

ESCWA Capacity Building Workshop on Open Government in the Arab Region

Beirut, 3 July 2019

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Participation, collaboration and engagement (1):

Participation: strategy and concept



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Preparing capacity development material: background and purpose

- Capacity development material for government decision-makers in the Arab region on implementing open government
- Structured as a generic medium- to long-term strategy
- **Basic premise:** although Governments are not omnipotent, their actions affect the lives of millions of citizens
- All citizens have a **right to know** how institutions are making decisions, who participates in preparing them, who receives funding and what information is produced or underlies the preparation and adoption of legal acts

Strategy derivation: Obama Open Government Directive 2009

- **Transparency**
 - Government accountability
 - Public has information about what government is doing
- **Engagement**
 - Public can contribute ideas and expertise
 - Government can make more informed policies
- **Collaboration**
 - Improve government effectiveness

Strategy derivation: European E-Government Action Plan, 2016-20

- Facilitating **digital interaction** between administrations and citizens and businesses for high-quality public services
- Developing **re-usable modules** for user-friendly and personalised as well as better policies
- Based on **principles** of inclusiveness and accessibility; openness and transparency; and trustworthiness and security



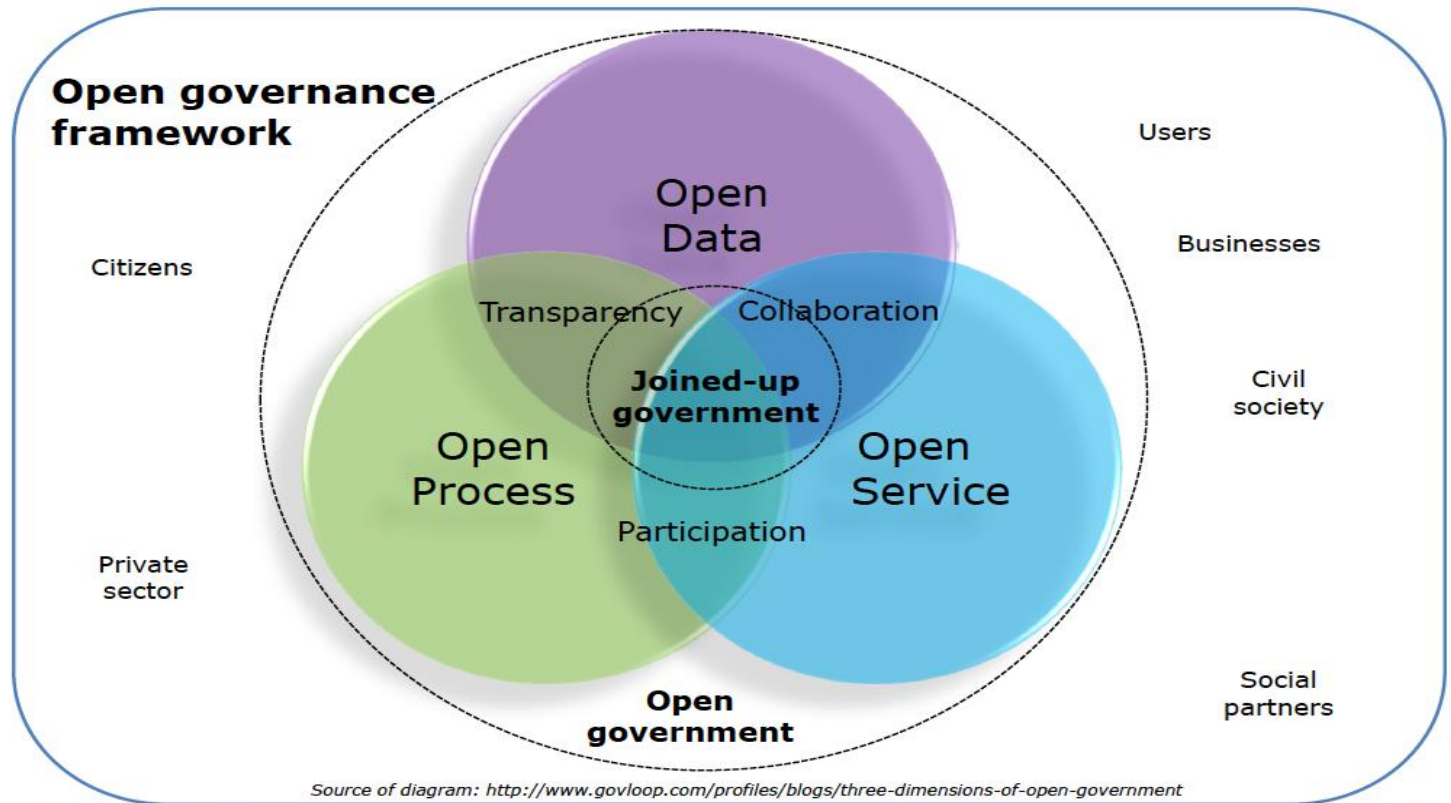
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ESCWA framework on open government

Strategy derivation:

European open governance framework, 2016



Source of diagram: <http://www.govloop.com/profiles/blogs/three-dimensions-of-open-government>



Strategy derivation:

OECD digital government strategy, 2014

Government no longer perceived only as provider but also now as convener and enabler

Technology can be used for:

1. Greater transparency, openness and inclusiveness of government processes
2. Encourage engagement and participation in public service design and delivery
3. Data-driven culture in public sector
4. Risk management approach



Strategy derivation:

Tim Berners-Lee's 5-star open data scheme, 2006



Link data to all other appropriate data



Use URIs to denote things, so that people can point at your stuff



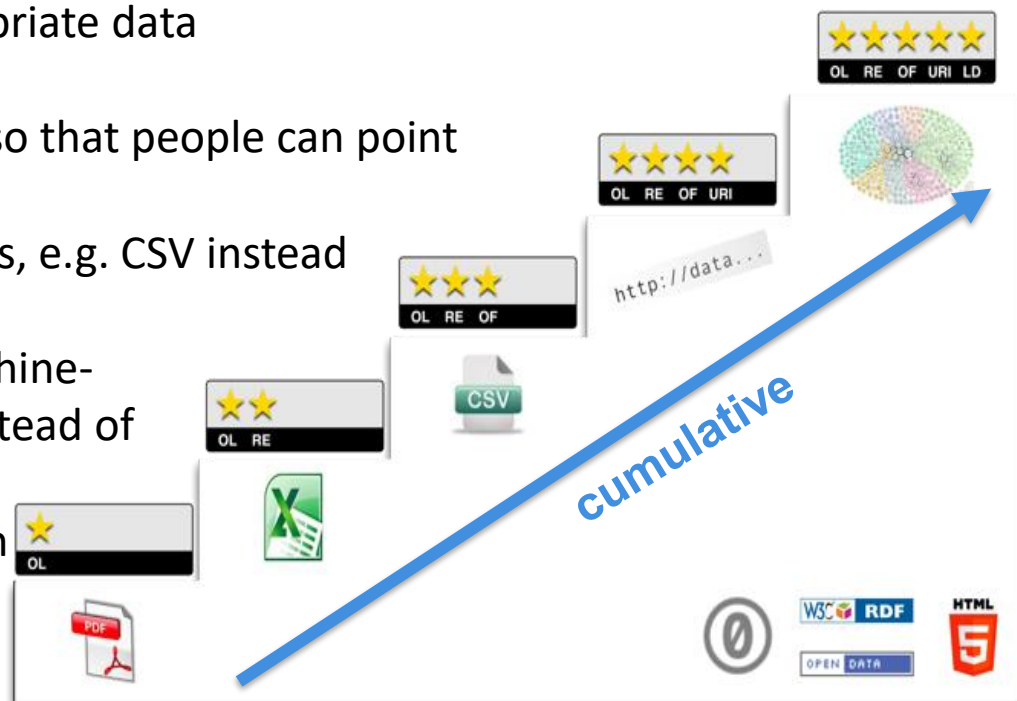
Use non-proprietary formats, e.g. CSV instead of Excel



Available as structured machine-readable data, e.g. Excel instead of image scan



Make your stuff available on the Web (whatever format) under an open license



Putting open government and participation in perspective (1)

eParticipation and Open Government are **not goals in themselves** – they are tools to make wider societal goals possible, e.g.:

- Global policy goals: Agenda 2030 SDGs
- Regional policy goals, e.g. Arab Region, EU, ASEAN
- National policy goals
- City policy goals

Putting open government and participation in perspective (2)

Participation benefits

- Service efficiency and effectiveness
- Quality and legitimacy of decisions
- Good governance and active citizenship

eParticipation additional benefits

- Reduced transaction and coordination costs
- Greater deliberativeness
- Enhanced information-processing capacity

Strategy derivation: UNDESA E-Participation index since 2003 (1)

- **E-information:** enabling participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information without or upon demand
- **E-consultation:** engaging citizens in contributions to and deliberation on public policies and services
- **E-decision-making:** Empowering citizens through co-design of policy options, coproduction of service components, delivery modalities.



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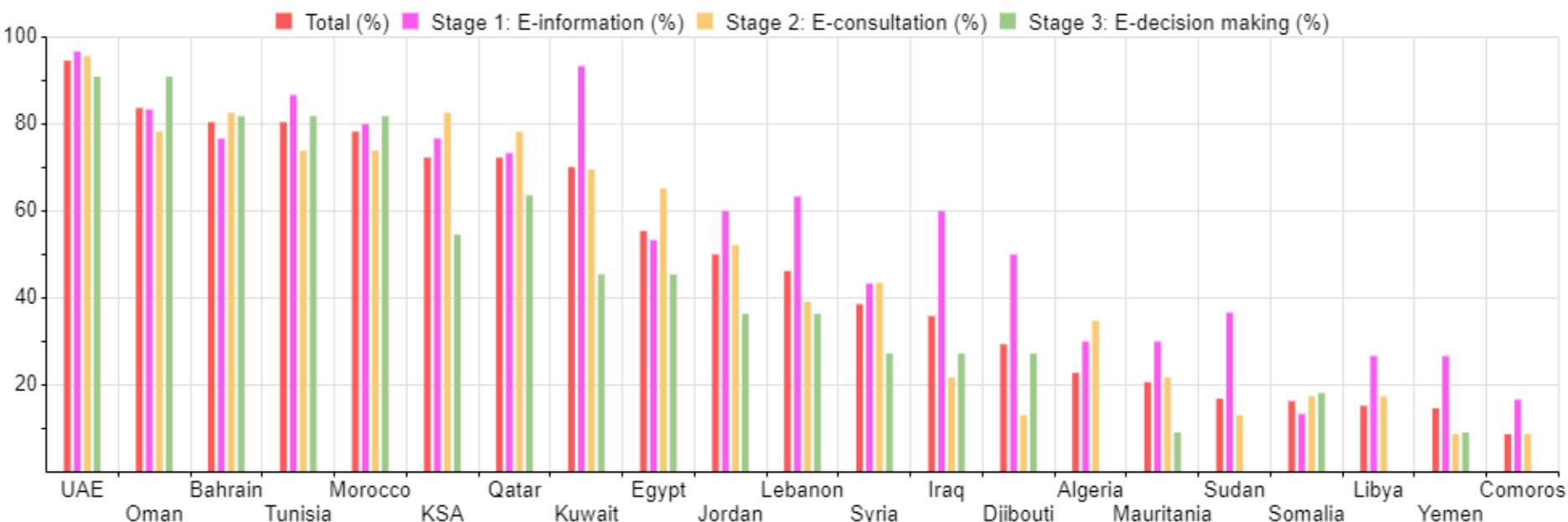
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Strategy derivation: UNDESA E-Participation index since 2003 (2)

UN E-Participation utilisation by stages 2018



E-Participation Framework is comprised of the following three stages:

Stage 1 - E-information: availability of online information

Stage 2 - E-consultation: online public consultations

Stage 3 - E-decision-making: directly involving citizens in decision processes



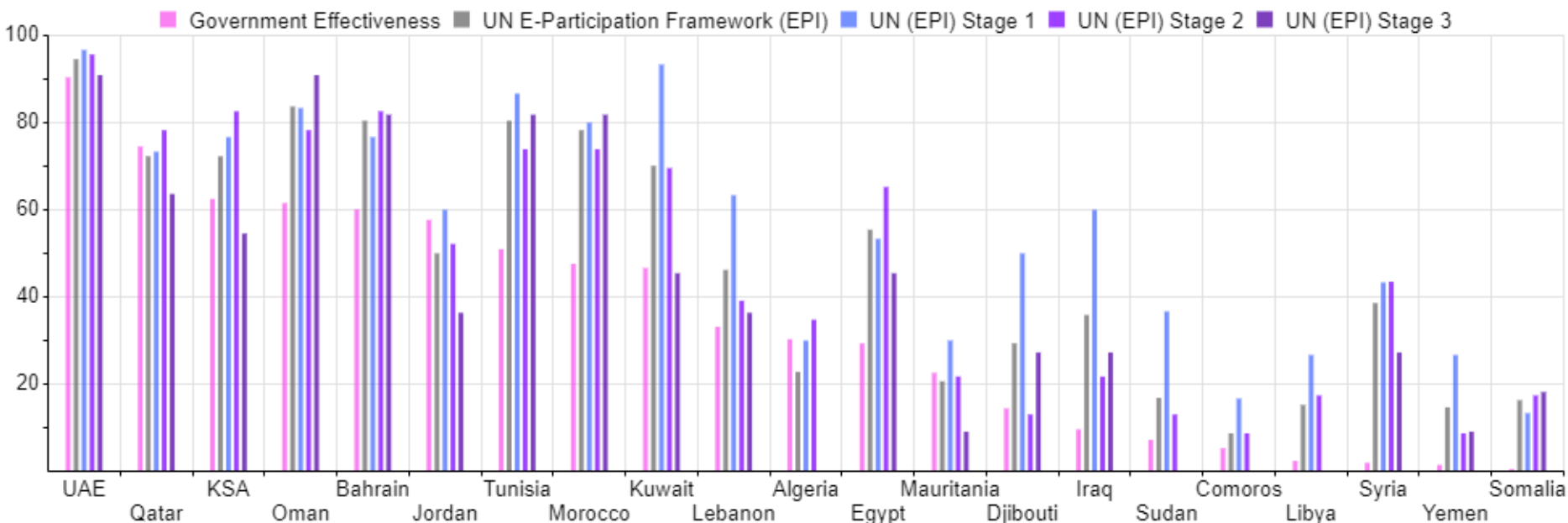
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Government effectiveness and e-participation

Governance Indicators (Gov. effectiveness) 2017 and UN eGov Survey eParticipation incl. stages 2018



Government Effectiveness (GE) – capturing perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies.

Source: [Worldwide Governance Indicators \(WGI\) project by the World Bank Institute](#)



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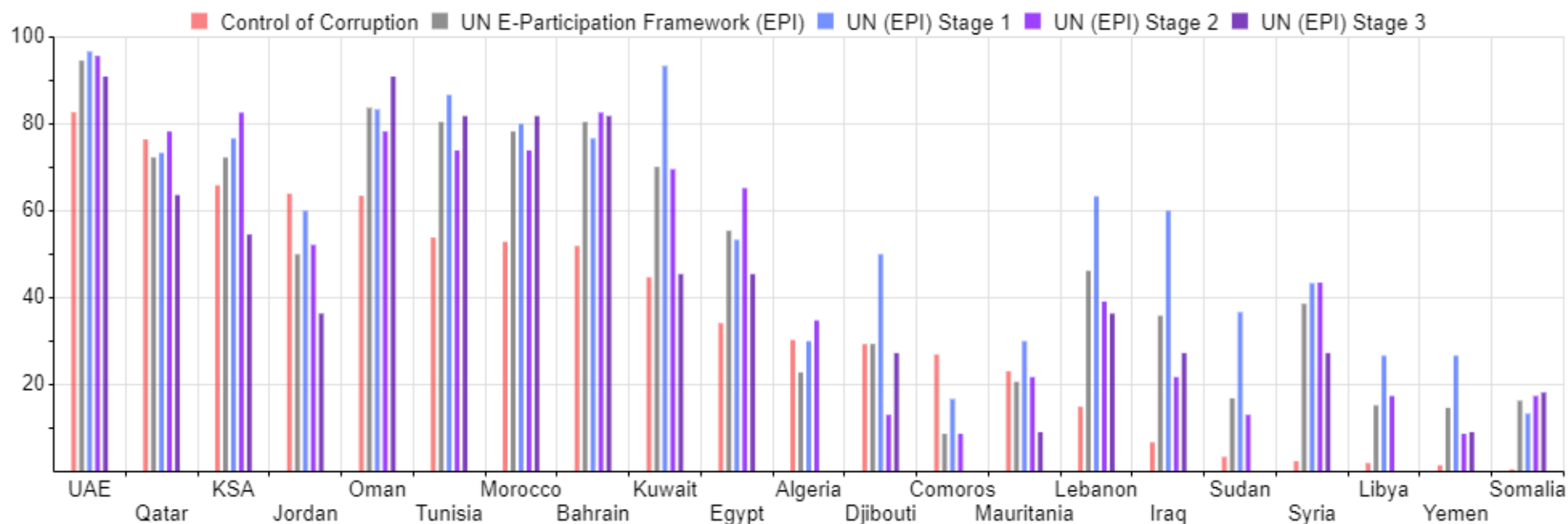
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Control of Corruption and e-participation

Governance Indicators (Control of Corruption) 2017 and UN eGov Survey eParticipation incl. stages 2018



Control of Corruption (CC) – capturing perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests.

Source: [Worldwide Governance Indicators \(WGI\) project by the World Bank Institute](#)

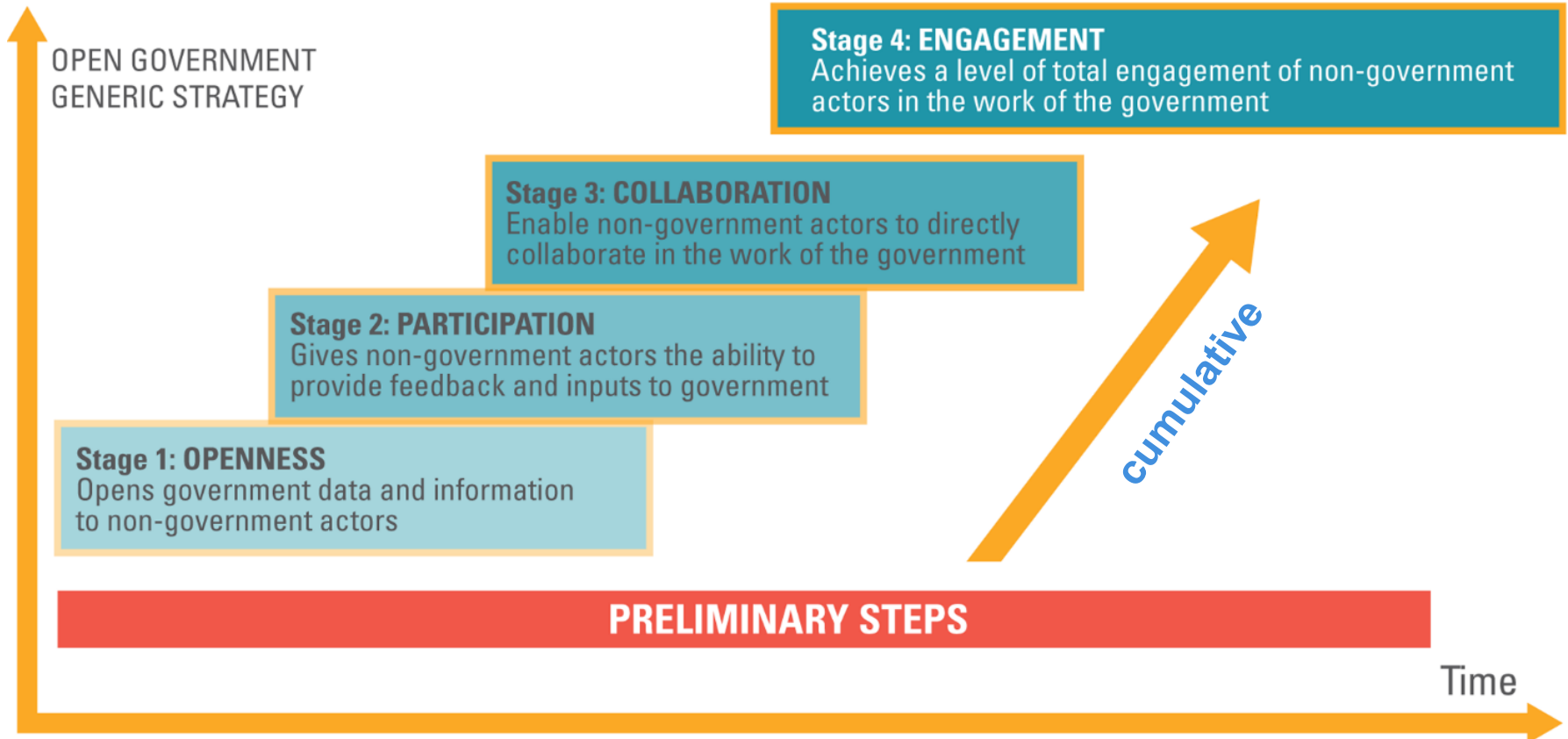


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ESCWA generic open government strategy

Four phases of open government



Four phased framework

Phase	Method	Goal
1. Openness for Transparency	➤ What government does and how it is organised	✓ Accountability
2. Participation	➤ Feedback loops	✓ Responsive
3. Collaboration	➤ Co-creation	✓ Inclusive
4. Engagement	➤ Shared responsibility	✓ Effective



Six strategic objectives

1. Developing policy and strategy
2. Providing institutional frameworks
3. Setting up legal and regulatory frameworks
4. Upgrading government capacity
5. Rolling-out technology features and channels
6. Improving public capacity

Preliminary steps

- Availability and use of ICT
+ business process reengineering in and across entities
- Declared policy document outlining national vision for participation and open government
- Change management strategy
- Increase capacity of government employees
- Raise awareness among non-government actors



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ESCWA generic open government strategy

III. PHASE 1:

GENERIC OPENNESS STRATEGY



Phase 1: generic openness strategy

- **One-way flow of information** from government to non-government actors
- **Government is active**, other non-government actors tend to be passive
- **Transparency** by default, with legally defined exceptions
- Public can **hold government to account** on policies and performance
- Some relevant data from **e-information** component of UN E-Participation index
- **Putting data online:**
 - 1 Star ★ make your stuff available on the Web (whatever format) under an open license

Openness strategy – Policy

- All government activities in principle **open and transparent** but **not total transparency**, though decisions themselves, as well as the evidence and rationale for them should be transparent.
- The public can then:
 - 1) understand how and why government works
 - 2) hold government to account
- Long-term and politically **stable framework**
- **Aligned** with broader social policies
- **Impacts, benefits, costs**
- **Quick wins**

Analyse and improve impacts, benefits, costs; collaborative alliances, coordinate strategies, align policies, body with cross-government responsibility and power, top political will
- **Tackle resistance** across government entities and promote sharing



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Openness strategy – Institutional framework

- **Institutions**
State/national authority or competence
- **Governance**
Centralisation and de-centralization: determine policy and coordinate strategy at top government level (e.g. prime minister office, taskforce in Finance Ministry), action plans and implementation at lower levels
- **Monitor/analyse impacts**
Standardised approach, quantitative, qualitative, KPIs, etc.

Openness strategy – Legal and regulatory

- **Legal and legislation**
Freedom of information, re-use of information and data
Once only principle, consider digitization before legislation
- **Open government data**
Inventory of data, Chief Information/Data Officer, data quality, ownership of data, taxonomies/global standards
- **Data protection**
E.G.: Identity Assurance Programme (UK), see own data and know who has used it (Estonia)
- **Security**
Technical, citizen data, reputation



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Openness strategy – Government capacity

- **Open government data**

Cities often leaders but national level also important

- Open data must be standardised and shared across entities (e.g. European Interoperability Framework, EIF)
- Focus on high value datasets, e.g. map, weather, environmental, traffic, socio-economic, base registries

- **Government personnel**

Whole-of-government perspective, knowledge sharing and transfer; civil servants career progression

- **Raise awareness across government**

Openness strategy – Technology features and channels

- **Tools and features for transparency**
 - Portals for information and data
 - Transparency features (e.g. policies, rights, missions, codes of conduct, agendas, how to use)
 - Data protection and security features
- **Align** to suit the needs of both government and users, e.g. on-going process of experimentation and adaptation
- **Raise awareness** amongst non-government and especially disadvantaged users
- **Provide incentives**: why? what's in it for you?, cost, accessibility, outreach, help desks, chatbots, training, in-person support, floor walkers, personal assistants)

Openness strategy – Public capacity (1)

- **Basic digital training**
Especially for traditionally digitally excluded, e.g. people who are older, poorer, have disabilities, live in inaccessible areas
- **Curate demand side ecosystem**
Appropriate tools, surveys, quick wins, potential pioneers



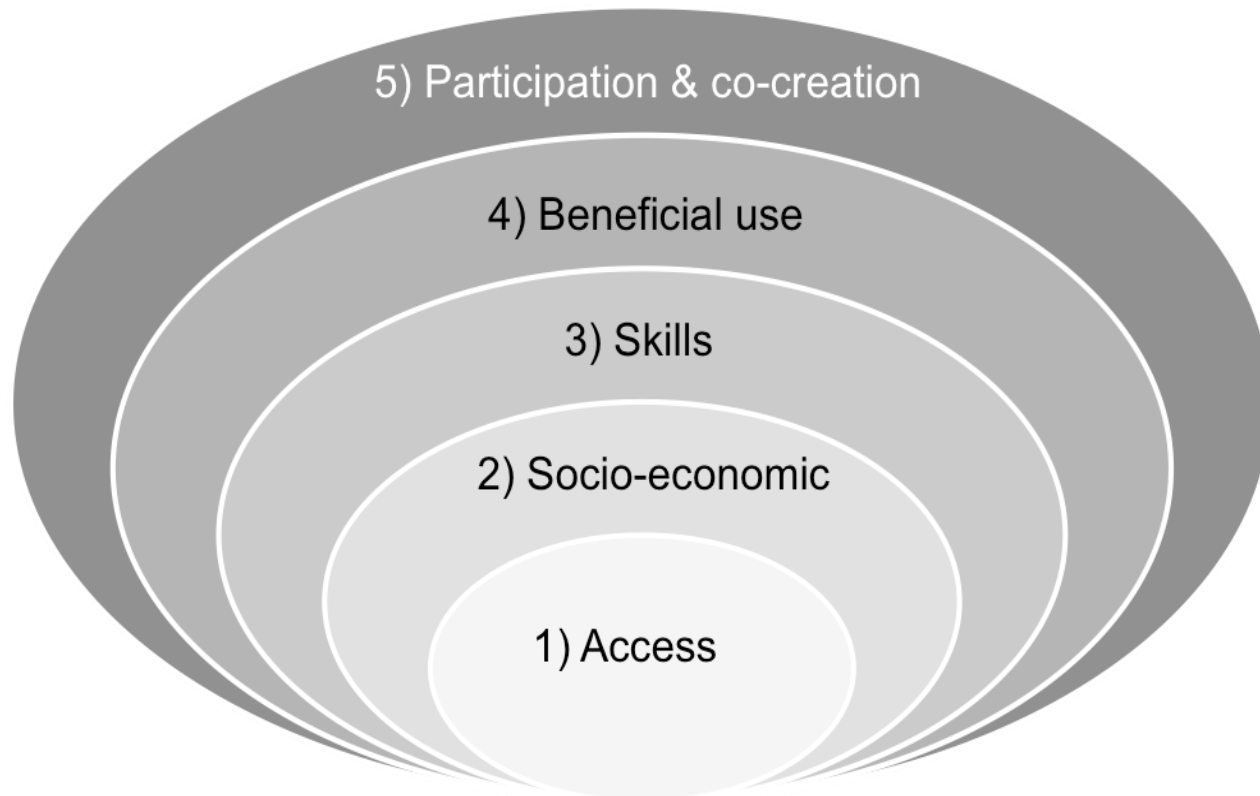
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Openness strategy – Public capacity (2)

Cumulative levels of ICT use and exploitation





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ESCWA generic open government strategy

IV. PHASE 2:

GENERIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY



Phase 2: generic participation strategy

- **Two-way** exchange of information, knowledge and opinions
- Government becomes **active and re-active**, other non-government actors are re-active
- Participatory by default, with legally defined exceptions
- Public **contribute ideas and expertise**
- Government **determines the agenda and retains the leading role**
- Some relevant data from **e-consultation** component of UN E-Participation index
- **Putting data online:**
 - 2 Star ★ ★ available as structured machine-readable data, e.g. Excel instead of image scan
 - 3 Star ★ ★ ★ use non-proprietary formats, e.g. CSV instead of Excel

Participation strategy – Policy and strategy

- **Participation policy**
 1. overall philosophy, 2. list of facility and functions, 3. how participation will be handled, 4. expected user behavior
- **Success criteria**

Explain in language people can understand – let people express their anger and frustration if necessary, respond whether use inputs or not (no black holes), as early in the policy and decision process as possible
- **Participation process**

Process simplification and reduction; complexity kept in back-office
- **User-centered design**

Design thinking, personas, service pathways
- **Personalisation**

E.g. MyPage, simplification=personalization, mass customisation

Participation strategy – Institutional framework

Building on Phase 1

- **Institutions**
State/national authority or competence
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- **Monitor/analyse impacts**
Standardised approach, quantitative, qualitative, KPIs, etc.

Participation strategy – Legal and regulatory frameworks

Building on Phase 1, plus

- Require government entities to enable participation – **right of and opportunities for** non-government actors to participate

Participation strategy – Government Capacity

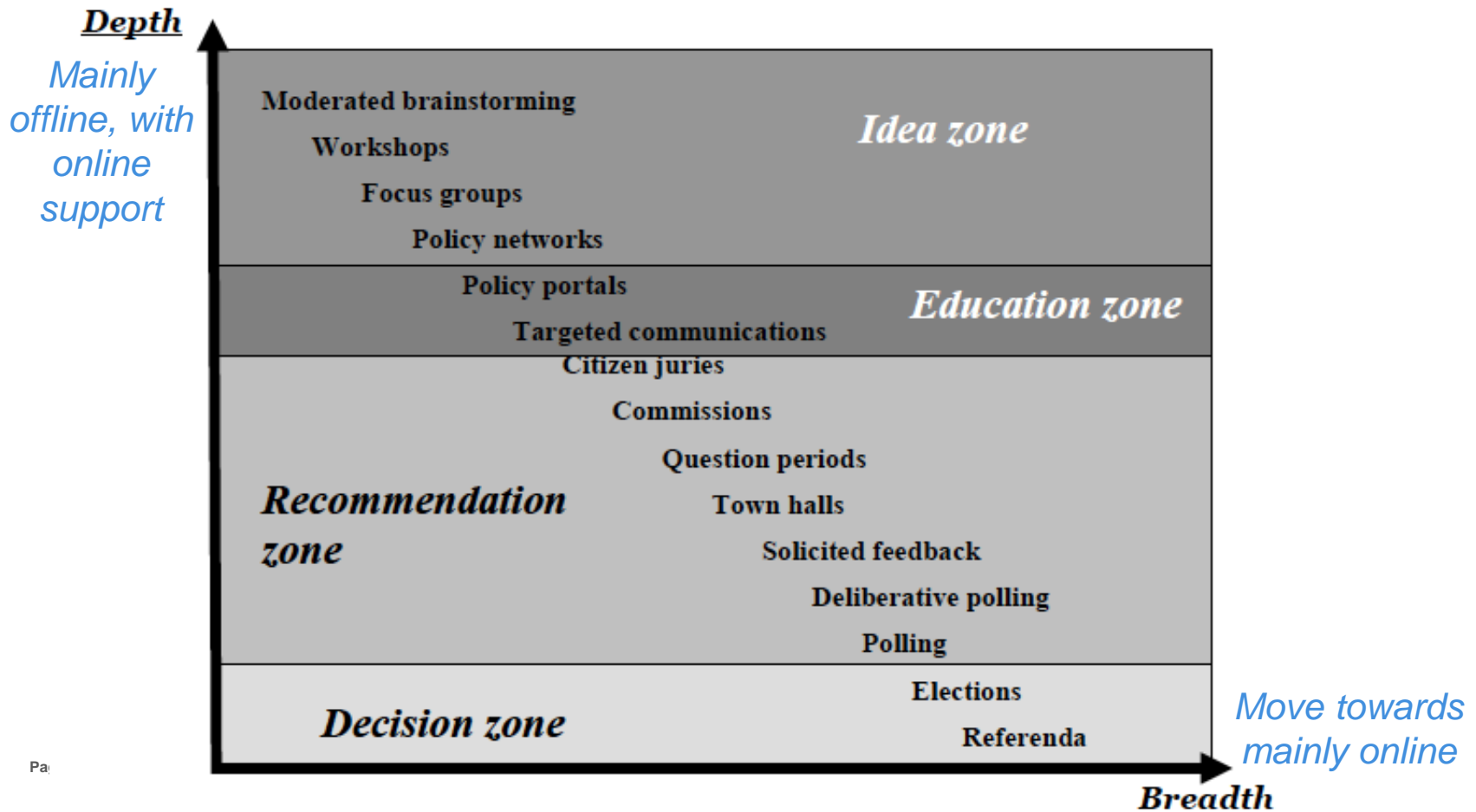
- **Guidance for civil servants** – train civil servants in engaging with the public: responsive, credible, accurate, fair, clear, thorough and transparent; open about what they can and cannot do
- **Objectives** needs to be clear from the outset + transparent procedure and understand success criteria
- **Be a civil servant** – ambassador for the government, promote participatory culture
- **Help to frame the debate** – government as arbiter between competing interests in society, making trade-offs transparent, reduce trivialisation and shouting, avoid false polarisation
- Timing: participants inputs must be **early enough** to make a difference
- **Security and privacy for civil servants** – email, passwords, security risks

Participation strategy – Technology features and channels (1)

- Shift to social media, web 2.0, semantic web
- **Multi-channel and multi-media** both for participation and e-participation
- **E-participation portal**: audio, video, feedback, rating
- **Collect feedback**, comments, opinions, access decisions based on previous consultations
- **Open government data tools** facilitating accessing, using and commenting
- **Data protection** – eID, information privacy, Commissioner to advise users, guidance on cyber security

Participation strategy – Technology features and channels (2)

Aligning purposes with types of participation, collaboration of engagement



Participation strategy – Technology features and channels (3)

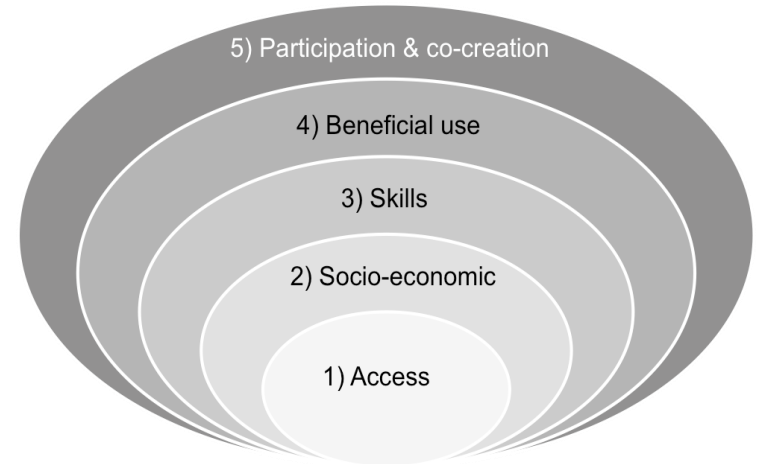
- **Interplay** between channels, mix of offline and online
- **Social media types**: networks, platforms, publication, feedback
- **Citizen feedback channels**
 - Citizens: this is a problem
 - Government: we need input to inform administration or political process

Examples: chat, comment, poll, surveys, forums, blogs, social media link buttons, etc.

- Remember to **acknowledge feedback**: automatic receipt of feedback

Participation strategy – Public capacity

Building on Phase 1, plus



- Build participation from the bottom
 - local and specific is best
 - then show how local debates have wider relevance
- Digital and political literacy
 - problem of digital ‘elites’

Thank you

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