Open Government Case Study - Sample Case Submission Form

[Open Data, Participation, Collaboration, Citizen Engagement, and Public Sector Innovation]

Important Information

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are conducting a joint study on the economic and social impact of open government for the Arab region. The study will reflect on literature review and previous studies and reports made by OECD and ESCWA and other organizations, and it will consider case studies and best practices from Arab and OECD countries. As such, and for the preparation of the study, this Sample Case Submission Form is intended to help the collection efforts for inspiring case studies and best practices from government entities and agencies in the Arab region. It should be noted that selected cases may be published within the ESCWA portal for the open government, which is under design and implementation, as well as the OECD Open Government case platform[1]. Furthermore, the relevant experiences will be in featured in the planned Joint OECD-ECSWA meeting of the MENA Working Group on Open and Innovative Government this year, in coordination and collaboration with authorities concerned by these experiences.

The attached form serves as a submission form for open government activities that have been or are currently being developed and implemented at any level of government, and specifically those authorities that are working on open government development in the country, including local levels. The Case Study might cover one of the following topics: Open Government, Open Data, Stakeholder Participation, Collaboration, Citizen Engagement, Transparency, Accountability or Innovation in the Public Sector.

In the context of the attached form, an "activity" refers to any processes and actions taken to work towards the achievement of open government at national, area or local levels. An activity can consist of one or more actions. Participants can submit as many activities they wish, and it is preferable to choose activities with an economic or social impact. ESCWA will make the analysis of the contributions and may contact participants with follow-up questions.

To share a case, please complete the MS Word form, either in English or in Arabic, as many times as you wish. We must receive all submissions no later than [15/05/2020]. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to send an email to Ms. Nibal Idlebi, chief of Innovation at ESCWA (email: idlebi@un.org, & escwa-tdd@un.org) and to the OECD Open Government Unit (Opengov@oecd.org).

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[1] https://oecd-opsi.org/case_type/open-government/

1. Organisation Details

1.1. Organisation Name	National Taskforce for containing the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) which has major contributions from the following Key Entities: 1. First Deputy Prime Minister Office 2. Supreme Council of Health 3. Ministry of Health 4. Ministry of Interior 5. Ministry of Finance and National Economy 6. Ministry of Industry and Commerce 7. Ministry of Labour and Social Development 8. Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA)
1.2. Organisation Type *[Government, NGO, International, Academia, Private Sector]*	*Government*
1.3. Country	*Kingdom of Bahrain*
1.4. Primary Sector *[Economic affairs, Education, Public administration, Health, Transport, etc.]*	*Health*

2. Activity Case Study

Now, we are going to ask you several questions about your activity. We are very excited to find out what you did, how you did it and who benefited from it. The more comprehensive your answers are, the easier it will be for the reviewers and readers to appreciate the aims and achievements of your activity.

2.1. Title *[a title for your activity]*	*Contain Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)- BeAware Mobile Application*	
2.2. Website *[the website about your activity, if existed]*	*www.moh.gov.bh* *www.bahrain.bh/covid-19* www.Bahrain.bh\apps	
2.3. Year Your Activity was Put Into Practice	*2020*	
2.4. Which of the following best describes your activity? *[Please mark the main category]*		*Open Data*
		Participation
		Collaboration
		Citizen Engagement
		Transparency
		Accountability
	✔	*Public Sector Innovation*

2.5. Summary (Short and Simple Explanation)

The summary should describe your activity and be short and simple (few sentences), and it should use clear language, compel the reader to continue reading, use simple, not sector-specific terminology (no idioms, slang, or domain-specific "buzz" words). The summary should answer the following questions:
- What the activity is?
- Why it was developed or the problem/opportunity being addressed?
- And who it benefitted?

[response of no more than 100 words]

The advanced technology infrastructure within the Kingdom of Bahrain enabled supporting the national efforts towards containing the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) through the launch of a Mobile Application named as "BeAware Bahrain". The App is based on a collaborative platform involving all concerned organizations (governmental and non-government) while engaging the society and raising their accountability of conducting the early test based on tracing their contacts with affected and Self-Isolated cases; which was made available as a free live location-based data to Users. The App empowered the sustainability of the health care system and maintained the social impact of the Pandemic.

2.6. Case Study Overview

The Overview is an overview of the activity and outcomes. You will have the opportunity to elaborate on some of the details. Please tell us:
- What problem the activity solves or what opportunity was taken advantage of
- What the activity is
- Objectives
- Beneficiaries
- How is it envisioned for the future? For example, how will it be institutionalised in its current context? How will it scale even bigger?

[response of no more than 500 words]

COVID-19 conquered the world and required immediate actions by countries to contain the spread of it while ensuring the availability of proper healthcare for affected cases. Individuals were required to take preventive measures and undergo social distancing and pay attention to personal hygiene to minimize the spread. Each time a case was identified, required the government to trace the contacts of that case within the last 14 days; which was done through information given by patients based on their memory, which is less accurate and time-consuming. Moreover, the ramp up of mass and random testing incurred additional costs which could have been efficiently utilized elsewhere.

Thus, the government decided to launch the "BeAware Bahrain" Mobile Application to the public to raise awareness and to utilize technology to help limit the spread of the virus. The app uses location tracking technologies of the Self-Isolated cases to ensure their commitment and adherence to self-isolation guidelines. The Self-Isolated Individuals are given a Wireless Bracelet linked to their mobile phone to ensure physical attachment to the phone. This was supported with a government regulation to ensure the commitment of not removing the bracelet and avoid violations; which helped in protecting the integrity of the App data and safeguarding its effectiveness to the end users and decision makers.

Booking for the final test appointment is also available for Self-Isolated cases with test results information. The app also notifies its users in case they have come into close proximity with any Self-Isolated or newly identified case within the last 14 days. Once users receive the notification, they will be entitled to conduct the test and the test center will have access to their tracing history.

Additionally, the App provide access to guidelines, statistics and public announcements about the status of the Coronavirus Locally and Internationally. It was designed for the purpose of containing the Pandemic Social Impact by giving individuals a level of confidence based on maintaining their social distance throughout the day, which helped people continue to lead a somewhat normal life but also helped country leadership prevent a complete country shutdown. It also highly improved the sustainability of the health care system within the Kingdom all over the period by enabling better resource planning the availability of the test and treatment centres and medical resources and staff.

Ultimately, all individuals living in Bahrain and using the app have benefited from it, in addition to other key players represented in the National Taskforce of containing the spread of the virus which consists of the First Deputy Prime Minister Office, Supreme Council of Health, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

The Application with its Business-supporting side and Technological infrastructure will be institutionalized in the National Disaster Management Process within the Kingdom and would be used in such situations in the future. Within the current context, deeper analysis is being conducted on affected cases' profile to support the decision-making process and to plan further containment actions.

2.7. What Makes Your Activity Different, Unique, or Innovative?

[response of no more than 100 words]

The "BeAware Bahrain" App provided a quick and reliable response to an active situation within the society using open source and Cloud technology. Its agility capitalized on the matured interoperability among different institutions (Public, Private and NGOs) involved in the Pandemic containment. It took two weeks from conceptualization to public utilization including releasing the supporting regulations that boosted its credibility. It engaged Society individuals as key players and ultimate beneficiaries. The App provided doctors with live data to be able to identify patterns and improve guidelines and treatment while providing Resource Planners with estimations to ensure sustainability of health services.

3. Development

3.1. Collaborations & Partnerships

Were there partners involved? Describe what each brought to the table and why it was important to the case. These may include: Citizens, Government officials, Civil society organisations, and Companies.

[response of no more than 100 words]

The App was led by the National Taskforce to contain the Virus with the collaboration of five key players. Ministry of Health as the Business Owner who regulate its utilization. Ministry of Interior who support monitoring Self-Isolated cases' adherence to isolation guidelines. Information & eGovernment Authority as the development arm that brought latest technologies into action through partnership with private companies.

The Society as a key success factor with their positive response in utilizing its features. The Society Organizations with their volunteering efforts based on announcements and statistics to ensure the safety and quality health care across the Kingdom.

3.2. Users, Stakeholders & Beneficiaries

Who are the users, beneficiaries, and stakeholders targeted? How each group are affected. These may also include: Citizens, Government officials, Civil society organisations, and Companies.

[response of no more than 100 words]
The App has two types of users. Self-Isolated users who are required to download the app and link it with their wireless bracelet to ensure the accuracy of their location data fed to the App. The optional users presenting individuals within the Society (Residents and Citizens) who were made aware of it to download and enable the access to their location data to get notified about the need to conduct their early test based on tracing history. Its statistics and information were feasible to decision makers and civil organizations for effective participation in the containment efforts.

4. Reflections

4.1. Results, Outcomes & Impact

- What results and impacts have been observed from the activity so far?
- How have the results and impacts been measured (e.g., methodologies used)?
- What results and impacts do you expect in the future?
- To the extent possible, please indicate the tangible or numeric results.

[response of no more than 300 words]

The utilization of the "BeAware Bahrain" App derived positive outcomes to the Coronavirus containment efforts. It minimized the government investment in isolation centers by adopting a self-isolation approach while using technology to ensure compliance to isolation guidelines and to take in only the confirmed cases and those who require medical attention. The efforts moved towards enhancing the capacity of the test and the treatment Centers based on accurate estimations. The traceability of individuals' location data helped with early detection of affected cases and gave better statistics to the decision makers on the status of the Pandemic among the Kingdom. The Emergency Level was adjusted and furnished guiding indications for the Curfew decisions based on availability of credible data about sources of infections.

The Private and Public Services provided through the Traditional Channels got completely digitized as the Government and Business Owners realized that frequent cases might emerge from its agents and customers. Schools transferred to Self-Isolation centers for blue-collar workers immediately when the data alerted that more cases is coming from this population category. The government got early indications about allocation of its Social Assistances and direction was given to support Women, Entrepreneurs as well as Small to Medium Enterprises to help their survival during the Pandemic lifecycle. Public donation account was allocated to help support the public economic recovery.

The App rating shows that the users are satisfied with its capabilities. It achieved 4.7 stars from Android users rating and 4.8 stars from iOS users rating. The number of voluntary downloads exceeded 300,000 within the first few weeks of its launch, which does not include self-isolated cases.

4.2. Challenges

- What challenges have been encountered?
- What failures have been encountered along the way (e.g., structural failures or significant setbacks)?
- And how, if at all, have those challenges and/or failures been responded to?

[response of no more than 300 words]

The time sensitivity and the need for urgent solution to contain the spread of the Virus put tough pressure on the development team where failure cost was very high beside its direct transparent to the Leadership within the Kingdom. The team was formed with the most skilled resources from conceptualization to post release support. The communication and collaboration to perform parallel tasks was a challenge when a new work style was mandated (working from home). However, the encouragement by demonstrating the value of the outcomes to the society enabled the high performance among all parties which exceeded the expectations.

The connectivity with sources of data related to statistics, announcements and identification of new cases was also a major challenge specially with the need for fast adaptability to the App requirements. Moreover, maintaining the credibility of data was a challenge that was resolved and regulated through official decrees from the Business Owner (Ministry of Health) and supported with the wireless technology (Bracelets) as well as modernized infrastructure design to ensure load balancing and performance reliability.

The business support of the App objectives was required to express integrity that was established through providing a dedicated national contact number "444" and operation centre to monitor Self-Isolated cases commitment through virtual calls and requests for Selfie captures to be sent once the connection with the wireless bracelet get lost due to connectivity issue or device distance. Furthermore, regular public announcements and press conferences with reference to the App data to reflect the national impact of its utilizations on the Virus containment efforts.

4.3. Conditions for Success

What conditions do you think are necessary for the success of your activity? Conditions for success may include:
- Supporting infrastructure and services
- Policy and rules
- Leadership and guidance
- Human and financial resources
- Personal values and motivation

[response of no more than 500 words]

The use of Open Source Technology and the Cloud Infrastructure among the robust 5G Network within the Kingdom enabled the innovation and made it as a unique implementation. The strategic direction from the First Deputy Prime Minister office defined the accountability and ensured the commitment of involved organizations and partners to make it happen. The fault tolerance was very high and critical thinking applied all over the process from technical configurations to process design and enhancements. The harmony among skilled human resources enabled tremendous outcomes and achieved valuable returns into the business objectives.

The 360-degree view of the situation enabled the formalization of timely policies and regulations to get the ultimate value of the App release. It was not considered as a new fancy technology innovation to advance a regular public service. It was a core service that enabled value delivery by the health care system and ensured its sustainability throughout the process of containing Coronavirus spread.

The leadership commitment to relay on the outcomes of analysing the trends of available data involved key players into the cycle which provided instant feedback to the development team to ensure its fit for purpose as well as designing the suitable business procedures for the maximum alignment to the latest Coronavirus status within the Kingdom. The business procedures consisted of activating the call center with traditional and virtual agents who clarify enquiries although all feedbacks for Frequently Asked Questions were updated constantly in addition to the active registry of prevention guidelines. The procedures also include Ministry of Interior support for the health specialists in their active monitoring of Self-Isolated cases and individuals' obligation to conduct the tests once receiving the notification based on their tracing history with Self-Isolated or newly identified affected case.

The team was self-motivated as they felt the social responsibility on their knowledge and skills and understood the App contribution to the overall safety and health of the Kingdom. The crowdsourcing model of the national efforts of containing the spread of the virus eliminated the financial challenges towards achieving the targets. The information and data accessibility helped reaching Civil Organizations that contributed with medical, human and financial resources as well as facilities to support the overall objectives.

The #فينا_خير and #كلنا_فريق_البحرين , #معاً_ضد_الكورونا , #مجتمع_واعي made a difference through motivating the working teams and enhancing the public awareness on the App features and derived values specially that some may have concerns about enabling the tracking of their Location Data. Some media influencers were posting their experience while providing suggestions to the development team for improvements as well as giving some thanking messages that motivates and encourage further achievements. The high officials also referenced the App in their public speeches which gave it more credibility.

4.4. Replication

Has the activity been replicated to address similar problems? If so, how? In your opinion, what is the potential for it to be further replicated in the future? You may wish to discuss how the activity has already been used by others, as well as how you believe it could be used by others in the future. These others may be in: Other organisations, within your organisation, larger or smaller agencies, organisations or governments.

[response of no more than 300 words]

The freeness of the App' data, made it possible for other Websites, News Agencies and Social Media accounts to re-publish its Statistics, Guidelines, Announcements and Data as per their Business Specialization. This enhanced its popularity and supported its objectives.

The kingdom was approached by numerous regional and international organizations and governments in an effort to understand the way the app works and to replicate the solution in those countries, since it is built around readily available technologies. The technical team have conducted hours of conference calls to share their experience with those interested in applying the same approach.

The government of Bahrain invested in this App as a solution for the spreading pandemic that affected its Society and the whole World. It proved the collaborative efforts and the Value Driven from Data Sharing among key Players within a Business Area which is the enabling factor of the Knowledge Economy and the Digital Strategy of the Kingdom. In the future, it will be one of the success stories that always turns into the head of Solution Providers and Decision Makers. The experience is being documented and reflected within the National Disaster Management Process and procedures based on the results and draw-backs of this implementation and all its Circumstances.

It might worth mentioning that after the popularity of the "BeAware Bahrain" App and the realization of its value, Google and Apple announced their cooperation to perform contact tracing and notify contacted device holders on the need to conduct their initial test based on their tracing history. In case of positive test results, the user will be asked to update his/her status as an affected case and all his/her contacts within the last 14 days will be automatically notified; such a proven concept that got replicated by the Technology Leading Organizations.

4.5. Lessons Learned

What lessons from your experience would you like to share with others like you? Where there any pitfalls to avoid?

[response of no more than 300 words]
The Strong Visionary Leadership made such case a Reality. The Government has reaped the fruits of its investments in strengthening the ICT infrastructure and building the capabilities of its taskforce. The diversification among the implementation team specializations and their work background opened room for creativity throughout the activity. The Business Owner commitment all over the cycle added real value and helped detecting issues in early stages. The turnaround cycle was minimum since every member was looking for the outcomes to plan for the next step. This lays future responsibilities on the team to transfer such skills to other initiatives within the Kingdom or even Internationally as a proven practice.

The App held the National Slogan launched to cover all the activities associated with the Coronavirus containment. This made it self-promoted and reachable with less efforts although the public awareness was constantly conducted for higher covered due to the sensitivity of the situation.

The Government within the Kingdom of Bahrain should take advantage of its vibrant tech savvy sociality and launch future technology-based initiatives to support other critical areas. The awareness level amongst all

stakeholders has been raised and new implementations should come into effect to keep the momentum and bring more achievements into the Sustainable Development within the Kingdom and help advance its Digital Strategy.

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4.6. Anything Else

Is there any other information you would like to share about the activity?

[response of no more than 300 words]

5. Materials

5.1. Materials

Do you have online materials you would like to include with your submission? Please use the fields below to insert your links.

Link for images	*[https://...]*
Link for supporting files	أخبار(12-04-2020) لى حكومتنا الإلكترونية
Project-Related Video URL 1	*https://youtu.be/REWh_UYwTOo*
Project-Related Video URL 2	*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-PmeWMS1iQ&feature=youtu.be*
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