Chapter 5. Open government initiatives and practices

The legal framework, revised or developed after 2011, in particular the Constitution and organic law n° 113.14 related to municipalities, fosters stakeholder participation, transparency, integrity and accountability. This framework also requires the creation of new participatory mechanisms. The city of Salé has committed to designing and implementing practices aimed at supporting open government principles, in line with these new prerogatives.

According to the OECD, stakeholder participation covers all forms of stakeholder involvement in the policy cycle, as well as in service design and delivery, whether it is in the form of information, consultation or engagement (see Box 5.1).

Box 5.1 Definition of stakeholder participation according to the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government

Stakeholder participation: all the ways in which stakeholders can be involved in the policy cycle and in service design and delivery, including:

Information: an initial level of participation characterised by a one-way relationship in which the government produces and delivers information to stakeholders. It covers both on-demand provision of information and "proactive" measures by the government to disseminate information;

Consultation: a more advanced level of participation that entails a two-way relationship in which stakeholders provide feedback to the government and vice-versa. It is based on the prior definition of the issue for which views are being sought and requires the provision of relevant information, in addition to feedback on the outcomes of the process;

Engagement: when stakeholders are given the opportunity and the necessary resources (e.g. information, data and digital tools) to collaborate during all phases of the policy-cycle and in the service design and delivery.

The city of Salé has developed initiatives in all these areas with the aim of informing citizens, involving them in the design of the city's future and strengthening integrity.

Proactive publication of information to increase transparency, participation, accountability and integrity

Initiatives launched by the municipality of Salé in the areas of transparency and communication allow a regular and valuable flow of information on the subject of municipal activities, which, in turn, helps to improve the accountability of the elected representatives and of the municipality towards its citizens. Against a background in which Morocco is awaiting implementation of the law guaranteeing access to information, the municipality of Salé has taken the decision to proactively publish a variety of important

data of the municipality. This information includes laws, decrees and official documents related to local government administration, which is accessible on the municipal website (https://en.villedesale.ma), as are the budget, council decisions and the annual programme of calls for tenders. These documents are also displayed in printed format at the premises of the municipality itself. Thus, the city publishes a certain number of important documents in line with common practice in the OECD countries (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Publication of key information – OECD countries and Salé

	Budget documents	Annual ministry reports, including accounts	Audit reports	All government policy reports	Commercial contracts over a stipulated threshold	List of public servants and their salaries	Administrative datasets	Information describing types of record systems and their contents and uses	Information on internal procedures, manuals and guidelines	Description of the structure and function of government institutions	Annual report on freedom of information law	Freedom of information proecdural information
OECD countries (32)												
Required to be proactively published by FOI law	17	17	12	8	11	5	6	11	12	19	16	16
Not required by FOI law, but routinely published	13	10	11	10	5	4	15	11	10	11	7	12
Neither required by law nor published	2	5	9	14	16	23	11	10	10	2	9	4
Municipality of Salé												
Proactive publication	yes				yes		x			x		
Not published			x			x			x			
Not applicable		x		x						x	x (*)	x

Note: (*) the law regarding the right to access to information was adopted by the House of Representatives in February 2018 and published in the official bulletin. This bill will only enter into force one year after its publication in the official bulletin
Source: (OECD, 2011[13]) and information supplied by the municipality of Salé

The website is also used to make certain public services available online and strengthen transparency and accountability. This includes the launch of an online facility (www.guichetsala.ma) for certain public services, such as granting building permits and publication of calls for tenders on the national public procurement website (www.marchespublics.gov.ma).

However, although the website is used extensively as a communication tool, public administration officials who took part in the OECD peer review noted that greater use could be made of ICTs to achieve more participatory and inclusive communication or to make information available in open data formats. Publication of information in this type of format includes two main aspects: 1) *availability and access*: the data must be made available as

a whole and at a reasonable reproduction cost, preferably downloadable on the Internet. The data must also be available in a practical format, which can be modified; and 2) *reuse and redistribution*: the data must be made available under a licence that enables reuse and redistribution, including cross-referencing with other datasets. The non-profit association Open Knowledge International defines open data as follows: "Open data is data that can be freely used, re-used and redistributed by anyone - subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and share alike" (Open Knowledge Foundation, 2017[14]). The municipality could therefore consider publishing key information about the functioning of the city in open data format, including the municipal budget which is currently downloadable as a PDF, so as to facilitate reuse of this data. In addition, the municipality could publish information related to the city as open data – some of which is already publicly available – with the aim of promoting research and creating economic opportunities (see Box 5.2). At the time of writing this report, the city of Salé has not published any data in an open format. Developing knowledge and skills in this area would be timely in order to further the ambitious open government reforms being pursued by the municipality. Consideration of the use of ICTs could help to identify opportunities and priorities for maximising their use. This could include a shift towards more open data. These discussions and the development of new tools could be moved forward in partnership with universities, especially engineering faculties, and with civil society. The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Investment and the Digital Economy, which manages the national open data portal for Morocco (www.data.gov.ma), could share its expertise with the city of Salé.

The city of Salé's Facebook[1] page, which has more than 6 000 likes, is another tool used for communication and disseminating information. The city also has Twitter and YouTube accounts. Since these channels only reach a certain group of citizens, use of communication technologies is principally a means of ensuring a dialogue with the young. These communication tools are the product of proactive efforts by the city to publish information, of which most of the important information (budget, summaries of municipal council meetings) is regularly updated. This is essential to ensure that it continues to be meaningful in the long term. In addition, and in keeping with practice in the OECD countries, citizens and journalists have the opportunity to learn more about municipal politics by attending council sessions which, as the law stipulates, are open to the public. The press is also invited to various activities and events organised by the council. The effectiveness of this approach depends, however, on participation by a press that is diverse and independent in the quest to strengthen transparency and accountability.

Communication activities by the city of Salé is a sector that is already well developed, based on various channels, demonstrating the municipality's will to continue improving relations with citizens. Among the strategic objectives of the communication plan 2014-2016 is more openness towards public opinion and citizen participation. Interviews conducted by the OECD team with civil society organisations show that the flow of information appears to be effective.

Box 5.2. Open data for economic value and research

Several cities in OECD countries, such as New York, Berlin and Paris, have set up open data portals. A case in point is the Paris website, which contains more than 200 datasets on various themes, such as the most popular first names, a list of municipal markets, education facilities, places where you can buy a coffee for 1 euro, etc. These portals also provide access to certain real-time data. Publishing data can offer a number of advantages: it can encourage the creation of applications and economic value, or be used in university research. For example, publication by the French Ministry of the Interior of data on road accidents prompted Rue89 and Le Nouvelobs to create an application that offers a map of road accidents. In Seoul, South Korea, publication of health data has enabled private company Ohseatbyeol to develop an app on health and well-being for the elderly, including, for example, the location of hospitals and advice about exercises. This app makes life easier for citizens, while also stimulating the private sector.

In 2013, New York City launched its open data portal in an effort to encourage innovation, research, economic opportunities and citizen participation in public governance and strengthen transparency. The portal groups together 1 400 datasets on New York organised into a number of categories, such as economic development, education, energy and environment, government and finance, health, human services, public safety, recreation, transparency, transportation, developers and the open budget. The launch was coupled with a municipal decree that instructed all public agencies to identify, catalogue and publish their information on the portal. Each agency must also allocate an official to coordinate the data. The decree highlights the importance of prioritising data publication. The data, which can be used to increase the agency's accountability, improve public knowledge, further the agency's mission, create economic opportunities or respond to a demand identified by the public, needs to be prioritised. Agencies are not obliged to publish data whose publication involves excessive financial and administrative costs.

Source: Open Data Portal Berlin (https://daten.berlin.de), Open Data Portal Paris (https://opendata.paris.fr/page/home/), Open Data Portal New York (https://data.ny.gov), Open Data Handbook New York (http://ny.github.io/open-datahandbook/OpenDataHandbook.pdf), Open Data Portal Korea (www.data.go.kr/main.do?lang=en), (l'OBS avec Rue89, 2014[15])

Citizen participation in developing and implementing public policies

The city of Salé has developed many mechanisms to involve its citizens. Some of these mechanisms are already well established and have been developed using a bottom-up approach starting at district level. However, participation in the mechanisms discussed below is often confined to a limited number of stakeholders and may, as a result, compromise the legitimacy of the process. For this reason, it is important to adopt a rigorous approach to identifying actors to involve. Figure 5.1 below illustrates the actors who could be affected by new regulations, and who should therefore be included.

Figure 5.1. Mapping of actors affected by a regulation or law

Source: (OECD, 2013[16]).

The city of Salé has regular and productive interaction with local civil society with which it signed a total of 102 agreements (of which 5 were signed during the 2003-2009 term, 52 in 2009-2015 and 45 since 2015). In addition, the establishment of the Advisory Body on Equity, Equal Opportunities, and Gender in April 2018, with a diverse membership (see Table 5.2), allows interaction with a diversity citizens of Salé and ensures that the concerns of the various social groups concerned are taken into account.

Table 5.2. Members of the Advisory Body on Equity, Equal Opportunities, and Gender

Represented category	Disabled	Children	Elderly	Women	People locally renown	With experience in local development	Professionals	Local associations	With experience in gender
Number of representatives	2	2	2	2	5	3	4	7	3

Source: Information provided by the commune of Salé.

However, the participation of other actors appears to be less structured and consistent. Universities in Salé are invited to meetings, but the cooperation is neither as fruitful nor as structured as it is with associations. The private sector is even more absent from these participatory mechanisms. The engagement of specific groups, such as young people and women, is often highlighted as another challenge. The involvement of local media – including community media such as Web Radio Salé – could also help to improve dialogue with citizens and increase transparency of the municipality. The Local Government Participatory Practices Manual published by the International Centre for Municipal Development, part of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, provides advice on ways

of increasing women's involvement in public consultations, and can also serve as a source of inspiration of how to involve other groups in society (see Box 5.3).

Box 5.3. Guidance for an inclusive consultation

The Local Government Participatory Practices Manual "A toolkit to support public participation in municipal decision making" published by the International Centre for Municipal Development, a part of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, proposes:

- "Ensure that, wherever possible, information is disaggregated by gender, race, age, income, ethnicity, and other relevant socio-economic factors.

- Ensure that information is provided in simple and clear language.

- Identify gender gaps, i.e. inequalities between women and men which have to be considered in the outcomes and follow-up actions.

- Wherever possible, hold consultation meetings where women or particular communities gather already (i.e. low housing, coop housing, schools, childcare centres, shopping malls, recreations centres, coffee houses, etc.), and in settings that are accessible and comfortable for diverse women, First Nations (or indigenous) women, racialized communities, young women and men, elders, etc.

- Make full use of partnerships with local women's organizations to access their networks and expertise and reach women who are marginalized in the community. Where appropriate, provide financial support to enable inclusive consultations.

- Practice proactive strategies and reach out to women and marginalised women and men to ensure they are included.

- Plan meetings at different times of the day and not only evenings. Women might be more reluctant to go out at night and have many family responsibilities in the evenings.

- Ensure safety of consultation events such as lighted areas, easy access to public transportation, etc.

- Provide practical support to help women, low-income residents, those with fixed incomes, etc. to attend meetings. Support can include: transportation subsidies, childcare, translation, buildings that are accessible for women and men with disabilities, and food that is considerate of dietary restrictions for any number of reasons.

- Support women's leadership initiatives."

Source: (International Centre for Municipal Development, 1999[14])

The Advisory Body on Equity, Equal Opportunities, and Gender could serve as a forum for debate to review participatory activities and draw up a roadmap to identify participatory mechanisms suited to each group, the development and setting in place of participatory mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, as provided for in the framework of the MAP (see below) and an inclusive debate so as to identify all forms of participation needed by

the municipality, and which it would like to develop in the medium and long term (for example, participatory budgeting see Box 5.4).

Box 5.4. Participatory budgeting in Tunisia

In Tunisia participatory budgeting was introduced for the first time in 2014 in four municipalities: La Marsa – which allocates 10% of its investment budget to the participatory budget – Menzel Bourguiba, Tozeur and Gabès, on the initiative of the association Action Associative. To date, 19 municipalities have adopted the participatory budgeting system. According to officials and civil society in La Marsa and Sfax, participatory budgeting has helped to build confidence between citizens and the municipality, and has increased participation and legitimacy in a context in which towns are governed by special delegations nominated to run the cities until the first local elections since the revolution of 2011 will take place.

Throughout the world, there are a great many different approaches to participatory budgeting. In Tunisia, Action Associative is a key actor, which increases awareness and offers training in a well-defined methodology. In line with this system, participatory budgeting takes place according to the following stages.

The process often begins with an official decision by the municipal council to create a budget line for the participatory budget. Next, an agreement is signed between civil society and the municipality, defining the rules of cooperation.

The first phase is that of communication and raising awareness of the participatory budget and the possibility of engaging in the process. Forums are then organised in the various residential areas, hosted on a voluntary basis by local facilitators proposed by signatory associations to the conventions. The facilitators also have the task of informing citizens and raising awareness among them through brochures, messages broadcast on loudspeakers, house-to-house visits, etc.

Each forum lasts two days, generally from Saturday to Sunday. The Saturday is given over to a presentation by the municipality or the technical service of the participatory budget, projects planned achievements and local finances. The Sunday is used for discussions between citizens, allowing them to present their needs and vote for projects. At the end of the forum, three delegates, who must include one woman, one man and one youth, are chosen to represent the residential area/district to which they will be accountable.

After the vote has taken place in all neighbourhoods, a delegates' forum is organised, during which a vote is held for the projects that will subsequently be adopted by the municipal council.

The methodology also provides for the involvement of citizens in the implementation phase. Citizens' monitoring committees are formed to oversee the procurement process and the carrying out of the works. (OECD, 2019[15])

In addition, several municipalities, including La Marsa, Menzel Bourguiba, Gabès, Tozeur, La Manouba, Sfax and Gafsa, have signed an intermunicipal mutual aid agreement on participatory budgeting. The aim of this intermunicipal network is to provide support for the participatory budget and secure its long-term future.

Source: (OECD, 2019[15])

Citizen participation in sessions of the council and municipality committees

The municipal council of Salé manages the municipality's affairs through its deliberations. The council must meet in ordinary session three times each year, in February, May and October. These sessions, in line with the law, are open to the public, unless otherwise decided by a third party of the council or governor of the prefecture. However, to date, no session of the council has been held behind closed doors. In accordance with the law, the agendas and dates of meetings are displayed at the municipal head office and by notification by electronic means (website, Facebook). Given the importance of municipal council meetings to the municipality's affairs, opening up these sessions to the public is common practice in the OECD countries. It is therefore positive that the city of Salé allows its citizens to closely follow discussions and the development of urban policy, in an effort to strengthen transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, as a result of the right to petition, citizens and associations can demand that a question be tabled in a session's agenda. However, according to municipal staff, the right to petition is a recent development (enshrined in the 2011 Constitution and the organic law of 2015) and at the time of writing this report, has not yet been used by citizens.

By contrast, committee sessions are not public. In accordance with the law, the committee chairperson may invite certain public agents and officials in an advisory capacity. In Tunisia, for example, committee sessions are open to the public and some other actors such as trade unionists or chamber of commerce officials are invited to present their opinions. This option allows key actors to be included in the city's policy discussions and to have access to supplementary information, and ensures the involvement of different stakeholders from the beginning.

Participation in strategic planning

In addition to the deliberations of the municipal council and its committees, strategic planning is a key process for defining the municipality's vision and ensuring its management. It is therefore critical that citizens be able to make a contribution, as indicated by the 2009 Municipal Charter and the organic law of 2015. The city of Salé has already opened up its process of strategic planning to its citizens. The launch of the Thursday dialogue sessions offers an opportunity to involve the community in discussions about the city's strategic directions. These Thursday dialogues are monthly meetings for public consultation that have been organised since 2017 in partnership with GIZ and the Directorate-General for Local Authorities, which is part of the Ministry of the Interior. They bring together local civil society and all managers and stakeholders to debate themes related to local development. At the time of writing this report, the meetings had addressed the following issues: relations between the local administration and citizens, the environment and cleanliness of the city, public transport (buses and trams), culture and local development, the role of local actors in qualifying public schools, a unified development plan for the city of Salé, and illiteracy and local development. Results of these discussions are submitted to the municipal council. The choice of themes addressed depends on the competence of the municipality, and citizens are invited to propose subjects. While the first three themes were chosen in consultation with the district consultation committee, the others emerged from forms completed by the audience during the Thursday dialogue sessions. Furthermore, the participation of citizens and organisations in the municipal action plan (MAP) is a legal requirement (Article 78 of the organic law on municipalities). According to the municipality, participation in preparation of the

municipal action plan is under way, involving inclusion in the diagnosis, needs assessment and definition of the vision. However, the city has not yet been able to develop experiences in terms of involving citizens in the monitoring and evaluation of the MAP. Monitoring committees need to be set up to support participation throughout the public policy cycle (see Figure 5.2). The city of Alcobendas (Box 5.5) has set in place a very precise process for involving citizens in strategic planning.

Figure 5.2. Different stages in the public policy cycle
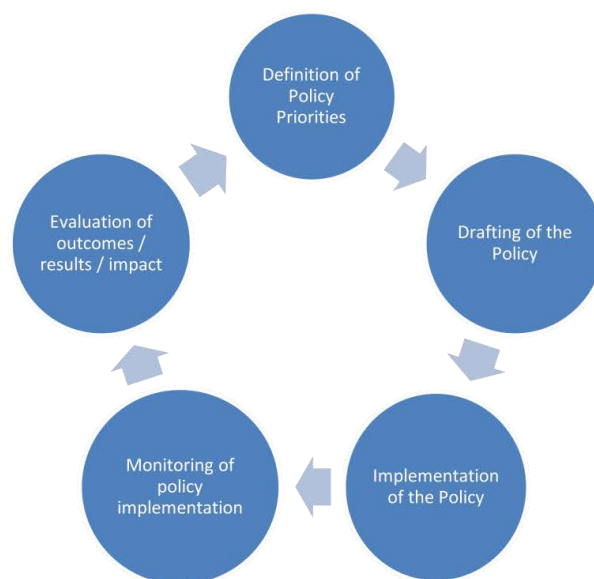
Source: (OECD, 2016[2])

In addition, the city of Salé can draw on experiences of citizens' and associations' participation in proposing, developing and implementing solutions to certain social problems, such as the organisation of street vendors, through the participation of those concerned, their grouping into associations, the setting up of a tripartite consultation committee, or the involvement of associations in the allocation of street sales licenses. The city's cleanliness programme (Salé, clean city) is another example of a participatory approach that has engaged relevant actors in order to examine the problem, define responsibilities and involve the associations in implementation. These experiences of participation in structural challenges could also inspire and inform the participatory mechanism for the MAP process.

Box 5.5. Participation in strategic planning in Alcobendas, Spain

In 2013, the municipal council of Alcobendas approved its strategic plan (*Diseña Alcobendas el futuro que queremos*). The plan comprises 38 projects divided into five strategic categories – promotion of the city; economic development; innovation; education and employment; sustainable development; good governance, transparent and responsible management; social responsibility and quality of life – which together define a vision for the city.

One of the key objectives was the involvement of all stakeholders in the process. Building on the participatory mechanisms defined in regulations on citizen participation, the plan was developed by following a series of steps:

Development of an assessment report and a survey of the preferred strategies. These two documents were published on the website and in the local press, and were also explained during roundtable sessions with citizens.

For each theme, experts were invited to offer advice and help to define public opinion.

On the basis of this information, working groups using the SWOT methodology were called on to define their vision of Alcobendas, and to propose and develop projects to be included in the strategic plan.

513 project proposals were presented in person and through the website, on the initiative of individuals or businesses. These people and companies were then given the opportunity to defend their projects in front of the public.

The projects were grouped into themed categories, and stakeholders then classified them by order of priority during the municipal social council, based on two criteria: usefulness for citizens and project viability.

The final plan was presented to the municipal social committee and approved by the municipal council.

All participants were given feedback on their proposals. A total of 320 people took part in the process, either as individuals or as representatives of institutions, associations or businesses. The entire documentation for the strategic plan is available on this website (www.alcobendas.org/es/portal.do?TR=C&IDR=2295), as are the meeting reports, SWOT analysis, etc. Monitoring and evaluation reports have also been published on the website (city observatory website) to keep citizens informed of the project's state of progress (completed, ongoing, delayed, not activated).

Source: Lino Ramos Ferreiro, Jefe de Planificación y Evaluación, Ayuntamiento de Alcobendas
Citizen participation at district level

Citizen participation at district level

At district level, citizens have two opportunities for participating in municipal affairs: through district council meetings and consultation committees for associations. As at the municipal council level, district council meetings are open to the public; the same rules apply. As for the consultation committees, these group together several associations that are signatories of a consultation charter, such as neighbourhood associations, cultural,

sports and social associations. As shown in Table 5.3, the number of associations that participate is quite substantial. These consultation committees are a rich source of proposals and a place for discussion to develop proposals and submit them to local institutions, encouraging the implementation of collective action. They interact with the district councils and have led to the formation of a number of working groups, particularly in the areas of literacy, the environment, economic inclusion, youth and cultural initiatives and disability. The consultation committees aim to develop themed activities, conduct shared assessments and generate awareness of district projects. These groups bring together associations, district and external services. The districts' administrations supply the committees with human and material resources to ensure their effective operation and enable activities to be implemented that are deemed a priority by the district committee and the district council (see Figure 5.3 for the consultation structure). According to committee members, the majority of the activities conducted by these committees fall under the heading of social affairs.

Figure 5.3. Consultation structure at district level
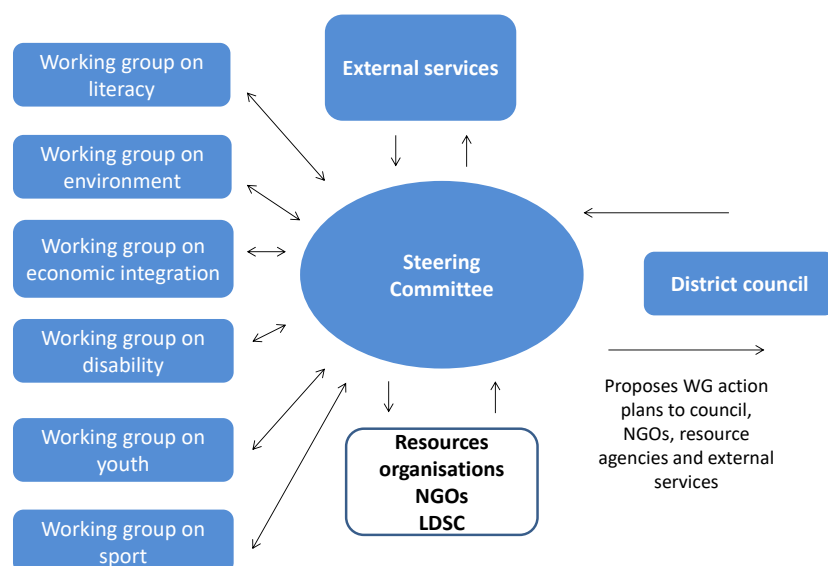
Source: Document supplied by the municipality of Salé.

Table 5.3. District consultation committees

District	Signatory associations	Working groups
Tabriquet	165	6
Laayada	77	5
Hssaine	75	7
Bettana	65	4
Bab Lamrissa	66	7

Source: Information provided by the commune of Salé.

These consultation committees appear to be well established and are used on a regular basis by associations in the districts. According to the interviews conducted, the culture of dialogue that they have managed to instil has also fostered participation at the city level (for example in the Thursday dialogue sessions). These dialogue structures and working groups are a rich source of interaction and information, from which the city of Salé could draw greater advantage. Aside from joint projects implemented at the district level, the working groups and consultation committees should inform policy making of the city of Salé, as well as that of the region and at the national level. For this to happen, mechanisms for conveying information will be needed. Representatives of consultation committees could be approached by the council committees and invited to consultations on the national programme for open government in Morocco.

Claims and complaints

Complaints are another useful way in which citizens can express their opinions. On the one hand, they allow citizens to rectify situations in which they consider themselves to have been unjustly treated, and on the other hand they enable the administration to collect information on poor functioning or the dissatisfaction of citizens. The municipality of Salé has a system for receiving claims and complaints. A unit has responsibility for managing complaints in accordance with the prerogatives of the municipality. An online portal has been set up to collect complaints and send them automatically to the mailboxes of the President, Director General of Services and of the other services concerned. The municipality also collects statistics on the complaints lodged (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4. Complaints lodged with the municipality of Salé

Year	Number of complaints lodged
2014	319
2015	439
2016	353
2017	214

Source: Information provided by the commune of Salé.

Recently, the municipality has launched a mobile application called "Ayni Ala Madinati" (*I watch over my city*), which enables citizens to lodge complaints about the collection of household waste. Results for this initiative have yet to be evaluated. The use of mobile applications may indeed be a way of involving citizens, especially the young who are increasingly connected through their smartphones. However, the long-term success of such initiatives and the building of citizen confidence will only be achieved by guaranteeing high levels of responsiveness to claims on the part of the administration, coupled with transparency throughout the complaints handling process. In addition, these claims processing systems constitute a database of valuable information whose analysis could be useful in designing public policy that responds to structural problems.
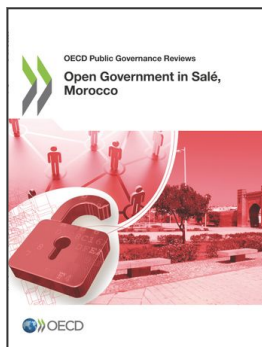
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[1] https://bit.ly/2HKAsCq

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