

# **The National eStrategy for Lebanon**

The United Nations Development  
Programme

The Office of the Minister of State for  
Administrative Reform

Document 5:

An Implementation Roadmap

**Prepared by**  
Akram Najjar  
Salam Yamout  
Kamal Siblani

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## Table of Contents – An Implementation Roadmap

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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introducing the Implementation Approach .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>The Stages of the Roadmap.....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Stage 1: Setup an Implementing Entity for the National eStrategy .....	2
2.1.1	The Necessity for an Implementing Agency or Entity .....	2
2.1.2	The Requirements for Setting up the Entity .....	2
2.1.3	The Responsibilities of the Entity .....	3
2.2	Stage 2: Gain the Consensus of Champions and Stakeholders .....	4
2.3	Stage 3: Develop Specific Implementation Plans .....	5
2.4	Stage 4: Implement Pre-requisite Programs and Solutions .....	5
2.4.1	Pre-Requisite Programs .....	5
2.4.2	Pre-Requisite Solutions .....	5
2.5	Stage 5: Implement Priority Programs and Solutions .....	6
2.5.1	Priority Programs .....	6
2.5.2	Priority Solutions .....	7
2.6	Stage 6: Monitor and Evaluate Implementation .....	7
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1	The Government .....	8
3.2	The Private sector .....	8
3.3	International Organizations (+Donors) .....	9
3.4	NGOs .....	9
3.5	Academia .....	10
3.6	The Media .....	10
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Critical Success Factors for the National eStrategy .....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1	Government Leadership .....	11
4.2	Involvement of the Active Stakeholders .....	11
4.3	Administrative Reform and Development .....	11
4.4	Pragmatic Implementation.....	11
4.5	Consensus and Commitment.....	12
4.6	Efficient Partnerships .....	12
4.7	A Properly Implemented Legal Framework .....	12
4.8	Sustainable Programs and Solutions.....	12
4.9	Learning Lessons from Other Countries .....	12
4.10	Implement Using Best Practices.....	12
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Challenges while Implementing the National eStrategy.....</b>	<b>14</b>

## Figures – An Implementation Roadmap

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<b>Figure 1: An Overall View of the Implementation Roadmap .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Figure 2: Pre-Requisite Programs .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Figure 3: Pre-Requisite Solutions .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Figure 4: Criteria for the Ranking of Solutions .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Figure 5: Priority Programs .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Figure 6: Priority Solutions .....</b>	<b>7</b>

## 1.0 Introducing the Implementation Approach

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The National eStrategy project will be realized through the implementation of many programs, solutions and recommendations. These are to be implemented by various parties such as the private and public sectors, international organizations or NGOs. At this stage, a general time plan or a roadmap is proposed that takes the National eStrategy project into several stages.

The following diagram presents an overall view of the proposed Roadmap. The individual stages are presented in Section 2.0:

		Years >>											
		1				2				3			
		Quarters >>											
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1	Setup an Implementation Entity	■	■	■	■								
2	Gain Consensus of Champions and Stakeholders	■	■	■	■								
3	Develop Specific Implementation Plans		■	■	■								
4	Implement Pre-Requisite Programs and Solutions			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
5	Implement Priority Programs and Solutions				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
6	Monitor and Evaluate Implemented Solutions				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

**Figure 1: An Overall View of the Implementation Roadmap**

## **2.0 The Stages of the Roadmap**

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This Section presents the 6 stages of the Implementation Roadmap.

### **2.1 Stage 1: Setup an Implementing Entity for the National eStrategy**

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This stage covers the requirements needed to setup an implementing Entity for the National eStrategy project. Ownership of a project is one of its critical success factors. For a National eStrategy, this complex issue is compounded due to the presence of many parties in the project.

The implementing Entity needs to be an executive entity whose role is the development of project plans and activities, their implementation and the monitoring of their progress.

Many of the Programs and Solutions will not be directly implemented by the Entity. However, the role of the Entity in planning, coordinating and monitoring such Programs and Solutions is critical for their proper implementation.

#### **2.1.1 The Necessity for an Implementing Agency or Entity**

The National eStrategy for Lebanon needs to be viewed as a process, an ongoing set of coordinated programs, projects and specific activities. There is a need for one Entity to manage such a wide base of action.

Reality may intervene and delay the setup of such an Entity or even allow it to be setup with characteristics and responsibilities that do not meet the objectives of the National eStrategy project. The requirements for setting up such an Entity are presented in the next subsection. Without such requirements, the following risks will arise:

- Programs and Solutions may be implemented without coordination resulting in duplication and conflicting aims.
- Monitoring and evaluation will be lacking.
- Ownership of the National eStrategy will be lacking resulting in the project not meeting its aims.
- Accountability will be lacking.
- The National eStrategy project will not be able to evolve and meet ongoing changes.
- Due to the lack of an overall view of the resources needed for the project, funding will be misguided.

The Consulting Team stresses the importance of this stage and considers it a necessity. Without an Entity to plan and monitor the National eStrategy project, the objectives of the project will not be met.

#### **2.1.2 The Requirements for Setting up the Entity**

Currently, Lebanon does not have an ICT Ministry, National Center or Board. The Ministerial ICT Committee is made up of 3 Ministers and is therefore not suitable as an implementing vehicle for the project.

OMSAR has been planning and implementing ICT projects within its role of Administrative Reform and Development. However, there are other agencies that are also involved in implementing ICT projects such as the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and various international organizations.

The National eStrategy project proposes that an Entity be identified or specifically created. The following conditions need to be met by any Entity if it is to be successful:

1. **Reporting Line:** The Entity is an executive and monitoring agency. It needs to have authority in various aspects of its operations. It therefore requires to report directly to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).
2. **Structure:** The Entity should be run by a board consisting of a group of stakeholders, wide enough to secure acceptance and narrow enough to be effective with representatives from the government, the private sector (including the ICT sector), academia and international organizations.
3. **Empowerment:** The Entity needs to have a suitable level of autonomy in terms of spending, human resources and related activities. It needs to be an agile organization having dynamic and flexible internal processes needed to address the complex projects it will be implementing.
4. **Proper Resources:** Implementing the National eStrategy requires wide ranging expertise therefore the entity needs to be manned by experienced personnel with the proper background and knowledge.
5. **Openness to the Private Sector:** The entity needs to be open to the private sector in terms of being able to work with such firms without the restrictions often placed on government agencies.
6. **Short Time Frame for Setup:** In order to proceed with the pre-requisite and high priority projects at the soonest, it is recommended that the implementing Entity be setup within a framework of 6 months leaving the setup and launch of related organizational components for the following 6 months.

All in all, an Entity needs to perform as would a private sector firm with the requisite agility, leanness and vision but with a strong commitment, presence and backing of the Lebanese Government.

### 2.1.3 The Responsibilities of the Entity

To achieve such an aim, the following responsibilities are required of the Entity:

- Revisit the present Roadmap and elaborate and refine its activities.
- Revisit the Programs and Solutions defined in Document 6.
- Constantly review the relevance of the eStrategy and update it as and when needed.
- Coordinate with all parties involved in work related to the National eStrategy project.
- Coordinate with the Task Forces carrying out consensus building in Stage 1.
- Prepare budgetary estimates.
- Secure funding for the Programs and Solutions.
- Prioritize the Programs and Projects according to agreed upon criteria.
- Develop project plans for specific Programs and Solutions.
- Launch the Programs and Projects according to the established priorities.

- Monitor and evaluate all project activities, progress and results.
- Assist various parties during implementation.
- Represent the Government in all international conventions and meetings.
- Ensure that the Programs and Solutions are sustainable in their operation and results.

## **2.2 Stage 2: Gain the Consensus of Champions and Stakeholders**

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The National eStrategy for Lebanon requires commitment and consensus from all stakeholders. The following activities are needed and can be carried in parallel with other stages.

### **1. Identify the stakeholders**

- Policy makers in the Government
- The Council of Ministers
- The Parliament
- The Central Bank
- The Judiciary system
- The various Ministries and Agencies (As implementers or as beneficiaries)
- The private sector
- International agencies
- NGOs
- The Media
- Academia

The National eStrategy project has already paved the way by inviting such stakeholders into its discussions.

### **2. Identify the Champions**

Champions are those stakeholders that have a direct interest in the success of the project. There is a need to identify current and potential champions for the project or its related activities. In general, these are mostly selected from stakeholders.

### **3. Implement Schemes for Consensus Building**

Develop schemes for building acceptance for the project and its aims as well as for winning the stakeholders and champions. Such schemes could be any of the following:

- Workshops and conferences
- Web sites that promote the concept, project the plans and track the progress
- Publications such as newsletters, white papers, articles and reviews
- Media promotions with the aim of reaching the citizen
- Focus group meetings

### **4. Setup Task Forces**

Setup one or more Task Forces that can address specific aspects of the Implementation Roadmap. Such Task Forces will coordinate their work through the entity established in the next and parallel stage.

### **5. Review Progress**

As and when such activities take place, the project needs to be revised and updated based on the contribution and feedback of the Stakeholders and Champions.

### 2.3 Stage 3: Develop Specific Implementation Plans

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This stage can be launched when the Entity is setup and the stakeholders agree on various elements that make up the National eStrategy for Lebanon implementation roadmap. Such elements as funding, priorities, scope, etc., need to be defined.

From each of the Programs and Solutions, the Entity will develop an Implementation Project Plan that can be launched and monitored.

It is important to note that since many of the Programs and Solutions will be implemented and “owned” by other parties than the Government, in such a situation, the planning will be completed in coordination with the implementing Entity.

### 2.4 Stage 4: Implement Pre-requisite Programs and Solutions

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As per the results of the eReadiness Assessment, there are many gaps to be closed before the National eStrategy can be properly implemented. These gaps can be closed through the following Programs, Solutions and Recommendations.

**Note:** The ID refers to the numbering used in Document 6 which presents all Programs, Solutions and Recommendations include the pre-requisites.

#### 2.4.1 Pre-Requisite Programs

ID	Programs
1	Launch ICT Enabling Legal Framework
2	Improve the Affordability of Internet Connection
3	Improve Network Speeds in Lebanon
4	Increase Internet Penetration
5	Promote Proper Usage of the Internet
6	Increase PC Penetration
7	Improve Electrical Power Quality

**Figure 2: Pre-Requisite Programs**

#### 2.4.2 Pre-Requisite Solutions

ID	Solutions
9	Setup a Government Entity to Handle ICT Matters
55	Resolve Administrative Anti-Patterns in the Public Sector
76	Implement a National ID and Smartcard

**Figure 3: Pre-Requisite Solutions**

These are programs and projects and need to be commenced on with speed, even if the earlier two stages have not been achieved. The question of who shall implement such pre-requisites remains a critical challenge for this Stage.

## 2.5 Stage 5: Implement Priority Programs and Solutions

Out of the wide range of Programs, Solutions and Recommendations, it may not be possible at this stage to identify with precision which projects are of a top priority nature. Many factors affect such a ranking.

An exercise was carried out where 8 experts were asked to evaluate the 70 solutions according to the following 8 criteria:

Criterion (1 = total disagreement >>> 5 = total agreement)		Weight
1	Project responds to national priority issues	20
2	Project is implementable (Institutional, Capacity, Legal)	20
3	Required technological infrastructure is available	15
4	Project is sustainable (Results, Funding)	15
5	Project impacts are are visible to citizen	10
6	Private / public partnership is feasible	5
7	Time to achieve impact is short	10
8	Estimated budget is low	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>

**Figure 4: Criteria for the Ranking of Solutions**

The evaluations were then consolidated by weighting and averaging them. A ranking was arrived at which was used to identify a set of solutions that are considered important to commence with. After the final ranking was completed, an attempt was made to select 2 – 3 Solutions from each of the 7 Initiative.

**Note:** The ID refers to the numbering used in Document 6 which presents all Programs, Solutions and Recommendations include the priority Programs and Solutions.

The following list shows the selected Programs and Solutions:

### 2.5.1 Priority Programs

ID	Programs
9	Top Ten eGovernment Projects
11	Encourage International ICT Exhibitions and Fairs in Lebanon
12	Capacity Building for Public Sector ICT Staff
13	Public Sector Data Definition and Exchange
14	Promote and Improve Lebanon as a Training Venue
16	Free Information Access Points
20	Develop Specific eLearning/CBT Content for Lebanon
21	Combat Illiteracy through Computer Based Training and eLearning
24	Standardize and Spread the Use of GIS
27	Deregulation of Telecommunications Sector

**Figure 5: Priority Programs**

### 2.5.2 Priority Solutions

ID	Solutions
2	Activate and Speedup Online Banking
3	Multipurpose Community Telecenters (MCTs)
7	Educational Career Counseling
8	Launch Project/Entity to Gather and Publish ICT Data
11	Lebanon Business Promotion Entity
14	The Internet Hub Project
15	The Citizen's Guide to Health Information and Services
16	Whats On in Lebanon
17	Setup Information Decision Support Center
21	The Citizen's Guide to Governmental Procedures
26	Setup Business Startup Advisor
27	Provide Comprehensive Electoral Information Online
28	Publish Terms of Tenders and Bids
35	The Citizen's Guide to Consumer Protection
39	Youth Network
46	Setup Data Entry and Transcription Centers
52	Agrobus
59	IT Skills Portal
60	Launch National ICT Professional Association
74	ICT Training and Incentives for Public School Teachers

**Figure 6: Priority Solutions**

### 2.6 Stage 6: Monitor and Evaluate Implementation

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Public sector projects need to achieve their objectives and to achieve sustainability. A critical project management technique is that of monitoring and evaluating the following:

- Project activities
- Schedules
- Budgets
- Objectives
- Performance of various parties
- Quality of products and project
- User acceptance and use

The National eStrategy implementing Entity should be responsible for such Monitoring and Evaluation. Furthermore, it would also have the responsibility of addressing issues such as analysis of poor performance in all of the above aspects as well as proposing solutions to eradicate problems and improve performance.

## **3.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

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Due to the variety of programs and solutions to be implemented as well as to the wide scope of the implementing Entity, it is important to define the roles and responsibilities of related parties. Most of the stakeholders would come from the following.

Review the Responsibilities of the implementing Entity in Section 2.1.3.

### **3.1 The Government**

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Although the implementing Entity is part of the Government, the Government has its own responsibilities over and above those of the Entity. It is directly responsible for the National eStrategy for Lebanon. It remains the catalyst for its proper implementation:

- The Government needs to ensure that the proper and efficient institutional structure is in place as a pre-requisite for most of the National eStrategy activities.
- The Government has to be responsible for the initiation and implementation of all legal framework requirements.
- Economic openness is high amongst its responsibilities. This would lead to an easier entry into Knowledge Based Economies.
- The Government is the prime driver behind social programs.
- The Government should be the prime driver for securing funds and allocating resources for the implementation of the National eStrategy. This can be sourced from the Budget, international donors or the private sector.
- The Government has a strong coordinating role between all stakeholders.
- The Government would be responsible for initiating and cementing all partnerships required for the implementation.
- To promote the raising of awareness for the project and hence ensure its acceptance and the contribution and participation of all stakeholders.
- The Government has the role of launching drives for ICT and organizational standards and ensuring they are implemented.
- Along with specific parties in the private sector and Academia, the Government would be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the National eStrategy implementation.

In its above roles, the Government needs to have an open and liberal view of the overall implementation.

### **3.2 The Private sector**

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The private sector is a key player. It is the main partner of the Government. Being the source of technology resources and experience, its participation and contribution are necessary and critical for the success of the implementation.

Here are the responsibilities expected from this role. The first set covers those that can be provided by the general private sector:

- Partnership with the Government on key projects. This partnership not only ensures sustainability, but creates the necessary mechanisms for continued improvements.
- To provide proper human resource development for the ICT workforce

- Reengineering of the business processes currently in place in order to cope with the requirements of the National eStrategy.
- To develop an openness to international trading practices and objectives.
- Advise and play an active role in the implementation strategy

The following responsibilities are specific to ICT companies:

- To be the vehicle for the transfer of leading edge technology to Lebanon.
- To be the main provider of training and experience in ICT skills. This responsibility is shared between training companies and other ICT companies.
- To adopt modern ICT good practices and standards.

### **3.3 International Organizations (+Donors)**

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International organizations have played an important role in the ongoing process of rejuvenating Lebanon. Their continued role is crucial, especially as it relates to the implementation of the National eStrategy:

- International organizations have been crucial in developing visions that relate to various initiatives in Lebanon and other countries. Their role has been crucial in the launch of the National eStrategy project. It is therefore expected that Lebanon should lean on international organizations for a continued review of the visions developed for National eStrategies.
- International organizations are the main players in the field of analysis and collection of national data.
- To promote issues related to the National eStrategy through publications, conferences and seminars.
- To assist Lebanon in the building of its human capacity as relates to the National eStrategy
- To introduce knowledge concepts, training, tools in the implementation of projects
- To coordinate all ICT and knowledge activity funding to Lebanon
- To introduce Knowledge concepts, programs and tools in all their projects

### **3.4 NGOs**

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NGOs vary widely in scope and objectives. Their contribution and participation in the National eStrategy is also crucial:

- To incorporate elements of the strategy in their activities when appropriate and relevant
- To participate in generating aggregate demand for knowledge at the community level
- To preserving indigenous knowledge and contribute to the development of local content
- To participate and contribute to the National eStrategy's socio-economic objectives.
- Incorporate elements of the eStrategy in their activities
- Advise and play an active role in the implementation strategy

### **3.5 Academia**

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Academia's role is crucial, particularly due to the main opportunity provided in Lebanon by their quality and maturity. Academia covers general primary and secondary schooling, vocational training, university and special purpose education.

Their role is:

- To introduce the concepts and culture of knowledge into their curricula, research and teaching methodologies
- To advise and play an active role in the implementation of the strategy
- To develop effective and close co-operation between universities, the private sector
- To be the safe guardian of both general formal as well as ICT specific education.
- To join with the private sector in advancing technological research and innovation in Lebanon.
- To ensure that the new generations of the Lebanese workforce (ICT or otherwise) is ready for the envisaged Knowledge Based Economy.
- To assist the Government in its revision of the legal framework as required by the National eStrategy.

Academia's role in human capacity development is critical for the National eStrategy project.

### **3.6 The Media**

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The media covers TV, Radio, the press and increasingly, the web. The media plays a role in the following:

- To assist the public and private sectors in raising technological awareness in Lebanon.
- To provide the implementing Entity with a medium through which it promote its aims and gain acceptance of its main objectives.
- To assist academia and the private sector in the ongoing process of human capacity development.

Lebanon' media is a strength that needs to be exploited in various aspects of the National eStrategy.

## **4.0 Critical Success Factors for the National eStrategy**

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As a prelude to the policies and objectives of a National eStrategy, and to its implementation, this section defines those that are considered as Critical Success Factors.

### **4.1 Government Leadership**

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As demonstrated in the responsibilities of the Implementing Entity and that of the Government, the leadership of the Government in the overall eStrategy is critical for its success. Without the commitment, drive and support of the Government, the National eStrategy would not meet its objectives.

### **4.2 Involvement of the Active Stakeholders**

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In order not to load the Government with the overall responsibility, it is critical for the National eStrategy to be supported actively by all its stakeholders. Such support consists of active participation as well as contribution to the implementation of the Programs and Solutions.

### **4.3 Administrative Reform and Development**

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The National eStrategy for Lebanon project is to be driven by the Government. However, many partners are also required for its successful results. Without a lean, agile and responsive public sector, many of the strategies proposed for the 7 initiatives will not be efficiently implemented.

Administrative reform becomes a necessary condition for the National eStrategy project. By this is meant a committed global reengineering of the public sector's organization, legislation and human capacity.

### **4.4 Pragmatic Implementation**

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When some National ICT Policy or National eStrategy documents are reviewed, it will be found that they consist of a deep analysis of the current situation followed by brief recommendations. Recommendations usually do not get realized as concrete projects. Therefore, the National eStrategy for Lebanon as developed has concentrated on tracing a line from the statement of requirements (policies and their objectives) to the required strategies (solutions or projects). This document presents the policies and their objectives. A separate document presents a comprehensive list of solutions that address the various objectives. The solutions have the following characteristics:

- Practicality and pragmatism. All solutions have been successfully implemented in other countries. Some indeed in Lebanon, but with a restricted scope that this project is extending and enhancing.
- Incremental implementation is proposed.
- Realistic budgetary and duration levels
- Sustainable results and funding
- Projects that address national issues of concern or priorities

- Projects that are technologically feasible

#### **4.5 Consensus and Commitment**

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One of the characteristics of large scale national objectives is that they invite disparity in the levels of acceptance by various parties. Consensus for the project as a whole must be secured. Consensus leads to higher commitment on the part of the stakeholders. Lack of commitment is one of the leading causes of failures in national projects, ICT or otherwise. Commitment applies to various aspects of ICT strategies: their launch and promotion, their funding, their sustenance and their improvement.

#### **4.6 Efficient Partnerships**

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The implementation of National eStrategies relies on a large number of partnerships between multiple parties. The partners are varied and may be any of the following: the public and the private sector, NGOs, Academia and international organizations. In some cases, regional countries have also cooperated on realizing coordinated strategies.

#### **4.7 A Properly Implemented Legal Framework**

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A key pre-requisite for all initiatives is the revision and modernization of the legal framework required for all ICT operations. One of the key recommendations is the development of a wide ranging legal framework for such operations.

#### **4.8 Sustainable Programs and Solutions**

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One of the risks of national strategies is a general pattern of “injecting” these projects into the national economy only to find them fall and falter in due course. The main cause is usually that these projects are one time efforts or projects that require constant rejuvenation. Rather than await crisis points to revive such projects, it is a critical success factor for the National eStrategy project to develop solutions that are sustainable. This means that their results should be continuous and ongoing not just one time outcomes. It also means that these solutions should be integrated into the economy in such a manner that the economy will carry them and keep them operational.

#### **4.9 Learning Lessons from Other Countries**

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Other countries have ventured into eStrategies with varying degrees of success. Such experiences are available. In many instances, and through the international organizations promoting such drives, the experience can easily be learnt. A key success factor is the learning of the lessons from such implementations.

#### **4.10 Implement Using Best Practices**

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This Section develops general practices that are fundamental to the success of the project and can be seen as general good practices for the implementation of the remaining solutions.

1. **Implement ICT best practices:** In the proposed policies and their related strategies, it is crucial that the Government adopt a policy of using best practices. For example, implementing ICT projects requires a fair amount of expertise in software engineering, project and quality management. This is especially applicable to projects that go beyond traditional ICT applications oriented projects.
2. **Ensure ownership of projects:** Invariably, the public sector suffers from too strong an ownership. What is required here is that the beneficiaries of the solution be involved and committed to their project.
3. **Set concrete goals and take small achievable steps:** For projects to succeed, an early buy in is required. Setting up concrete goals that can be achieved incrementally provides the beneficiaries with recognizable results and ensures their future commitment.
4. **Set up monitoring and evaluation of projects:** Many projects are launched to great acclaim but are then left to flounder. Building the proper monitoring and evaluation schemes into the project/solution make up ensures an ongoing success.
5. **Open up to regional perspectives and cooperation:** The region has seen a variety of successful initiatives. It has been common in the Arab World to cooperate on many issues. The Government should ensure that it provides the ICT sector with enough support to allow for regional cooperating.
6. **Position the government as the key champion, user and legislator of ICT:** As and when the Government gets automated, going through eGovernment with all its pre-requisites, the rest of the Nation will take notice and will see the Government as the key champion of ICT.
7. **Adopt policies that avoid risks from globalization:** Globalization is a process. It is going on with and without countries that ignore it. It is a double edged sword. It may be beneficial to Lebanon if Lebanon learns to integrate its policies with the objectives of globalization. The Government should avoid any policies that cause globalization to have adverse effects on socio-economic development.
8. **Adopt issues at the National level:** Various initiatives made up of a "patchwork of projects" have succeeded in implementing such solutions. Without a National perspective for such solutions, many disadvantages arise. The Government should ensure that there is always a top view for all policies and solutions attempted within the National eStrategy project.
9. **Evaluation by independent parties:** The National eStrategy for Lebanon needs to be monitored and evaluated both internally and externally. The objective assessment of an independent party, an international consultant or organization would provide the necessary drive for higher quality and ensure that the project meets its objectives.

The above practices will reduce the challenges to be discussed in the next Section.

## **5.0 Challenges while Implementing the National eStrategy**

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A project of such a scope is bound to be labored by various risks and challenges. This section identifies the key pitfalls that may encumber the project during its launch and its ongoing realization.

1. Inappropriate choice of an implementing entity or a choice that does not fulfill the requirements presented in Section 2.1.2.
2. Delays in the development and implementation of the related legal framework.
3. Implementing the various programs and solutions as ICT projects without due regard to the eStrategic objectives.
4. The eStrategy project is based on partnership, coordination and national level activities. Many strategies are proposed that will require a single entity to handle them. One of the risks of the project is that such entities may slip into a territorial attitude prevalent in many public sector agencies.
5. A key pre-requisite for many of the proposed strategies is a change in the related legal framework. The public sector has a built in tendency to increase controls and regulation. Laws are issued over laws. Regulations curtail freedom of action and operation. It is important to keep the end in sight and ensure that laws and regulations issued to allow for progress should not work against such progress.
6. The project requires major funding. Applying inappropriate funding or curtailing funds in the middle of projects is damaging to these projects and their sustainability.
7. Political interference.
8. The entity that will implement the National eStrategy is crucial for its success. If the staff of the entity is not selected with the proper qualifications or if they are placed in inappropriate working environments, the project will suffer.
9. Insufficient planning and design of solutions would lead to inefficient projects or those that do not meet their objectives.
10. Unclear objectives for the Solutions are most often the source of discrepancies between requirements and results.
11. Insufficient top-level commitment is one of the most critical challenges to National eStrategic solutions.
12. Limited level of beneficiary participation
13. Lack of availability of data on related eStrategic issues or data of low quality, validity and reliability.
14. More focus on technology than on processes, people and organizations. This is a traditional challenge in the ICT industry.

Such challenges need to be addressed in the early and ongoing stages of the National eStrategy project.