Chapter 8
Success Stories of ICT Implementation in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Information and communication technology (ICT) has a great role in the development, growth, and economy of the country. ICT refers to any system, device, or product that can store, manipulate, and receive and transmit digital data effectively. ICT brings clear differences in the economy of countries wherever it is successfully implemented. It becomes a reason of timely, accurate, and efficient operations and becomes a source of user satisfaction by providing them fast, better, easy service around the clock. As timely access of information and communication plays a vital role in the success of any organization either public or private, many developed countries are already competing in digitalization. It is not only convenience, but it is the prime ingredient of good governance and an indispensable part of modern life. This chapter discusses the successful implementation of ICT infrastructures in the context of good governance and builds a vibrant society, the main agenda of Vision 2030 of KSA.

INTRODUCTION

E-Government has been deploy by many countries all over the world due to its significant role in delivering transparent and timely government services to the citizens. The government departments in which technology is penetrated and practiced are more efficient and significantly affect country's international competitive power (Al-Mushayt, Haq & Perwej, 2009).

The government of Saudi Arabia is constantly working to modernize the ICT infrastructure in the country and achieve 71% Digital maturity level of e-government services in 2018, which is a great improvement as compared to 58% in 2016. Kingdom's Digital Transformation Program is one of the

principal goals to achieve Vision 2030 objectives. Saudi Arabia's National Vision 2030 aims to build digital government to boost the kingdom's economy based on fourth industrial revolution and establish a vibrant digital society by turning the country into a globally competitive ICT hub. Vision 2030 has 96 strategic objectives based on 13 Vision Realization Programs, all promising to improve the citizen's lifestyle.

The Saudi Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) has taken several initiatives to infuse technology in government infrastructure and in 2018 Saudi Arabia ranked seventh worldwide by World Economic Forum (WEF) for efficient government spending index which is a key measure of global competitiveness. At present Saudi National Portal offer more 2,500, government services and the m-government alone addresses almost 130 applications for 70 government agencies. In the ongoing journey of digital transformation, KSA has achieved several milestones to serve citizens and attract foreign investors. Following section discusses some major e-projects deployed by KSA government to achieve goals of digital transformation (Saudi Vision 2030).

MAJOR E-GOVERNMENT PROJECTS IN KSA

Yesser Program

One of the important initiative under MCIT is to launch "Yesser Program" which covers three main domains G2G, G2C and G2B. Yesser Program aims to establish and manage most e-government services and products to provide fast and easy services to the people (e-Government Program "Yesser").

Main products of "Yesser" are as follows:

Saudi Portal

Saudi e-Government Portal provides broad online services to citizens, residents, businesses, visitors and external organizations efficiently. In addition, to provide e-services the portal also provides directory of government agencies and links to Saudi laws and regulations (Saudi Portal).

National Contact Center (Amer)

Amer Program launched in support of e-government strategic goals. It is the National Contact Center of Yesser program, designed to provide technical support, assistance and prompt advice to users. The center supports all government agencies and provides information about e-services to general public and to respond inquiries in both Arabic and English language by using variety of communication channels such as email, phone 9both landline and mobile), social networks, Fax, website, SMS, post etc.

The main objectives of the program is to address queries related to e-government issues and procedures, facilitate e-communication between individuals and organizations, reduce the load on service providers and to improve the response time (National Contact Center (Amer)).

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