thank You**

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