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	*e-Government Unit at the Presidency of the Government*
1.2. Organisation Type *[Government, NGO, International, Academia, Private Sector]*	*Government*
1.3. Country	*Tunisia*
1.4. Primary Sector *[Economic affairs, Education, Public administration, Health, Transport, etc.]*	*e-Government, public administration*

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]*	**The National Open Data Portal of Tunisia**
2.2. Website *[the website about your activity, if existed]*	www.data.gov.tn
2.3. Year Your Activity was Put Into Practice	*2017*

2.4. Which of the following best describes your activity?
[Please mark the main category]

x	*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?

The National Open Data Portal represents a single access point for all data produced and published by public institutions at the central and local levels. It aims to strength the transparency and integrity of public sector through publishing data on government activities; to comply to the provisions of the organic Law on access to information in its section on the proactive publication of public data in open format in addition to promote the public data reuse to stimulate innovation through ICT.

The beneficiaries of this platform are various, including public institutions, citizens, private sector, academic sector, media and CSOs, NGOs.

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?

Overview of the activity and issues to be resolved
After the revolution of 2011, the national open data platform has been designed as an impactful tool in the framework of Tunisia's efforts to promote the openness of the government and improve the trust of citizens, by addressing concrete issues such as:
– *The opacity of public structures linked to the weak disclosure of public data and information on governmental actions.*
– *The unavailability of public data in structured and open format, which hampers the innovation through the reuse of public data, especially by startups and developers.*

The National Open Data Portal has been developed within the framework of the first OGP national plan (2014-2016) to replace the website put online since 2012 as the first open data website and to keep up with global standards adopted in the field.
the platform is a unified repository of all public data published in open format. It currently contains more than 1200 data sets on about 15 themes. The platform is fed in two ways, either manually via its central back office, either automatically through harvesting the data provided by several ties sectorial open data portals. It is interconnected with five sectorial portals of open data (cultural affairs, industry and energy, municipalities, transport, agriculture).
The objectives of this platform are :
– *Enhance the citizens empowerment and activate their participation in public affairs;*
– *Promote the reuse of open public data and push the economic growth by developing mobile applications and new services in compliance with citizens needs aiming to improve the public services quality,*
– *Stimulate the innovation and enrich the analyzes and researches specially in the academic field;*
– *Improve the strategic decision-making*

The portal is addressed to various beneficiaries' categories *such as the public structures, citizens, private sector, academic sector, media, NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs).*

The envisioned measures for the future are articulated around :
– *Promulgation of an open data decree: this text aims to regulate the process of publishing and reusing open data according to the principle of openness as a basic rule. It will provide the governance model for the national open data program, and will define its organisational, legal, technical aspects including the of the national open data platform use.*
– *Promote the reuse of the public open data through the organization of competitions and Hackathons which stimulate the innovation through the public data and develop new added value services and applications.*

- *Complete the implementation of the public data inventory project.*
- *Continue the implementation of the capacity building program on the open data field which started in 2019 with 06 training sessions on the various associated aspects.*

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

This portal is a fundamental pillar in the whole Open Data ecosystem in Tunisia. Indeed, It is a unifying portal which allows public institution to feed their data in several ways, either manually or automatically by the harvesting of datasets from the sectorial open data portals. Il addition, it allows the developer through APIs to automatically use published data sets to develop mobile applications and services. It also offers the possibility of highlighting the reuse cases created based on these open data. Moreover, this platform emphasizes the principle of "open by default" and the free access to public data, which open new possibilities for civil society and small businesses to engage in new projects.

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.

The national open data portal offers the opportunity to coordinate with several partners. Indeed, it has been developed within the framework of a technical support provided by the African Development Bank.
A collaboration framework with all ministries has been adopted through a steering committee in charge of the identification of features and specific needs in order to ensure a good design of the platform. It allows to establish a network of open data coordinators in all ministries in charge of the follow-up and the coordination of related activities such as the organisation of several workshops and training sessions on the concept of open data, building technical capacity, organizing hackathons in addition to promoting the national OD program.
Also, the civil society was an active partner which contributes in various activities

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.

The targeted stakeholders comprises :

1. ***Operators of the platform***

   - *e-Government Unit : manages, animates the platform and coordinates its deployment with the various public structures;*

   - *Public institutions: contribute to the portal's management according to a well defined intervention perimeter given that they provide and publish data in open format and they are themselves consumers of published data.*

2. ***Target audience or Users:***

   - *Public institutions: publish the data in open format through the national open data portal or by federating their own sectorial platform with the national one. They effectively manage the cycle of*

> *public data production and publication, in addition to improve data quality and facilitate the access to it. They are themselves consumers of published public data.*
> - *Citizens and civil society: seek reliable and contextualized data. Also, applications and services developed based on OD are oriented to address their needs.*
> - *Academic sector and researchers: use the data published on the national open data portal for scientific and information enrichment purposes in their fields of study; innovation and research;*
> - *Private sector, Startups and developers: used the platform in a professional and scientific context, allowing easy and direct access to data, simple export and exploitation of data sets.*

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.

Concrete results, outcomes & impacts include :
- Existence of the National OD portal in two languages and data sets are published in Arabic and French and publication more than 1200 datasets through it by 37 public providers (ministers,…), classified on 15 themes;
- From 2017 to 2020, more than 30000 users have made use and visit of the national portal
- Development of 7 sectoral Open Data portals,
- Establishment of an assessment grid used for the monitoring and evaluation of OD portals,
- Development of a public data inventory project with 6 ministries
- Organisation of Hackathons aiming to use public datasets (OpenGovDataHack2020, Onshor Hack, Mapathon Hackthon,)

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?

- *Be in line with international technological trends in open data to strengthen the reuse of open data, and to allow public institutions to benefit from their published data*

- *Need to raise public awareness on the existing data structures at the initial stages of the project to promote a larger involvement of the public. The initiative faced challenges as there was a general lack of knowledge about the OD concepts and standards in the country. To resolve this issue, several workshops and informational sessions have been organized to build knowledge and capacity around open data and to promote the use of the National OD portal. Given the weak capacity of the administration in some cases, civil society contributed to the arrangement of forums and workshops.*

- *Lack of financial and human resources dedicated to manage this project, given the absence of a budget allocation in the State budget to ensure this component. Currently, the international cooperation is*

> *being used to set up some activities related to OD (training, awareness-raising workshops, drafting a communication plan on OpenGov and Open Data)*

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

> - *The leadership, guidance and high-level political commitment have been key success factors of this innovation.*
>
> - *The involvement of civil society in this approach has also been an important enabling condition for the initiative's success.*
>
> - *Tthe existence of a legal framework on access to information (Organic Law Number 22 of 2016) and the acknowledgments of the right to access information in the constitution form the enabling conditions to support the National OD portal.*
>
> - *The establishment of an organisational framework at the central level characterized by the open data focal points in Ministries. These coordinators are working with the e-Government Unit to establish and execute related initiatives and project*

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.

> Several open data portals have been developed at the beginning of 2019 at the sectoral level such as the cultural affairs, transport, agriculture, municipalities and local affairs, interior and security.
>
> This initiative has been replicated also by the civil society organizations which developed open data portals for geographic data and for municipalities.
>
> Thus, the establishment of an open data ecosystem in Tunisia will enable the establishment of a new economy based on data reuse and innovation. It will also allow public entities to harness the power of new technologies through the development of new services and applications.

4.5. Lessons Learned

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

The success of the Tunisian experience is due to the adoption of a practical approach of "learning by doing". Indeed, the national OD portal was the second version of a simple website developed in 2012. The first step was the coverage of the technical aspects of open data.

Afterwards, Government reflections were focused on covering the legal, institutional and organizations aspects related to the open data field. In this context, several projects have been launched to enhance the Open Data ecosystem, such as the establishment of sectorial Open Data portals, the drafting of legal framework of Open Data, the implementation of public data inventory project, the elaboration of a national Open Data action plan, the design and execution of a capacity building program on Open Data.

In addition, the involvement of the civil society in this approach contributed to the success of the project. As a result, the publication of data sets in the national portal takes into account the users' demand (CSOs and citizens).

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	❖ *Training session on organizational framework of open data* http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=2041 ❖ Informational day on the open data decree project http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=874
Link for supporting files	***Assessment Report of Open Data Portals (Version of 2019)*** http://www.data.gov.tn/89-%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%A9-

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Project-Related Video URL 1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFD4-XvAS7k&feature=emb_title
Project-Related Video URL 2	*[https://...]*
Other related URL	*[https://...]*
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