



HIGH LEVEL E-GOVERNMENT STRATEGY DOCUMENT

Lebanon

e-Gov 2007



PREFACE

It has been five years since OMSAR developed the first e-Government strategy of Lebanon. Since then much change has taken place both in Lebanon and in the application of ICT technology within governments throughout the world. Specifically, many developments were targeted and used as enhancers and enablers of e-Government. In addition, there have been many innovative and successful e-Government implementations worldwide and much experience to draw on. These developments presented an opportune moment to undertake a full review of our e-Government Strategy to take advantage of the experiences earned to date; learn from the international successes; and further incorporate the innovations and new perspectives into our own strategy.

The successful international practices have been converging towards broadening the e-Government project to encompass the modernization of governments through the transformation of the public sector to cater for greater citizen participation and more integrated involvement. The common focal point of the international trends is that they all emphasize the importance and value of putting the citizen at the center of any e-Government endeavor. From within that spirit arose the need for a renovated and updated strategy aiming to concentrate the focus on the citizen.

The vision of the new strategy aims to place the people and their communities at the core of a new knowledge-based and connected government that is able to provide them with accountable services that they can trust. It is from this vantage point that this strategy aims to achieve its much-aspired objective of going beyond data and systems and more towards the genuine goal of changing how government operates.

The new e-Government strategy presented here builds on the previous strategy by restructuring around new central pillars seeking to provide more innovative and internationally proven methods of enabling a rapid realization of the benefits of e-Government. The objective is to reform government systems and processes leading to better delivery of government services and economic gains through improvements in government productivity. The formulation of this strategy was furthermore based on inputs and opinions expressed by the leading stakeholders of government, academia, civil society and the private industry and their input is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated.

Finally, this strategy sets specific goals and objectives, which when achieved, will not only provide better citizen services, but will eventually result in considerable cost savings for government. Ultimately, the main beneficiary of e-Government will be the government itself. However, the success of this strategy depends on the understanding that applying ICT to government does not necessarily make it better; reforming the underlying business processes - while applying ICT - will certainly do.



More importantly, the success of this strategy depends on the support and commitment of all concerned stakeholders; Members of Parliament, Ministers, Director Generals, public officials and all government employees. In this regards, I would like to take the opportunity to extend my deepest appreciation to H.E. PM Siniora whose attentiveness and dedication to this Strategy were remarkable and can be considered a true model of the level and type of support needed to ensure its successful realization in the future.

I am proud of the accomplishments to date and I am fully confident of the high value of this new strategy for Lebanon. I am entrusting you to commit to its principles and objectives, to own it, and to oversee its successful implementation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, cursive letters that appear to be 'J.O.' followed by a long horizontal stroke and a large loop.

Jean Oghassabian

Minister of State for Administrative Reform.

November 2007



Vision for e-Government in Lebanon

The overall objective of the e-Government strategy is to realize economic and social benefits and quality-of-life improvements for all Lebanese citizens.

This will be achieved by:

1. The Government delivering all its services and information electronically, allowing citizens and business to have ready access and enabling timely and accurate information to be delivered in a user friendly manner.
2. Delivering services that meet the specific needs of different sectors of the community including citizens, business, government employees, citizens in the regions, citizens who are disadvantaged by physical handicap, by economic status, language barriers or physical location.
3. Providing information to citizens on legislation, policies, plans, progress monitoring and other government information thus promoting transparency and enabling citizens to be better informed on government business.
4. Using electronic systems to enable government and citizens to communicate so citizens can convey their views and opinions to government and be consulted by government.
5. Better understanding by the Government of the needs of citizens and delivering services that meet their needs.

The Government better understands the requirements of citizens and is better able to deliver services that meet their needs. Traditional means of service delivery are not neglected.

Background

This strategy 'e-Gov 2007' builds on a solid foundation of progress made during the past 5 years. The government's commitment to reform using ICT started in 1997 with the establishment of the Ministerial ICT Committee (MICTC) chaired by the Minister of State for Administrative Reform and latterly by the Prime Minister.

1998 saw the first publication of a national strategy to establish the structure to oversee ICT developments. Many initiatives commenced and progress was made despite the difficulties facing Lebanon.



These paved the way for the launch of the first more focused e-Government strategy document in 2002 and followed by a series of reports assessing Lebanon's e-Readiness and a report on e-Strategy and associated Action Plan which looked into the use of ICT in the broader national perspective. The earlier e-Government strategy correctly focused on the priorities at that time namely establishing the framework to enable e-Government implementation.

Key achievements since 2002 include:

- Nearly 30% of public sector employees have received training in basic computer skills thus contributing significantly to capacity building.
- OMSAR developed and maintains the Informs Portal – A Website portal project providing access to more than 2000 government forms with instruction on their completion. This will make it much easier to move to next stage where such forms can be downloaded, submitted electronically with payments being made online.
- Considerable progress has been made in modernizing the communication infrastructure in Lebanon. The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA) has been established and plans are well advanced to sell off the two government owned mobile phone companies. Communications is vital to achieve the benefits of electronic government.
- There have been many successful implementations of systems by Ministries including:

Key Developments

- **1997:** Ministerial ICT Committee was formed and Chaired by the Prime Minister.
- **1998:** First IT National Policy and Strategy documents developed. The operation of MICTC in decision making and overseeing the use of ICT was formalized.
- **2002:** e-Government Strategy was developed and launched focusing on establishing sound frameworks for future developments namely Legal and Regulatory Framework, Technical Framework, Services Framework and Government Capacity Building/promotion/operations Framework.
- **2003:** e-Readiness report developed and published. This provided a measure of the progress being made in Lebanon to adopt technology both in government and nationally and showed Lebanon's position in global rankings based on internationally accepted indicators.
- **2007:** Updated e-Government Strategy building on previous experience and seeks to introduce more innovative ways of implementation with new Pillars – **e-Reform** focusing on internal government systems and processes; **e-Citizen** – focusing on the delivery of services to citizens; **e-Business** – focusing on the delivery of services to business and **e-Community** focusing on services to regions and the disadvantaged citizens.



1. MOF tax system.
 2. Customs system – expansion to cover all 5 ports of entry.
 3. Cadastre Land Registration.
 4. Cooperative of Civil Servants (COOP) medical benefits and compensation system.
 5. The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) system.
 6. Commercial Registration System.
 7. Automation of the Work Permit system
 8. A number of GIS applications.
 9. A number of Document Management and Archiving Systems.
- Most government entities now have Local Area Networks installed and there is a significant pool of ICT skills and knowledge in government which makes it timely to move to more innovative ways for implementing e-Government.
 - Many government entities now have Websites giving the Lebanese Government a significant presence on the Internet.
 - Significant progress has been made in establishing the legal framework to enable full implementation of electronic procedures laws covering Intellectual Property Rights, Electronic Procurement and Digital Signatures have been prepared and have been approved or are awaiting approval.

Significant changes to the way governments operate

Today Governments worldwide are under increasing pressure to change the way in which they function and operate. There is a realization that the Government no longer needs to undertake all the functions itself and that efficient government today must involve forming partnerships with other organizations. This requirement arises as a consequence of:

- More pressure to demonstrate greater performance with more competition, more choice, more focused services, better responsiveness and better quality of services.
- The need to deliver services through a range of market-based tools (e.g. competitive sourcing of delivery of services, public private partnerships, contracting out and privatization).
- There is greater delegation of responsibilities, both managerial and financial, to government managers (“let the manager manage”) linked to greater accountability (e.g. introduction of performance budgeting).
- There is a greater need to provide and deliver services that meet the needs of citizens e.g. multiple services delivered through single points of service.



- The growth of communication networks allows citizens to be engaged in government decision and policy making through electronic consultation; email comments being delivered online, regular surveys undertaken and blog sites (web logs).
- Today there is much less stability and demands on governments are much tougher. This requires a high degree of responsiveness to cater for natural disasters, civil strife, refugees and terrorism.

E-Government Pillars

To cater for these changes this strategy is proposing to build a number of recommendations grouped around four key pillars namely:

- E-Reform (G2G) (G2E)
- E-Citizen (G2C)
- E-Business (G2B)
- E-Community (G2C)

The vision for the four pillars is:

e-Reform – seeks to improve the overall efficiency of government and achieve significant cost savings through

- Introducing Chief Information Officers (CIOs) in Ministries and forming a CIO Council.
- Achieving interoperability of all government systems by interconnection through a standards based intra-Government portal. Provide a data center that links through the intra-Government Portal and allows data to be backed up and recovered in a standard format shared by all government systems.
- Keeping comprehensive data on government transactions and making this available to the Central Administration of Statistics for compilation of agreed standard indicators for ICT.
- Providing systems to enable government employees to receive online training, empowering them through the use of collaborative tools to support work across different departments and entities and using mobile tools to enable them to work from anywhere.

e-Citizen – seeks to deliver services to the citizen in a fast, reliable and easy to understand and use service. This will be achieved using a variety of electronic systems including the Internet, telephone, Mobile phone, community centers as well as the traditional systems. This will enable citizens to:



- Enable the better sharing of infrastructure in delivering services to citizens and business by moving to ‘one-stop-shop’ operation for the delivery of government services facilitated by use of common standards.
- Obtain Tax Forms and make payments to be made and received online.
- Submit Passport Applications on line.
- Submit applications for permits to be made online and the permit to be received online.
- Obtain copies of education records, certificates etc.
- Register life events – births, deaths, marriages, name changes.
- Access public services facilities such as health and retirement information.
- For Smart Cards (when introduced) – report lost cards, stolen cards, new applications.
- File Job Applications
- Provide citizens with mechanisms to better understand government and to communicate with government with for example all government legislation being provided online. Enable electronic consultation with citizens to be promoted.

The overall concept is illustrated in the diagram below.





e-Business – seeks to provide integrated services to the business community and make it easier for the private sector to do business with government. This will be achieved by:

- Electronic tendering for government business including specifications, ToRs, receipt of bids, evaluation of bids, contract negotiations and payments.
- Commercial Registration of Businesses conducted entirely on-line including payment of fees.
- Filing of business tax forms online and payment of dues.
- Making available online relevant documentation on all government processes that impact business e.g. laws on legislation on e-Procurement, Intellectual Property Laws, Digital Signatures, PKI, government policies on outsourcing, PPPs and partnerships.
- The Government adopting standards on ICT issues including security; architecture; e-Government.
- Ready availability to government ICT policies and strategic plans for information and comment.
- Publication of progress reports on ICT matters under consideration in government, outcomes of MICTC meetings, e-Government program and forward planning where the ICT industry can contribute.
- Allow focused services to be offered to specific classes of businesses e.g. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), doctors, teachers, social workers, Lebanese expatriates, trade agreements and investment incentive policies.

e-Community – seeks to promote regional developments as well as promoting the quality of life in communities and targeting citizens who are disadvantaged due to location, economic circumstances, education, language, physically handicap or visual impairment. This will be achieved by:

- Providing targeted information services that have a regional focus such as:
 - a) Services for SMEs in regions whereby all information and forms etc on government and regional regulations (e.g. taxation, commercial registration, municipal rules) are grouped together in a single website.
 - b) Services aimed at specific businesses e.g. farmers, fruit growers, retailers, hotels with information specifically targeted at each region giving for example information on weather, market prices, costs of fertilizers, demand, crop information, information on diseases, contact details of suppliers with cost of transport.
 - c) Allow regional SMEs to market their services (local products) on the e-Government system and provide a low cost/free service to set up their own website (in many cases this



- could be simply a “business card” image with name, address, telephone, services offered etc).
- d) By adopting a Private Public Partnership (PPP) allow commercial advertising with a sharing of advertising revenues between the PPP and the community.
 - e) Empowering communities by providing information on their region e.g. hotels, local products, tourist sites and contact information.
- Capacity building by providing online training on ICT and a range of other subjects to meet the specific demands of the region and the communities within the region thus empowers the citizens, raising their capabilities, and expanding their access to life choices and opportunities.

Social Inclusion

Providing targeted services aimed at the specific sections of the citizen community and is about reducing the inequalities between the least advantaged communities and groups compared to the rest of society. This will be achieved by providing:

- Online training on selected topics aimed at improving employability, including locations, timetables and contacts.
- Providing information on guidelines for employing people with disabilities (“employability framework”) and employment opportunities.
- Provide computer equipment that enable the blind to take advantage of ICT and include, for example, systems that convert normal text to, and print in, Braille.
- In consultation with communities and support groups, adapt services to provide more focused local support.
- Provide information on financial services that are available to disadvantaged groups (e.g. microfinance services for purchases for example stock, seed, grain, fertilizers; banking).
- Ensuring full awareness on their eligibility for government programs targeted at them.

The Telecenters project being implemented under the US – Lebanon Partnership initiative will play an important role in delivering services to the disadvantaged not only in providing e-Government services but in enabling the community to benefit from these.

New Initiatives

‘e-Gov2007’ will seek to speed up the process of implementation by selecting and promoting new methods of government reform and by seeking partnerships with other governments and with large private sector companies. Those will endeavor to take advantage of the experience of



other governments or private companies who have successfully implemented significant e-Government systems which could be applicable in Lebanon. These initiatives are:

Progress Monitoring Modality. More frequent meetings of the Ministerial ICT Committee with the Chief Information Officers (CIO) and a CIO Council taking a significant role in the strategy acceptance and implementation combined with an electronic Progress Reporting modality which will be based on e-Government implementation plans developed by agencies.

Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and CIO Council. The appointment of CIOs in all key agencies to be extended to all government entities and the establishment of a CIO Council. Following precedence in other countries, the CIOs will be the focal point for all ICT matters in their agency and will report to the head of the agency. The CIO Council will meet regularly, discuss and agree on ICT issues across government and make recommendations to Ministers and to the MICTC.

The CIO will be responsible for the ministry's e-Government implementation plan, chairing sub committees in the ministry to assist in its preparation and to ensure ownership and will become the e-Government champion for the ministry.

Single Window Government. The construction of two government wide Portals, an e-Citizen Portal to provide a focal point for the delivery of services to citizens ("one-stop-shop") and the private sector and an Intra-Government Portal for government-to-government communications. The Intra-government portal would link to all agencies and to a government datacenter and provide the basis for achieving interoperability between government systems.

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). Greater use of the private sector in implementing e-Government projects through adoption of outsourcing and use of Public Private Partnerships initiatives.

Partnerships with Multinationals. Potential adoption of government wide solutions provided by large multinationals which have been implemented successfully in other governments (e.g. "Texas Online"). This expedites the process as it relies on adopting readymade and tested solutions.

Partnerships with other Governments. Greater use of partnerships with other governments in implementing specific projects simplifying and streamlining the process (e.g. no competitive tendering) and speeding up reform.

Priority Projects

A number of priority projects have been selected for consideration and funding. These include:

- **Capacity Building.**



OMSAR in partnership with agencies continues the capacity building process in agencies by preparing a schedule of basic courses in basic ICT skills. This is seen as an essential ongoing task which cannot be delayed and is key to enabling implementation of electronic services in government. It will be extended to include Ministers, members of Parliament and senior staff in government.

- **E-Procurement.**

On approval of submitted legislation (pending) prepare a strategy for implementation of e-Procurement. This will build on the work already undertaken. The Government will kick start e-Procurement with simple purchases (e.g. commodity items; contracting training consultants). E-Procurement is key to improving government purchasing which has benefits all round – more efficient government, better and easier procedures for the private sector greater transparency in purchasing.

- **Unique Identity Number (UIN).**

This not a major project in terms of resources, costs and time but is a prerequisite to introducing the Smart Card and will realize benefits across all sectors in Lebanon. It potentially is a ‘quick win’.

- **Smart Card.**

There are numerous documented examples of the multiple difficulties in citizen identification with systems throughout Lebanon covering all sectors. There are significant predicted benefits. This is a major high cost and longer term project which has the potential to impact all citizens in Lebanon and its implementation could be delayed. It has broad support through government and the private sector.

- **Government Website Standards and upgrades.**

This project is to upgrade selected Government websites from currently UN Stages I and II to UN Stage III (interactive) or above. Consideration is to be given to outsourcing this project to the private sector in a PPP arrangement. Lebanon has a significant presence of the Internet with many websites however these are not yet interactive and do allow downloading of forms or their submission electronically. There is a need to attempt to implement such upgrades as a priority project and there is the possibility that upgrading some of these could be comparatively simpler and could realize early benefits.

Estimates of costs for these projects are given at Attachment 1.



Future Developments

'e-Gov 2007' will not be a static document and the intention is to adopt a more flexible approach to implementation in future with changes in plans and strategies as experience is gained, the priorities of Government change and feedback is received from citizens.



Appendix 1: Estimates of Costs and Resources for Priority Projects

No.	Pillar	Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Resources	Comments
1.	e-Reform	Ongoing training for Public Sector agencies.	1	\$300,000 per annum	Outsourced to private sector.	Cost estimate based on the costs incurred by OMSAR in previous courses.
2.	e-Reform	MICTC support	1	Absorbed within existing budgets.	OMSAR	Administrative and operational support to MICTC. Part of OMSAR's charter.
3.	e-Reform	MICTC	1	\$30,000 per annum	OMSAR, CIOs from key Ministries Absorbed within existing resources.	Promotion of e-Government initiatives. Preparation of brochures and other PR material for e-Government strategy.
4.	e-Reform	Scoping the CIO concept	1	\$60,000 per year \$7,000 1 st year	Existing staff – no recruitment initially. Partially absorbed by OMSAR's budget.	Scoping the responsibilities and mechanics of the CIO concept including the modality of CIO appointments and establishing mechanisms for their operation. Outcome is an agreed profile of the CIO and agencies should appoint someone of this caliber. Seek representative from foreign government to give a presentation on CIOs and CIO Council to MICTC and designated CIOs. Airfare (\$5000) plus 1 week's accommodation costs (\$2000).
5.	e-Reform	Establish the CIO Council.	1	\$50,000 per annum for Website. Thereafter \$30,000 per annum support and \$60,000 per annum for meetings.	Absorbed within existing resources.	Establish and maintain a CIO Website. Outsource to Private sector. Prepare ToRs, issue, evaluate responses and implement. Sundry expenses for logistics of meetings, payment for attendance 30-40 people per meeting 6 times per year. Presentation material, preparation of brochure, PR efforts with PCA, Ministers and Parliament.
6.	e-Reform	'Quick Wins' Identify potential projects that would demonstrate e-Government.	1	Absorbed within existing budget.	Absorbed within existing resources in OMSAR.	Administrative actions only. Identify 'quick win' projects to demonstrate benefits of e-Government.



No.	Pillar	Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Resources	Comments
7.	e-Reform	Public Procurement Law.	1	Absorbed within existing budget.	Absorbed within existing resources.	OMSAR undertaking a watching brief only. Dependent on e-procurement and e-Transaction.
8.	e-Reform	Implementing e-Procurement pilots.	1	\$500,000	Absorbed within OMSAR budget.	Continue with the project scoped by OMSAR taking into account best practice, design and implementation in 5 key ministries. Option to consider using a managed service from private sector.
9.	e-Reform	Establish ICT capacity in Government entities.	1	\$150,000 per year	Existing resources used but supplemented for limited period by specialists.	Special training to be focused on specific agencies and provide largely by private sector with content etc specified by OMSAR in consultation with CIOs and MICTC. Assume 3 units established per year including special training provision of specialists to assist in capacity building. OMSAR and CIOs develop a profile of unit required for different size of agencies.
10.	e-Reform	Agency e-Government Implementation Plans developed.	2	\$75,000 per annum	Use existing OMSAR resources supplemented by specialist assistance.	Template developed by OMSAR in consultation with CIOs. Emphasis on succinct focused plans. Specialists hired to assist in refining specification and in implementation. Progress reporting modality introduced. Emphasis on electronic reporting with agencies updating their plans online and changing them as their plans develop.
11.	e-Citizen	Single Window to Government: e-Citizen and Intra-Government Portals	1	\$750,000 initial start-up cost thereafter \$50,000 (8%) per year support costs	Possible outsourced to private sector under a PPP	Contract consultants to undertake a comprehensive scoping study for both portals. This would include consultation with key agencies, on content, interoperability with agency legacy systems, architecture, including a payment gateway, website standards, ToRs, costs, implementation plan to include how future agency systems can be integrated. Intention is that the same architecture is used in both portals.



No.	Pillar	Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Resources	Comments
12.	e-Citizen	Establish the e-Citizen and Intra-Government Portals.	1	\$600,000 initial start-up cost thereafter \$100,000 in first year thereafter \$50,000 per year support costs.	Possible outsourced to private sector under a PPP.	<p>ToRs issued and supplier/PPP chosen.</p> <p>Capital cost of hardware \$300,000 each. Initial implementation costs will be substantial. Estimate \$100,000.</p> <p>If a PPP is used then initial cost would be lower but the running costs would be higher, depending on the transaction processing fee.</p> <p>Under a PPP if advertising is allowed then revenue would be shared between PPP and Government with a further reduction in costs.</p> <p>If an internal government Portal there could still be advertising revenue if allowed.</p>
13.	e-Citizen	To define a unique Identity Number (UIN).	1	\$10,000	Absorbed within existing resources.	Possible hire of specialist to verify suitability of proposed UINs.
14.	e-Citizen	To introduce a Smart Card for citizens in Lebanon	1	\$45,000,000 startup cost thereafter \$600,000 per annum	Assume most services contracted out to private sector	<p>Assume assistance is provided at minimum cost by the Malaysian Government.</p> <p>Scope the implementation of Smart Card in Lebanon</p> <p>Purchase costs are for 4 million cards to be distributed initially plus say replacements and new cards of 90,000 (3%) per year.</p> <p>Cost of card estimated at \$10 each based on Malaysian estimate plus initial distribution and ongoing new/replacement/cancellation of cards.</p> <p>Considerable training will be required, publicity, citizen awareness raising, systems for replacement cards, documentation and procedures.</p>
15.	e-Business	Define standards for Websites.	1	\$20,000	Absorbed within existing resources in OMSAR.	Use international standards as a base and socialize through CIO Council. Update these as they develop.
16.	e-Business	Upgrade selected existing Websites to UN Stage 3 or above.	1	\$500,000	Specialist resources contracted to assist with the scoping of the project.	<p>Assume that the intention is that this is outsourced to the private sector.</p> <p>Specialist resources hired to detail what changes are required and what websites to pursue. Consider</p>



No.	Pillar	Project	Priority	Estimated Cost	Resources	Comments
						<p>a PPP option and cost alternatives. Assume initially 5 websites are selected. Prepare ToRs and select supplier.</p>
17.	e-Business	Identify potential partnership arrangements with foreign governments	3	\$50,000 per annum	Absorbed within existing resources	<p>OMSAR consult with CIOs, MICTC, Ministers and Donors.</p> <p>Initial research undertaken by OMSAR in consultation with CIOs.</p>
18.	e-Community	Community Tele-centers	3	<p>\$60,000</p> <p>Plus running costs of \$8,000 per annum.</p>	Absorbed within existing resources.	<p>OMSAR to develop plans to introduce e-Government benefits in parallel with new/upgrades to telecenters. \$5,000 per center plus \$8,000 per annum.</p>