



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



## ENACT Project

*Expediting the use of technology and innovation for enhanced operations in Arab Public Institutions*

### Submission of Case Studies

#### Introduction

Driven by the spread and adoption of emerging technologies and the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, all countries including Arab countries, have accelerated the implementation of their digital transformation agendas. Studies show that emerging technologies<sup>1</sup> and other technologies, like geospatial technologies, offer great potential to improve inclusiveness and effectiveness, promote trust in public institutions, and enhance government responsiveness to citizen needs.

To explore the efficient deployment of emerging technologies and their role in building responsive, inclusive, trustworthy, and effective public institutions, ESCWA launched the project entitled "Expediting the use of technology and innovation for enhanced operations in Arab public institutions" (ENACT) in 2023. The focus falls on providing Arab countries with recommendations to accelerate the implementation of adopted strategies and plans related to the use of emerging technologies and innovation in public sector services and back-office operations. The project will focus on practical measures and promote exchange of best practices and success stories.

ENACT supports the achievement of SDG 16 which calls for peace, justice and strong institutions, especially targets focused on developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions (16.6); ensuring responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making, and (16.7), and ensuring public access to information (16.10).

Building on efforts to collect and share examples and to provide demonstrative cases to enhance project activities, ESCWA would like to receive case studies from Arab countries. All national and local authorities are invited to complete this form and submit initiatives that demonstrate innovation and the use of emerging technologies in enhancing the operations and services of public sector institutions.

The initiatives submitted will be published online via the Arab Open & Innovative Government Portal<sup>2</sup>, launched in 2020, where it will serve as real-life examples of initiatives that are being developed and implemented by Arab countries to promote digital technologies, openness and innovation in public sector and open government. Submissions will also be used in the planned report on "Policies and best practices to harness the use of technology and innovation for building better Arab Public Institutions".

To submit a case study please complete this form, in either English or Arabic and email it to [idlebi@un.org](mailto:idlebi@un.org) and [escwa-tdd@un.org](mailto:escwa-tdd@un.org), by 30 June 2023 for inclusion in the ESCWA reports. Case studies for the portal<sup>3</sup> can be submitted until 30 November 2023, using the same contact information.

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<sup>1</sup> Emerging technologies includes new digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Big Data, Open Data, Blockchain, 5G, Robotics and Immersive technologies such as Metaverse.

<sup>2</sup> The portal can be accessed at <https://opengov.unescwa.org>.

<sup>3</sup> Published case studies are available from <https://opengov.unescwa.org/case-studies>



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### Case Studies Form

#### Tips

- Any Arab public institution can submit many case studies as they want to.
- Each case study must be an innovative or good practice related to responsiveness, inclusiveness, trust or effectiveness.
- It is suggested that authorities responsible for national ICT initiatives, liaise with other public institutes in the country to collect relevant cases and submit them to ESCWA.

Fields marked with an \* are mandatory.

**1. Title of initiative\* (English and Arabic):**

Sharik –UAE’s National Digital Participation Platform

**2. Initiative URL (If any):**

<https://Sharik.ae>

**3. Country\*:**

United Arab Emirates

**4. Your organization\* (English and Arabic):**

Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) – هيئة تنظيم الاتصالات والحكومة الرقمية

**5. Organization URL (If any):**

<https://tdra.gov.ae/en/>

**6. Primary sector(s) that the initiative addresses\*: (Please select all that apply)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture          | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral resources & energy                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and culture                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public administration           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education            | <input type="checkbox"/> Public works & infrastructure              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency & Disaster management | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social and economic development |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance              | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade & industry                |



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- Justice and Law
- Enforcement
- Labour & Employment
- Transport
- Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

### 7. Main aim of the initiative\*: (Please select no more than 3)

- Public sector innovation
- Digital government
- Access to Information
- Open government
- Open data
- Participation, collaboration & engagement
- Protection of people, systems, information and data

Fields marked with an \* are mandatory.

### 8. Technology focus of the initiative\*: (Please select all that apply)

- Connectivity (high speed internet/broadband) technologies
- Cloud computing
- Cybersecurity technologies
- Data centres
- Artificial intelligence
- Big data
- Open Data
- Immersive technologies (extended reality technologies such as VR, AR & Mixed Reality (MR))
- Blockchain
- Geospatial technologies (GIS, GPS and remote sensing)
- Internet of Things
- Other, please specify: Web experience and gamification (launching in July 2023)



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### 9. Sustainable Development Goals of the initiative\*: (Please select all that apply)

- Agenda 2030
- SDG1: End poverty
- SDG2: End hunger
- SDG3: Ensure healthy lives
- SDG4: Inclusive and quality education
- SDG5: Achieve gender equality
- SDG6: Clean Water and Sanitation,
- SDG7: Modern and affordable energy
- SDG8: Promote economic growth
- SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure
- SDG10: Reduce inequality
- SDG11: Inclusive cities
- SDG12: Responsible Consumption & Production
- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG14: Life Below Water
- SDG15: Life on Land
- SDG16: Peaceful and inclusive societies
- SDG17: Implementation mechanisms

### 10. Description of the initiative and its purpose: (Please answer all the following questions)

#### a. Brief description\*: (100 words)

Sharik.ae, the UAE Digital Government's innovative digital participation platform, revolutionizes citizen engagement and fosters collaboration between the government and the public. Designed to empower UAE citizens, residents, and visitors, the platform offers diverse opportunities for active participation in decision-making processes and shaping policies and initiatives. Through its comprehensive range of tools and channels, Sharik.ae enables individuals to contribute effectively, driving meaningful change and co-creating a better future for the UAE. This transformative platform signifies the government's commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and citizen-centric governance, paving the way for a stronger and more participatory society.

#### b. Implementation timeline\*: (Beginning and ending year(s) of the initiative)

Year of launch:	The updated version of <a href="https://Sharik.ae">https://Sharik.ae</a> enhanced public interface will launched July-2023 . However the current Sharik.ae public interface was originally launched in 2017. The new version of the entities interface was launched in January 2022 (requires access) - <a href="https://sharik.government.ae/">https://sharik.government.ae/</a>
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Is it ongoing?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	If No, please indicate year:	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Fields marked with an \* are mandatory.

- c. **Contributor(s)/Partner(s):** (List all entities that participated in developing and/or implementing the initiative. Please select the type of organization using the pull-down menu and name the role each entity played,)

Contributor/Partner Name	Type of Organization	Role played (25 words)
Ministry of Education	Government	Publish Digital Participation campaigns in respect to the Education Sector.
Ministry of Health and Prevention	Government	Publish Digital Participation campaigns in respect to the Health Sector.
Ministry of Climate Change & Environment	Government	Publish Digital Participation campaigns in respect to the Environment Sector.
Ministry of Community Development	Government	Publish Digital Participation campaigns in respect to the Social Protection Sector.
Ministry of Justice	Government	Publish Digital Participation campaigns in respect to the Justice Sector.
Ministry Of Human Resources & Emiratisation	Government	Publish Digital Participation campaigns in respect to the Employment Sector.

- d. **Purpose of the initiative\*:** (100 words)

Sharik.ae aims to foster an inclusive and transparent government, enabling citizens to voice their opinions, share ideas, and actively engage in government decision-making. As a trusted platform, it empowers the UAE government entities to gather valuable public input on policies, projects, and initiatives. By incorporating the perspectives and preferences of the people, Sharik.ae ensures that government actions are responsive and reflective of the collective will. With its user-friendly interface and accessible features, the initiative promotes a participatory democracy, where citizens play a crucial role in shaping the future of the UAE.

- e. **Functions and/or Features offered by the initiative\*:** (100 words)

Sharik.ae provides users with a dynamic platform to engage with digital participation initiatives and campaigns from diverse government entities across sectors. It enables individuals to propose new suggestions and ideas, offering opportunities for collaboration with government entities. The platform facilitates a two-way interaction between the government and the public through features such as forums, surveys, polls, blogs, and access to relevant news and events. Designed with a user-friendly interface, it ensures accessibility for users with varying levels of digital literacy. With its availability in multiple languages, Sharik.ae embraces inclusivity and caters to the diverse population of the UAE.

- f. **Principles supported through the initiative\*:** (Select all that applies to the initiative)

**Responsiveness:**



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*Ability and willingness of government to, timely and effectively, address the needs, concerns, and feedback of citizens.*

**Inclusiveness:**

*Extent to which all people in the society are represented, engaged, and included in decision-making processes and access to public services.*

**Trust:**

*Belief of citizens that public institutions will act in their best interest and fulfill their responsibilities and obligations with integrity, transparency, and accountability.*

**Effectiveness:**

*Commitment of government to develop effective policies and programs, and measure and evaluate its performance to meet goals and targets and delivering quality public services.*

**Transparency:**

*Openness, accountability and accessibility of government information, decision-making process and operations.*

### **Outcomes, impacts & change in experiences as a result of the initiative\*:**

g. (200 words)

Sharik.ae has a significant impact by empowering citizens, residents, and visitors to actively participate in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of empowerment and inclusion. Through the platform, the transparency between the government and the public has been strengthened, allowing for a more open and collaborative approach. By soliciting feedback and co-designing services, Sharik.ae has facilitated the delivery of government services that better cater to the public's needs, reaching service happiness percentage of 88% in December 2022.

One notable example is the Ministry of Health and Prevention's customer councils, where the public joins the ministry's teams in ideation sessions to enhance and improve services. The valuable input gathered through these sessions has led to tangible improvements in the services provided, ensuring they are user-centric.

Moreover, the UAE Government launched the 'Designing the Next 50' project, a major public eParticipation initiative aimed at engaging all segments in shaping the next 50 years. Citizens and residents have been encouraged to share their ideas for national projects, with the opportunity for these ideas to be included in the national budget. This initiative demonstrates the commitment to inclusivity and collective decision-making, allowing society members to actively contribute to the future development of the UAE.

### **Challenges faced during the planning and implementation of the initiative\*:**

h. (200 words)

- Incentivizing the public to actively participate in digital participation campaigns.
- Ensuring that digital participation is adopted as a culture within the government entities and is considered an integral part of the process for policymaking and service design/development
- Keeping up with the fast evolving technology trends that can be utilized as features within the Sharik platform (such as Blockchain, AI, Metaverse, etc.)
- Leveraging App dynamics to take informed decisions towards enhancing sharik platform to respond to the user needs based on their interactions/digital footprint required efforts, dedicated resources with specific skillsets, to learn from users footprints and inform the decision towards services design/development.



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- Integrating sharik platform with all government entities channels was a complex task, the aim was to ensure inclusivity and that the public can participate to the same consultation from their preferred channel, then all their feedback and insights are collected and analyzed within one centralized platform on the national level.
- Training FGEs on the updated capabilities on Sharik Platform to ensure government employees can leverage the provided tools and publish their digital participation campaigns. They were then ncentified to plan for the upcoming campaigns and plan ahead their digital participation calendar.

Sector	No. of Campaigns*				Total
	2022	2023		Total	
	Closed	Closed	Current		
 Education	1	1	4	13	19
 Employment	0	1	3	7	11
 Health	1	3	3	9	16
 Environment	3	3	4	1	11
 Justice	3	0	2	5	10
 Social Protection	0	3	0	5	8

### Lessons learned from the initiative’s development and implementation: (200

i. words)

- Digital Participation is an ongoing practice and a journey rather than a one-time initiative.
- Government entities need to utilize different channels and mediums to expand the reach and awareness of the public regarding the digital participation campaigns to drive higher engagement levels from the public.
- Government entities should utilize different types of incentivization to encourage the public to take part in digital participation campaigns such as gamification.
- Participation should not be limited to digital only, governments should practice both offline and online participation to increase the reach of vulnerable groups
- Diversification of participation topics is important, and the public’s key concerns should be a priority within selecting participation topics especially including topics targeted for the vulnerable groups.
- Government Employees at all levels should understand that Digital Participation is a way and not an end. It is a way to ensure inclusivity and user-centricity while developing and designing government services as well as making policies – this awareness has been achieved through the 2022-2023 Digital Participation building capacity program for the government entities.



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j. **Useful links: (title and URL)**

Customer Council Campaign:

<https://u.ae/en/participate/consultations/consultation?id=3375>

Consultation by the Ministry of Justice in regard to decide on the curriculum of the summer training program <https://u.ae/en/participate/consultations/consultation?id=3209>

FAHR: Brainstorming session to develop the "Jahiz" Platform

<https://u.ae/en/participate/consultations/consultation?id=3346>

Consultation on Sign Language: <https://u.ae/en/participate/consultations/consultation?id=3331>

**11. Contact person(s)\*:** (Please provide at least one contact person for the initiative. This information will not be published and it will only be used to follow-up on the submission, if needed)

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Phone/Mobile :	Click or tap here to enter text.

Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Functional title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Organization:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email:	Click or tap here to enter text.



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Phone:	Click or tap here to enter text.
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***Thank you***