

E-government Adoption and Trends in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

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Abstract

E-government in The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (HKJ) refers to the delivery of national or local government information and services via the Internet or other governmental institutions, ministries and departments. Many benefits and advantages that introduced by E-government and rising number of the HKJ internet users which has many policies on E-government development. Jordan government and ministry of information and communication technology have commitment to deliver faster and leading public service in E-government which is an Internet gateway to major government services. Several E-government policies have been issued by the government in the domain of information technology. E-government in Jordan presents many pertinent government data and services in electronic shapes to users everywhere and anytime, in order to delivers the best service to people using those services, let the users reach electronic information easily in a secure manner, get better output and save the effort, and participation in decision-making and public policy, and how acceptance of E-government services for the of Internet users. Proportional characteristics and suitable variable wherever proven as major reason for predict intention of use of E-government. This research gives a description of E-government experiment in HKJ, the E-government lifecycle, Implementing E-government Approach, challenges of E-government.

Keywords: E-government, E-services, Inter-Organizational Systems, public services.

Introduction:

E-government is a generic term for web-based services from governmental ministries. In E-government, the government uses information technology and particularly the Internet to support government operations, users, and provide government services in Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The interaction may be in the form of obtaining information, filings, or making payments and a host of other activities via the World Wide Web [1].

The E-government of HKJ national E-government initiative, launched by His Majesty King Abdullah II, aims to drive the nation's transformation into a knowledge society founded on a competitive, dynamic economy [2]. HKJ remains committed to this national vision. As part of its efforts to transform its society, economy and government, HKJ is pursuing E-government that aims to [3]:

- Deliver high-quality services to consumers, businesses and organizations.
- Improve government performance and efficiency.
- Enhance HKJ competitiveness[4].
- Ensure public sector transparency and accountability.
- Reduce cost and increase ease of interacting with government.
- Promote development of HKJ ICT sector.
- Develop skills within the public sector.
- Improve information security[5].

HKJ focused on an initial set of programs to serve as "building blocks" for E-government as outlined in *Launching E-government in Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Readiness and Approach*, a report presented to H.M. King Abdullah II in September 2000. In 2001, HKJ Ministry of ICT launched its E-government Program. During its initial phase, the Program was guided by a comprehensive "E-government Blueprint and Roadmap" developed in 2001. To meet its goals for improving delivery of services and government efficiency, the E-government Program in Jordan has, initiated major projects including:

- Completion of two phases of the Secure Government Network (SGN) which provides connectivity, Internet and email services to 18 government entities.
- Preparation of five "fast track" vertical e-services for government departments & ministries already launched.
- Establishment of a state-of-the-art Operations Center that hosts the SGN and will eventually host other E-government components and services [6,7].

HKJ E-government Vision:

E-government in is dedicated to delivering services to people across society, irrespective of location, economic status, education or ICT ability. With its commitment to a customer-centric approach, E-government will transform government and contribute to the Kingdom's economic and social development [8]. The Strategy crystallizes this vision into objectives, it presents priority E-government initiatives and projects, it identifies targets and milestones to facilitate performance control and raises accountability by clearly defining the responsibilities of key stakeholders [9].

Scope of E-government in HKJ:

E-government in Hashemite Kingdome of Jordan encompasses a wide range of activities; we can identify three distinct areas. These include government-to-government (G to G), government-to-citizens (G to C), and government to business (G to B). Each of these represents a different combination of Motivating forces [10]. Some common goals include improving the efficiency, reliability, and quality of services for the respective groups. In many respects, the government to government (G to G) sector represents the backbone of E-government. Governments at the union, state and local level must enhance and update their own internal Systems and procedures before electronic transactions with citizens and business are introduced [11]. Government to government E-government involves sharing data and conducting

Electronic exchanges between various governmental ministries. There are number of advantages with government-to-government initiatives [12]. One benefit with this is cost savings, Which is achieved by increasing the speed of the transactions, reduction in the number of Personnel necessary to complete a task, and improving the consistency of outcomes. Another advantage, which flows from this, is improvement in the management of public Resources [13]. Although E-government encompasses a wide range of activities and actors, three distinct sectors can be identified. These include government-to-government (G2G), government-to- business (G2B), and government-to-citizen (G2C), government-to-employee (G2E). However, since G2E operations are intra activities, they can be considered a subset of the [14].

HKJ E-government Lifecycle:

An E-government lifecycle in HKJ (Figure 1) has the following unique elements:

- When a program is being scoped, it is a time of innovation when increased research into: Demand and impact and the mechanisms that will deliver against these objectives are needed [15], The justification and understanding of benefit/cost ratio will be needed so social value, As a program is being designed and built there will be a need for exploration and experimentation to discover the best ways to [16]: Direct design and deployment of the program, ensure the service engages target users, integrate the program, especially cross agency, deliver citizen-centric solutions [17].
- After a program is rolled-out it will need to be supported through a transformation agenda of: Ongoing monitoring of usage and acceptance levels, Feedback to understand the changed perceptions that will emerge as to the positioning and suitability of the program content and delivery mechanisms [18], Iterative learning and experience by ministries, government and users, a cycle of refinement and renewal.

These elements combine to provide a way to move up the maturity curve while progressively delivering value to the community and to the government [19].

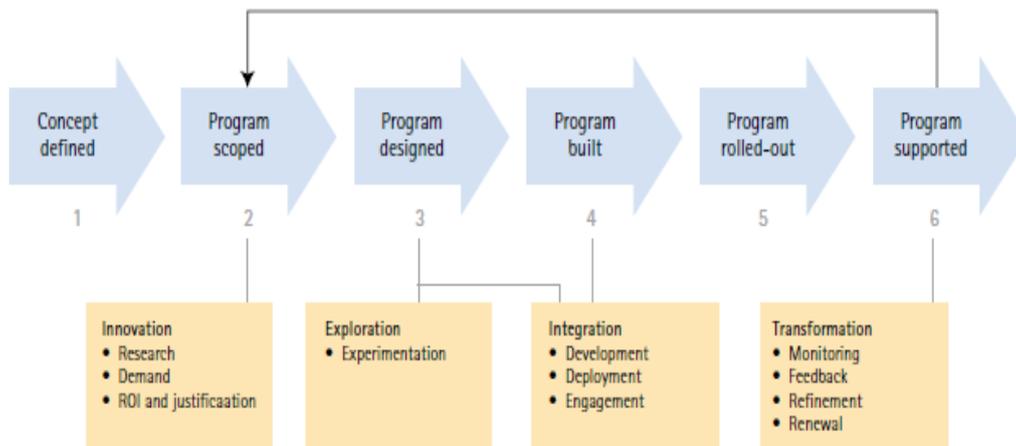


Figure1: - E-government Lifecycle

Stages of E-government in HKJ:

E-government is to fully realize the capabilities of available information technology in an effort to transform government from limited service operation into an automated. There are four stages of e-government in Jordan: evolution, presence, interaction, transaction, and transformation. It is important to note that an E-government initiative does not necessarily have to start at the first stage and work its way through all of the stages [20].

HKJ E-government Stakeholders:

Stakeholders of E-government in Hashemite Kingdome of Jordan are E-government users, Government entities, the E-government Program, to-be-established National E-government Steering Committee, Private sector and non-governmental partners, Political leaders [21]. In a customer-centric world, E-government in Jordan starts with (citizens, businesses, government entities and government employees), who are the primary stakeholders of E-government. As the providers and users of E-government services, Government entities and the E-government Program are also major stakeholders. Increasingly, private sector partners are becoming more involved in services delivery to users and in providing operational control and infrastructure maintenance services [22].

Commitment and active ownership at the highest levels are vital drivers for accountability of government entities for E-government progress, public investment in core E-government efforts, policymaking needed for E-government, and public sector reform that is essential for service delivery [23].

Advantages and benefits of E-government in HKJ:

Advantage of E-government in Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan can be classified into internal advantage and external advantage [24]:

Internal advantage: new technologies contribute to an improvement of the internal efficiency of public administrations, by streamlining information and administrative process management which will have an impact on relations between administrative apparatuses at both a horizontal level (between departments, and ministries) and vertical one (between central and local ministries) [25].

External advantage : ICT enables better management of external relations with the constituency ensuring higher standards of service and information delivery to the public, as well as at least potentially enabling levels of democratic participation that were previously unimaginable[26].

Benefits of e-government in HKJ have been grouped into the categories of agency benefits, consumer financial benefits, social benefits and contribution to broader government objectives. Benefits consist of cost reductions, increased revenues, improved price to output performance (efficiency), improved effectiveness (changing the demand profile for outputs), and improved e-service or cycle times [27].

citizens financial benefits are time savings for users, cost savings delivered to citizens, cost savings delivered to businesses, cost savings delivered to intermediaries, revenue generation opportunities for intermediaries, citizens or business, and financial benefits obtained from leveraging improvements in government service levels, integration and effectiveness [28].

Social benefits consist of contributions made by government online services to the quality of life of citizens, businesses and intermediaries that are not easily measured in financial terms, triggers to take action which would not otherwise be made as a result of information that is easier to find and use[29], information to help in decision making by people, community groups or businesses, and integration of public sector and private sector delivery to increase new business or work opportunities.

Contribution to broader government objectives in Jordan is greater take-up of information and communications technology in the information economy, social and technological development, improvements in information availability and more open government, improvements that support a more democratic government [30].

They also expect their privacy and security to be protected. Maximum value can be attained from citizen-centric E-government systems that follow life events, rather than being limited by agency boundaries. [31].

HKJ E-government Cases:

- **E-government in ISTD**

Taxpayers in the past in HKJ had to physically appear at one of 19 tax offices, or the headquarters of the Income and Sales Tax Department, to submit tax returns. Citizens would present forms they had filled out by hand and make payments through their banks. It was common for taxpayers to wait in long lines at the tax offices - especially at the end of every month, when sales tax is due, and at the end of April, when income tax is due. The whole process was done manually, although the tax department did archive tax records in a database.

Income and Sales Tax Department launched the program for e-government at the beginning of 2005, This is the first e-government program to be implemented in government departments in the kingdom, with a view to provide high-quality services lead to saving time and effort on the citizen and the employee so that citizens without access to the service of ISTD , and whatever the location,

whether inside or outside Jordan, since this service is available round the clock and throughout the day of the year because the citizen can access the service even on holidays. The use of these programs during the past year to alleviate the burden of the use of paper and stationery. The department aims at reducing the expense of sending sheets of tax returns to taxpayers each year. Electronic filling has led to the easy retrieval of information, which made it possible to browse the pages of information and file electronically without the need to refer to file paperwork by linking e-government system to an electronic archiving system. The e-government has provided service for electronic payment of outstanding balances provided the appropriate speed in the delivery of information to show immediate results of the service required and in record time.

The e-government in ISTD, carried out by the Department in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology provides many services highlighted by the disclosure of self-esteem, which includes employees, individuals, corporations and companies. Taxpayers can also obtain a statement of estimated fiscal years and the amount of balances due and payable. Taxpayers in HKJ also have the ability to update and amend the personal information, address, business address and mailing address. They also can claim tax exemptions such as spouse or parents, study and other exemptions. The department website provides in addition to immediate online-help in addition to all new laws and regulations, procedures and other feed in both Arabic and English [32].

- **E-government in Greater Amman Municipality**

The Greater Amman Municipality is responsible for delivering public services to a largely urban community in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The authority's business needs are mostly focused on supporting the delivery of front-line services to citizens. "Previously, senior managers were obliged to travel for face-to-face meetings by car through congested traffic because there was no alternative. Internal communication was by phone and paper, using fax machines and letters. External communication was expensive and time consuming and video conferencing was not an option."The authority is part of the Secure Government Network and the Mayor's ambition is to improve communication both within the organization and with 58 other government entities linked to the SGN.The authority is committed to playing an active role in helping Jordan achieve the objectives of His Majesty King Abdullah II, who wants to make the country an information and communications technology hub for the region. Microsoft Jordan is well equipped to support those ambitions. The Jordanian government has a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for Volume Licensing, so the authority was able to save money on licenses.With the new tools, users can now communicate with instant messaging, voice, and video-conferencing features, and are able to switch seamlessly between different communications channels. When users log off their office networks, calls can automatically go to their mobile devices without having to set up manual call forwarding. The aim is to extend the solution authority-wide to 2,000 users in the future. The Greater Amman Municipality will experience a significant cut in telephone and travel costs when the solution is fully implemented. By starting with senior managers, there is now complete buy-in from the Mayor's office, which will help with employee adoption. The pilot project—with 35 users, including the Mayor and his senior management team was highly successful and resulted in productivity gains by all senior managers. Authority saves on travel costs and telephone charges. The estimated reduction in travel costs is 45 per cent of the annual budget, while telephony charges are forecast to drop by 35 per cent. Video conferencing saves travelling time [33].

- **E-government in Ministry of Water and Irrigation**

To Information within the ministry of MWI in the HKJ was disconnected in the past and usually hard to find there was no central place where they could access all the information they needed.

Some operational processes were still handled manually and we wanted to speed up the access of information.”

In addition, there were few set processes for document management and compliance, which made the storage, security, retrieval, and backup of documents disorganized and time consuming. Updating content was also challenging. It often required involvement of the MWI.

Having the documents centralized into one portal through e-government was seen as the best way to help employees find information more quickly. Documents resided in different sources and computers across the organization. E-gateway is build for the different MWI departments, as a collaboration tool for document and calendar sharing, and to increase the productivity in publishing content online. Workflow automation has helped reduce costs and improve productivity and efficiency. With e-government the ministry is saving significant amounts of time in collecting, processing, and consolidating information that was previously scattered between different departments. We have freed up 30 per cent of the investment allocated for other technologies. As a collaboration tool within the e-government portal, employees can easily share documents and announcements, and benefit from shared calendars, reduced costs of data storage. With its portal, the MWI is saving the cost of processing and maintaining redundant data and document stores. The ability to monitor and control data quality and integrity is much improved [34].

HKJ E-government Services:

E-government in HKJ is about the delivery of services to targeted customer segments. These services vary in nature and objectives. Some are forward-facing like external customers and some are inward like aimed at enhancing government efficiency [35]. The delivery of E-government services in Jordan will be service-oriented, customer-centric, and results driven, it will be supported by modular, interoperable and re-usable ICT components and will leverage multiple access channels. It will be facilitated by an adequate mix of ownership. Ultimately, E-government services will transform the way citizens, businesses, and government entities and employees interact with government. The successful delivery of E-government services rests on a number of foundations in the areas of institutionalization, laws and regulations, technology, and business factors, identified as the four pillars of E-government [36].

Conclusion:

The movement to E-government in Hashemite Kingdome of Jordan is changing the way people and businesses interact with government. E-government offers a huge potential in seeking innovative way to reach the ideal of government of people, by people and for people. This research provides a basic view for guidelines and frameworks that address E-government’s definition, objectives, challenges, stages and benefits. It also gives impetus for resources that enable E-government’s planning, design, and implementation through reviewing E-government initiatives worldwide.

E-government intersects many issues, including privacy, digital divide (the lack of equal access to computers, whether due to a lack of financial resources or necessary skills), public access to government information, service delivery, and information security. E-government solutions are prominently represented in efforts to improve the management and efficiency of government information technology resources. E-government initiatives could have implications for ism. One of the hallmarks of a government system of government is the emphasis on vertical divisions of power. In contrast, E-government initiatives utilize information technologies that emphasize a horizontal, or networked, model of communication and interaction.

This Research has very useful findings for the development and implementation of E-government in Hashemite Kingdome of Jordan. Most of society was very ready to use E-government. Another

presumption that E-government that does not fit with the lifestyle and cultural communities are also indisputable. Through variable compatibility, this research has proved that E-government is compatible with their lifestyle and culture, and they ready when public services will be delivered e. Finally, this research provides a trigger for the Jordanian government both central and local governments to develop and implement better E-government since E-government had been awaited by about million Jordanian Internet users.

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