



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



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 featured in the planned Joint OECD-ESCWA 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 [07/05/2020]. 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).

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

1. Organisation Details

1.1. Organisation Name

Royal Commission for Riyadh City (RCRC)

1.2. Organisation Type

[Government, NGO, International, Academia, Private Sector]

Government

1.3. Country

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

1.4. Primary Sector

[Economic affairs, Education, Public administration, Health, Transport, etc.]

City Urban Development & Transport

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]

Riyadh Public Transit Network (RTN) Face-to-Face Communication Strategy

2.2. Website

[the website about your activity, if existed]

www.riyadhmetro.sa

2.3. Year Your Activity was Put Into Practice

September 2014

2.4. Which of the following best describes your activity?

[Please mark the main category]

	<i>Open Data</i>
	<i>Participation</i>
	<i>Collaboration</i>
<i>X</i>	<i>Citizen Engagement</i>
	<i>Transparency</i>
	<i>Accountability</i>
	<i>Public Sector Innovation</i>

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?

The Face-to-Face (F2F) Communication Strategy adopted by the Riyadh Transit Network (RTN) Project during its construction phase, was established to build unique community engagement between a city's 7 million residents and its Mass Transportation Project.

The initiative was conducted by RTN's Community Engagement Team (CET). Its objective was to inform residents and shop owners affected by upcoming traffic detours related to the construction, before any changes on the ground take place i.e. before contractors start installing jersey barriers on the road and deviate traffic.

Based on a simple philosophy "For residents to respect the project, the project needs, first, to respect residents", RTN's Communication Strategy was unique not only for the country, but for the whole region. Simply put: As a courtesy, residents were informed by the CET through F2F visits, two weeks beforehand, of any traffic detours and construction works. However, the communication was personalized by F2F encounters with each shop owner and resident directly affected by those detours.

In addition, the CET was kept inform about residents' complaints through the RTN Call Center, established as the main contact point between the residents and the project. Within 1 hour of receiving the complaint, the CET would meet the resident on the ground, with an engineer from the contractor, to resolve the issue on the spot. This level of responsiveness was never seen before in a any construction project, let alone one owned by the government.

This personalized level of communication has developed strong goodwill between the RTN and the 7 million residents of Riyadh. It also built a sense of co-habitation between the project and city inhabitants during the 6 years of construction.

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]

Background

The city of Riyadh started building the first Public Transit Network of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia back in October 2013: A Metro system made of 6 lines, with 85 stations, spanning over 176 km of tracks, and a Bus network of 80 routes, serving 3,000 bus stops, over 1,900 km of routes. This massive infrastructure project, one of the largest in the world at a cost of \$28 billion, was going to create more than 300 construction sites, in a city already congested with 7 million people, generating almost 10 million car trips per day.

Objectives

- To minimize the inconvenience caused to the population by the traffic detours generated by construction works
- To build affinity and a sense of ownership between the residents and the RTN Project

Activity/Solution

- To start construction, major traffic detours involving main city arteries had to be implemented.
- To minimize inconvenience to the population, RCRC adopted a customized Communication Strategy at 3 levels:
 - Face-to-Face (F2F) communication through visits by the Communication Engagement Team (CET) to every shop and home directly affected by the detours.
 - Door-to-door information distribution to the rest of the affected neighbourhoods
 - Advertising campaign to reach the remaining of the population city-wide

Those three communication activities would take place at least 10 days before detour implementation

- In addition, a Call Center was established to handle residents' complaints, which were channelled to the CET to resolve on the spot.
- The information distributed during the F2F and door-to-door included a letter from HRH The Governor of Riyadh explaining the benefit of the RTN, a brochure about traffic detours, with alternative parking places and contacts of the Call Center.
- The fact that people were informed in advance of the changes on the ground didn't give them any negative surprise, helped manage their expectations, absorb their anger and gave them an opportunity to complain and have their cases heard and resolved swiftly
- This developed a sense of collaboration between the residents and the project, since the former felt their voices heard and the prompt involvement of RTN to resolve their issues brought that message home

Beneficiaries

- All Riyadh city stakeholders: Residents, shop owners, commercial and business centers, schools, universities, government entities, hospitals....
- Overall, more than 80,000 F2F visits by the CET and 820,000 door-to-door distributions during the past 5 years

Institutionalization

- The success of the Communication Strategy was such, that it prompted the HRH The Governor of Riyadh to institutionalize it for all other government construction projects in the city.

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

[response of no more than 100 words]

- Based on a simple philosophy “For residents to respect the project, the project needs, first, to respect residents”, RTN’s Communication Strategy was unique not only for the country, but for the whole region.
- Simply put: As a courtesy, residents were informed by the CET through F2F visits - two weeks beforehand - of any traffic detours and construction works.
- Moreover, personalizing the communication with F2F encounters with each shop owner and resident directly affected by those detours, was also a first
- The level of personalization was also extremely granular, demonstrating how RTN went the extra mile to facilitate the life of the residents. For example, the King Abdulaziz Road Metro Line – also called the Green Line – serves 22 government entities along its 12 km of route. RTN asked contractors to implement 22 different local traffic detours to ensure easy access to those ministries, some of which had 5,000 employees. Each of the 22 detours was developed in animation format to be placed on the ministries’ websites, as well as printed in large quantities to distribute among each ministry’s staff.
- This attention to details earned RCRC many kudos from other entities from both the public and private sectors

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]

Besides the Community Engagement Team (CET), there were several other partners involved in the implementation of the strategy:

- The five contractors building the Metro and Bus networks seconded their engineers to visit locations with issues to be resolved for residents
- The Call Center channelling all complaints to the CET
- Utility companies: Water, Electricity and Telecoms
- The company conducting the door-to-door distribution to the 1.2 million households in the city
- Media channels, both traditional, digital and social, which helped us disseminate the information to residents in due course

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]

- **Prime beneficiaries** of Face to Face visits:
 - Residents, shop owners, commercial and business centres, schools, universities, government entities, hospitals....
- **Stakeholders**
 - When counting, more than 500 stakeholders were involved on the RTN Project – A massive undertaking
 - These included organizations with a physical interface with the project (like major malls and high-traffic destinations across the city), to land owners, government and regulatory organizations, academic institutions and utility agencies

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.

Results

- Since October 2014, the CET has conducted more than 80,000 F2F visits. In addition, 820,000 door-to-door distributions during the past 5 year.
- The Call Center managed over 25,000 complaints, which were then handled by the CET.
- Moreover, it is worth mentioning that visits were cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic due to social distancing. However, the CET managed to keep working remotely through emails, making sure business was going as usual on the ground through the Engineers from the contractors.

Impact

- The success of the RTN Communication Strategy will inspire community engagement activities of other projects managed by RCRC, namely: King Salman Park, Green Riyadh, Riyadh Art and Sports Boulevard.
- The RTN Project is regularly mentioned by other government entities and media personalities as a communication success story when it comes to citizen engagement and sense of ownership in such a massive project

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]

Mission Impossible?

- How do you build **simultaneously** 6 Metro lines over 176 km, with 85 stations, in addition to 80 Bus routes, with 3,000 stations over 1,900 km, through more than 300 construction sites, in a city of 7 million people, who already generate 9 million car trips per day?
- This is a massive undertaking by any sense of imagination. The disruption created would be impactful. To mitigate the risk of anger from residents and business owners who would be affected, Communication had to play a critical role, to demonstrate that:
 - RCRC first respected the population of the city and, out of sheer courtesy, wouldn't allow construction to take place without prior notification to residents
 - RCRC cared about the impact of the disruption and would spare no effort to minimize the inconvenience

Challenges

- Some people couldn't recognize the long-term benefits of the project. For example, those mostly affected because of their proximity to construction sites, would be the first to benefit once the service would run, due to their proximity to the new metro stations. Hence, the explanation about the medium to long term benefits had to be stressed during the visits to the public, for people to remain patient and endure the construction period.
- Another part of the message during construction was that the RTN would also re-engineer the city by making it more agile to move around and more liveable, while renewing its infrastructure in terms of power, water, telco and sewage treatment installations, as well as giving it a facelift with new sidewalks and streetscaping.
- In some instances, due to unforeseen circumstances, construction had to be extended for a longer period of time in certain locations, mainly because of issues with the utility network underground. This necessitated for the CET to conduct another series of F2F visits in the neighbourhoods, to explain to stakeholders the reason for the delay and the revised time plan.

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]

One of the main reasons for the success of face-to-face visits was the efforts of the CET. This team consisted of 18 employees from the Royal Commission of Riyadh City and has the expertise required to communicate with the residents of Riyadh and follow up on the complaints.

The communication team met weekly with contractors and consultants to discuss visits, and to present the complaints that had been closed and the new ones. These meetings were necessary to plan and schedule future visits.

In addition, the team's response to the complaints received was also one of the reasons for the success of the visits, so that the team communicated with the complainant during the first hour or two hours of receiving the complaint.

The team was also equipped with smartphones and a fleet of cars dedicated to their visits, which helped the team reach the complainants throughout the city.

There was also a team of consultants within the RCRC to support and coordinate the work of the CET and help the team to plan visits and provide advices when necessary.

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 success of F2F Communication on the RTN Project has provided RCRC with strong learnings regarding citizen engagement approaches.
- Because of the RTN success story in community outreach, the Governor of Riyadh requested RCRC to use its CET to inform residents of certain neighbourhoods in the city regarding an upcoming project by another government entity.
- A similar approaches will also be adapted to community engagement for RCRC's 4 Wellbeing Projects mentioned earlier: King Salman Park, Sports Boulevard, Green Riyadh and Riyadh Art.

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]

Lessons Learned

- Whenever you implement a project in the city, be courteous and respectful of its residents, if one wants them to respect the project
- Warn them in advance before any work starts on the ground and manage their expectations: If timings change, inform them accordingly

- Being forthcoming and transparent is much appreciated by residents
- Customized and personalized communication has no substitute, to ensure affected stakeholders are informed properly and regularly, hence trusting you and giving you credit for your diligence
- Gaining such credit with all residents is very important, because some days during construction, you might need it to be forgiven for a delay or a traffic issue
- With a project of such a scale, Collaboration with all concerned stakeholders is a must: Have weekly meetings to ensure communication is flowing and is up to date all the time
- Finally, engage residents on the project, so they can have a sense of ownership in it:
 - Let them see what you are doing (organize site visits...) and why you are blocking the city, so they can appreciate the challenges you face
 - Celebrate with them important project milestones, so they are part of the success of the progress
 - Engage with key stakeholders interfacing with the project, as well as with key entities and people in neighbourhoods
 - After all, the project is being implemented for them, to help them achieve a better lifestyle

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://twitter.com/RiyadhTransport/status/512484576053055488?s=20
Link for supporting files	<i>[https://...]</i>
Project-Related Video URL 1	<i>[https://...]</i>
Project-Related Video URL 2	<i>[https://...]</i>
Other related URL	<i>[https://...]</i>
5.2. Could you give us the permission to republish the data and information, or part of them, included in this form?	<i>Request to be submitted on a case-by-case basis</i>
5.3. Please provide the correct reference for re-publishing purposes.	<i>[response]</i>