1 Open government: Concept, definitions and implementation

After presenting the objective of the report, this chapter explores the definitions of open government, providing a brief history of the concept and its links with e-government, open data and the SDGs. It also proposes conceptual frameworks of how open government reforms can be implemented and can lead to broader impact, based on research from the OECD and ESCWA, and stresses the importance to monitor and evaluate such reforms.

Background and objective

Today, governments around the world are confronted with complex political, economic and social challenges, which have been exacerbated by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. This context potentially risks further eroding public trust in governments at a moment when citizens expect their leaders to apply the highest level of transparency, accountability and integrity in managing the crisis and the recovery plans. In most parts of the world, people increasingly expect to participate in public affairs and have a voice .

Even before the pandemic emerged, many governments had started adopting Open Government (OG) principles and practices, while several international initiatives were launched at global and regional level with the aim to increase transparency and accountability of public institutions, help citizens better engage with their governments at central and local level, increase public sector integrity, develop innovative solutions and make use of new technologies.

In the Arab region, to a large extent, the uprisings that took place in 2011 were the result of weak and exclusive state institutions and a call for those institutions to be transformed into more effective and inclusive ones. The Arab people expressed, and some are still expressing, grievances that stemmed from social injustice, political disenfranchisement, economic inequalities, and large-scale corruption. These problems were the direct result of extractive security, administrative, judicial and political institutions, and the Arab people demonstrated their aspirations to transition from a Limited Access Order (LAO) to an Open one (OAO). In several countries, the uprisings reflected citizens' desire to redefine the social contracts that were tying them to their states. They often erupted into violent conflict due to the very nature of LAOs: elites were reluctant to give up their dominant position within both political and socio-economic systems, which are intrinsically linked in LAOs, and refused to reform unsustainable power structures that had reached a breaking point.

Arab states have been facing challenges in recent decades that have jeopardized political – and therefore socio-economic – stability. Likewise, open government can be a strategic solution that can help countries implement all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reduce the risks of socio-political instability, civil strife and potential conflicts. Governments can perform better when they are transparent about their activities, procedures and data, and when they encourage public participation and meet their citizens' demands. This assumes they are prepared to be held accountable for successes and failures. Within the open government approach, progress towards sustainable development could be facilitated by innovations that give citizens a greater say over how they are governed. Examples include how public services (water, health and education) are provided; where and how infrastructure projects are built; or how budgets are allocated. Open government presents potential solutions to improve governance and unleash the developmental potential of Arab countries.

This report is a joint effort of the OECD and UN ESCWA. The OECD has a global working party on open government and signed a MoU with the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2019. It also has a regional working group on open and innovative government within the MENA-OECD governance programme, a strategic partnership between MENA and OECD countries to share knowledge, expertise and the standards and principles of good governance, as well as OG projects with several countries in the region (Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, etc.). UN ESCWA has launched an open government project in the Arab countries enhancing institutional development of better service delivery towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals in Western Asia. It is actively working with all Arab countries for the development of institutional, legal, economic and social frameworks and partnerships on open government to better engage citizens and society.

The main objective of this report is to demonstrate the economic and social impact of open government and its essential role for accelerating the achievement of the 2030 Development Agenda and its SDGs. This important impact will be shown through selected good practices and lessons learnt from OECD countries, the Arab countries and the world.

The report investigates the contribution of open government to better social services and inclusiveness, as well as to social and economic development. It will illustrate how open government principles of transparency, accountability and citizen participation can translate into offering new opportunities for governments, private sector and citizens for better and innovative interactions in order to fulfil the needs of societies and the countries' economies.

The cases from Arab countries were mainly chosen based on the responses of the Arab countries to the OECD-ESCWA questionnaire on open government in 2020 whereas the OECD cases were selected to show various aspects and dimensions of the positive impact of open government on different socio-economic fields.

The report will analyse the trends of open government in the Arab region and its related aspects based on internationally recognised measurements and the collected case studies from the Arab region. This analysis will consider the GDP level of the Arab countries as one of the key indicators to reflect how living standards relate to the open government principles.

The report will also address the open government concept by presenting and discussing the OECD and ESCWA perspectives; and clarifying its linkage with other related concepts such a e-government, open data and SDGs. This is very important considering the continuous evolution of various concepts and approaches (see Introduction).

Based on the current status of open government in the Arab countries and considering the positive impact of open government on social, economic and governance development, the report will propose recommendations on the way forward for fostering open government reforms in the region and for maximising its benefits.

What is open government?

Open government is a **concept for governance**. While it has a long history, its major momentum followed the remarks made by U.S. President Barak Obama during the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2011:

*"… Experience shows us that history is on the side of liberty; that the strongest foundation for human progress lies in **open economies**, **open societies**, and **open governments**… No one country has all the answers, but all of us must answer to our own people… When we gather back here next year, we should bring specific commitments to promote **transparency**; to fight corruption; to energize **civic engagement**; to leverage **new technologies** so that we strengthen the foundations of freedom in our own countries, while living up to the ideals that can light the world"[1].*

On the side-lines of the General Assembly, eight founding countries signed the Open Government Declaration[2] with civil society leaders, as a commitment to "*foster a global culture of open government that empowers and delivers for citizens and advances the ideals of open and participatory 21st century government*" and created the Open Government Partnership (OGP)[3]. Since then, 78 countries and a growing number of local governments—representing more than two billion people—along with thousands of civil society organisations have joined OGP.

The UN ESCWA defines open government as "a government that is effective and efficient in carrying out its duties, its work is transparent and accountable, and everyone can access its services. It is also a Government that responds to the needs of its citizens, values their participation, experience and knowledge

in decision-making, and relies on modern and emerging technologies to enhance its governance. ESCWA believes that improving **participation**, **transparency** and **accountability are the primary goals** of open government, regardless of its definition" (ESCWA, 2020[1]; 2018[2]).

The OECD defines it as "a **culture of governance** that promotes the principles of **transparency**, **integrity**, **accountability** and stakeholders' **participation** in support of democracy and inclusive growth" (OECD, 2017[3]).

However, there is no single, universally accepted definition of open government and it generally encompasses several approaches, definitions and principles while considering the varying legal, historical or cultural aspects of countries worldwide (OECD, 2016[4]). But (almost) all definitions include the same core concepts of **transparency, accountability and participation**.

For example, the EU has no formal definition of open government. However, it stated in its vision on public services (EU, 2016[5]) that OG encompasses three core aspects: Open assets ("*government data, software, specifications and frameworks that are open so that anyone can freely access, use, modify, and redistribute its content with no or limited restrictions such as commercial-use or financial charges*", i.e. Open government data), Open services ("*digital public services that can be re-used by other public administrations or eventually by third parties in order to provide value-added services*", i.e. efficient e-government) and Open engagement ("*opening up the processes for public policy making to the whole of society, including civil society, businesses, labour unions, or even individual citizens*") (Figure 1.1). The EU thus builds open government on the same concepts of transparency, participation and collaboration.

Figure 1.1. A framework for Open Government (EU)
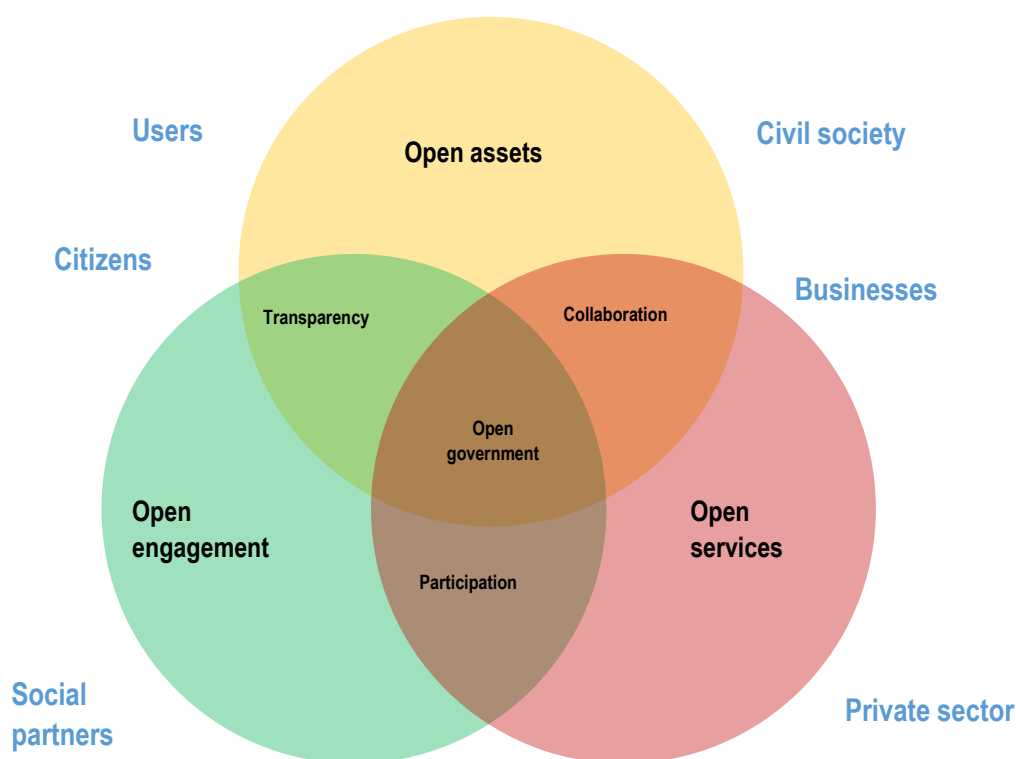
Source: Millard (2017[6]), "European Strategies for e-Governance to 2020 and Beyond", in *Public Administration and Information Technology, Government 3.0 – Next Generation Government Technology Infrastructure and Services*, Springer International Publishing, Cham, http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63743-3_1.

A brief history of open government

The concept of open government was clearly introduced in opposition to closed government, which legitimizes secrecy for reasons of state. OG is a "*governing doctrine which holds that citizens have the right to access the documents and proceedings of the government to allow for effective public oversight*" (Lathrop and Ruma, 2010[7]).

Thus, while the term "open government" was revived relatively recently, its history is long and initiatives to foster the principles of transparency, accountability, integrity and stakeholder participation have existed for a very long time. For example, the open government principle of access to information originated in 18th century Sweden, as the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act of 1766[4] guaranteed the public's right to access documents created or received by public institutions.

The term "open government" is often considered to having been formally used for the first time in 1957 when Wallace Parks, a member of the subcommittee on Government Information of the United States Congress, wrote the article entitled "*The Open Government Principle: Applying the Right to Know under the Constitution*". In his article, Parks wrote that "*open government and information availability should be the general rule from which exceptions should be made only where there are substantial rights, interests, and considerations requiring secrecy or confidentiality and these are held by competent authority to overbalance the general public interest in openness and availability*" (Parks, 1957[8]).

A slightly earlier use was found in a report commissioned in 1953 by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) and written by Harold Cross under the title "*The People's Right to Know: Legal Access to Public Records and Proceedings*". In the report's foreword it is stated that Cross had "*written with full understanding of the public stake in open government*" (Cross, 1953[9]). The debate unfolding during those years in the US culminated with the passing of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in 1966[5], another milestone in the history of the open government movement.

Over the years, the concept of open government has gradually expanded from identifying the disclosure of politically sensitive government information to a broader concept of transparency and then to an even broader range of government goals and functions, including public participation, public sector innovation, open data, the use of ICTs, as well as the improvement of public services and of government efficiency.

In particular, the term was revived by US President Barack Obama who started the "Open Government Initiative" when he issued his Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government[6] on 20 January 2009, his first day in office. This initiative conceived open government as based on the three pillars of **transparency**, **participation** and **collaboration**.
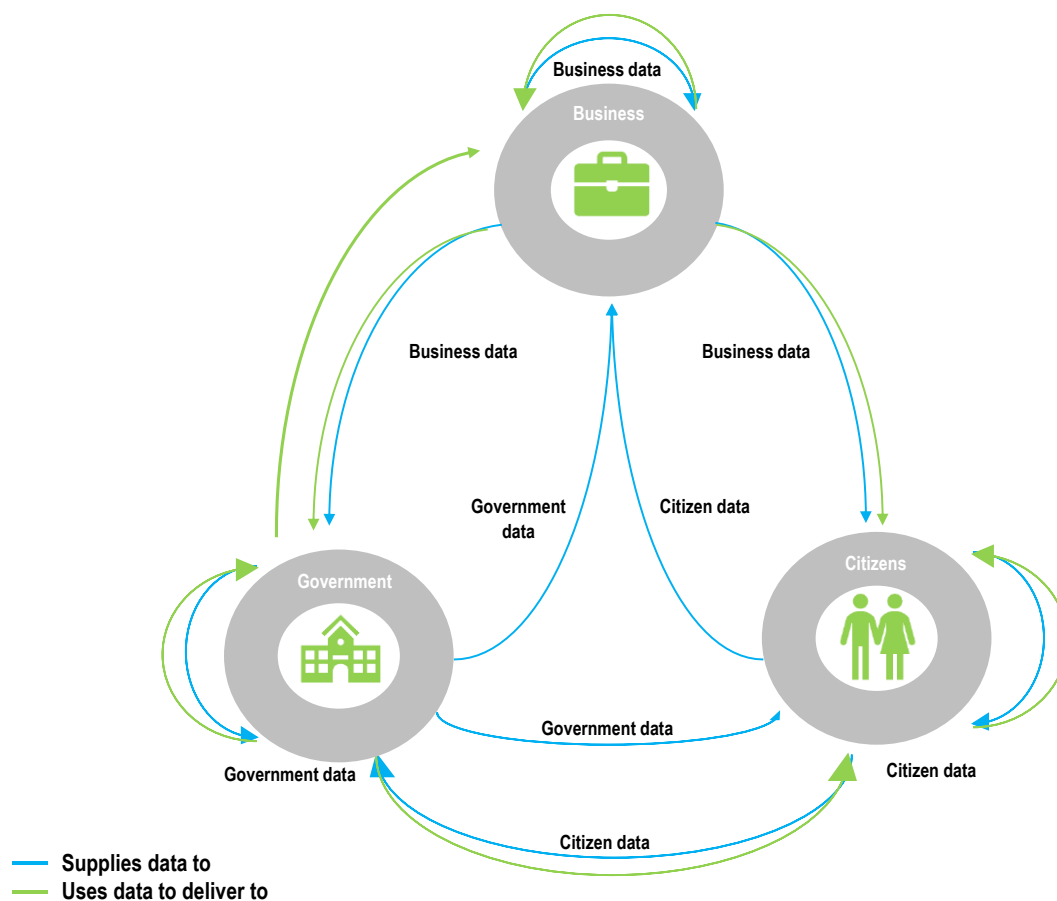
Open government and open data

Open Government encompasses the more limited concept of **Open Government Data (OGD),** which involves the idea that in most government and public entities data should be freely available to everyone to use and republish as they wish, without restrictions from copyright, patents or other mechanisms of control, as they were financed by public money and constitute public good. This issue is addressed in SDG target 16.10. Open Government Data (OGD) is part of the necessary **openness**, as a first stage of Open Government (according to the ESCWA framework presented below).

OGD gained momentum in 2013 when G8 leaders signed an "**Open Data Charter (ODC)**" outlining five core principles for how data can support governments' transparency, innovation, and accountability. This charter gained international visibility during the 2015 United Nations General Assembly after a global consultation. The five principles became six, including that data should be open by default, timely and interoperable. The final formulation of the principles is as follows: *1) open by default, 2) timely and comprehensive, 3) accessible and usable, 4) comparable and interoperable, 5) for improved governance and citizen engagement and 6) for inclusive development and innovation*. The ODC

defines open data as "*digital data that is made available with the technical and legal characteristics necessary for it to be freely used, reused, and redistributed by anyone, anytime, anywhere*"[7]. Some 150 governments, cities, local authorities and organisations joined the ODC; none from Arab countries. Moreover, the ODC's activities developed along with the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and the international efforts to deal with climate change[8]. Its latest strategy consists in shifting focus towards purpose-driven publication of data[9]. According to the OECD, open government data is intrinsically linked to, and is an integral part of, the open government agenda. It stresses the importance of OGD as a key driver for transparency and in many other related ways, for example to counter disinformation in social media (Matasick, Alfonsi and Bellantoni, 2020[10]).

The conceptualisation of Open Government Data also emerged from the concept of **Open Data (OD),** which developed worldwide in parallel and in response to the development of intellectual property and the rise of their commercial value, especially with the acceleration of the circulation and accumulation of information through the web (the data revolution) (Kitchin, 2014[11]). OD involves the data produced by individuals, private sector enterprises and public institutions alike (Figure 1.2) (Deloitte, 2012[12]). The Open Knowledge Foundation[10] defines open data as all data "*that can be freely used, re-used and redistributed by anyone - subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and share alike*"[11]. This is the case of **open-source codes**, open educational resources, etc. It leads to **Open Knowledge** "*when it's useful, usable and used*".

Figure 1.2. The Open Data Ecosystem

Source: Deloitte (2012[13]), "Open data: Driving growth, ingenuity and innovation", *A Deloitte Analytics Paper*, https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/uk/Documents/deloitte-analytics/open-data-driving-growth-ingenuity-and-innovation.pdf.

The case for Open Government Data is the strongest in this context, as it is produced with taxpayer money. But open data is overseen in a more global perspective, within the interactions between developed and developing countries, and between multinational companies and the countries' economies and their populations' livelihoods. As assessed by Deloitte, "*businesses will need to overcome the inevitable tension between the value they traditionally ascribe to proprietary data and the value of opening up, making their data more accessible and combining it with other sources will dramatically increase its value to the economy… Open data will be a vital driver for growth, ingenuity and innovation*" (Deloitte, 2012, p. 3[12]).

In this perspective, ESCWA adopts the simple and more general definition of the Open Data Institute[12], as "*data that anyone can access, use and share*" (ESCWA, 2016, p. 12[14]). Thus, Open Government Data is not only seen for its value for a particular country governance, but also for promoting economic (and social) global development and growth.

Open government and e-government

E-government is a strong enabler of open government when it supports the same principles. E-government is mainly related to the use of modern ICT technologies by government and local authorities to provide better public services to citizens[13]. However, there is a clear difference between e-government and open government, the latter being a governance issue. In fact, new ICT technologies facilitate open government and allow innovative approaches; but open government can be implemented even with low penetration of ICT technologies. This can be the case, for example, when investigative media requests the release of public contracts and makes government open and accountable for their content. At the same time, e-government does not necessarily always lead to openness. Thus, open government usually includes the use of ICT by governments but is in no way limited to it. "*If a government agency adopts digital records, they may indeed see gains in efficiency even if they do not make those records publicly available. But unless the reform increases public access to these records, this would not qualify as open government*" (Williamson and Eisen, 2016[15]).

Many UN agencies uses interchangeably the terms "e-government" and "**digital government**", as no formal distinction is made between them among academics, policymakers and practitioners. In many countries, the term e-government is embedded and institutionalised in national policies and strategies, though in some cases reference is made to digital government as the next phase of e-government. UN DESA does not differentiate between e-government and digital government in its worldwide surveys[14]. The UN DESA Survey last defined e-government in its 2014 edition, as "*E-government can be referred to as the use and application of information technologies in public administration to streamline and integrate workflows and processes, to effectively manage data and information, enhance public service delivery, as well as expand communication channels for engagement and empowerment of people.*"[15]

The OECD differentiates between the two concepts. E-Government "*refers to the use by the governments of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and particularly the Internet, as a tool to achieve better government*", while Digital Government (DG) "*refers to the use of digital technologies, as an integrated part of governments' modernisation strategies, to create public value. It relies on a digital government ecosystem comprised of government actors, non-governmental organisations, businesses, citizens' associations and individuals, which supports the production of and access to data, services and content through interactions with the government*" (OECD, 2014, p. 6[16]). In the latter concept, ICTs are therefore seen as an enabler and not the main focus. The OECD issued a Recommendation on Digital Government strategies, in addition to the one on open government (see below).

Most Arab countries use the two terms interchangeably, with also the term "smart government". However, the new trend is to use digital government to reflect the use of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data and internet of things (IOT) in government services, and some incorporate open data and citizen participation within digital government. For the purpose of this report, the terms e-government and digital government shall be used interchangeably.

Open government and the SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015[16], aims at providing a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, to be implemented by all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership. At the heart of the Agenda are the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),** which seek to integrate the three indivisible dimensions (i.e., economic, social and environmental) of sustainable development[17].

Open government is not explicitly a goal within the SDGs but is a way to design and implement policies for the achievement of the whole Agenda. In particular, the concept is directly linked to the **SDG 16** "*Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions*", which seeks to "*promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*". The specified targets of SDG 16 precisely aim to (16.6) "*develop effective, **accountable** and **transparent** institutions*", (16.7) "*ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making*", (16.8) "*strengthen the **participation** in global governance*"[18], (16.10) "ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms" and (16.b) "*promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies*".

However, several other SDG targets explicitly mention the open government principles of transparency and participation, such as:

- 5.5: *"ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making".*
- 6.B: *"support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management".*
- 9.C: *"significantly increase access to information and communications technology".*
- 11.3: *"enhance […] capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management".*
- 12.8: *"ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development".*
- 17.17: *"encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships".*
- 17.18: *"enhance capacity-building support to developing countries […] to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data".*

The whole 2030 Agenda, and not just SDG 16, can benefit from open government principles and approaches. Indeed, by promoting accountability, participation and transparency, Open Government strategies and practices can inform both the substance and the process of SDG implementation (OECD, 2016, p. 224[4]). Engaging citizens at all stages of the policy cycle and of service delivery, from design to implementation and evaluation, ensures that policies and services aimed at achieving all the SDGs are effective, meet people's actual needs and are perceived as legitimate. This is also clear in the Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development, endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council in 2018, which include all the OG principles of transparency, accountability, integrity and participation[19].

The link between open government and SDGs has been explicitly acknowledged by the OECD both in its 2016 global report on open government and in the Recommendation, with the latter "*recognizing that open government* […] *is a key contributor to achieving different policy outcomes in diverse domains including* […] *all major socio-economic targets within the framework of the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals*"[20].

The same link was made by the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in its 2015 "*Joint Declaration on Open Government for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*"[21]. In this document, the signatory countries, including many OECD and some ESCWA members[22], commit themselves to promote the rule of law through transparency, openness, accountability, access to justice and effective and inclusive institutions, to promote public access to information and open data on

government activities related to the implementation and financing of the SDGs, to support citizen participation in the implementation of all the goals and to uphold the principles of open government when defining indicators for measuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Some countries have even made an explicit link between their OGP national action plan and the SDGs. This is the case for Ukraine[23] and Mexico[24].

The ESCWA initially introduced the concept of OG based on its assessment of the SDGs, and in particular SDG 16 as "*achieving this goal needs good governance*" (ESCWA, 2019, p. 8[17]). It defined good governance as "*participatory; consensus oriented; accountable; transparent; responsive; effective and efficient; equitable and inclusive; and it follows the rule of law*" (ESCWA, 2019, p. 9[17]).

Accordingly, ESCWA launched an open government project in the Arab countries[25], with the overall objective to build the capacities of Member States so that officials can utilise emerging technologies effectively and efficiently to enhance transparency and accountability and adopt a more participatory approach to governance. The project directly targets SDG 16.

The frameworks for the implementation of open government

Beyond the issue of definitions and strong correlation with the SDGs, **open government is a governance practice** and efforts have been deployed by governments, civil society and international organisations, such as the OECD and ESCWA, to foster its adoption and implementation.

The OECD and its Member States have been at the forefront of the open government movement since its beginning. Years of research, analysis, data collection and exchange of good practices fed into the landmark report "*Open Government: The Global Context and the Way Forward*" (OECD, 2016[4]), which was published in 2016 and culminated in the abovementioned 2017 OECD Recommendation on open government (OECD, 2017[3]) (Box 1.1).

The OECD Recommendation defines a comprehensive set of criteria aimed at helping adhering countries to design and implement successful open government agendas. It features ten provisions corresponding to the following areas:

- the creation of an enabling environment, including the policy and legal framework (provisions 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8).
- the implementation framework (provisions 4, 5, 6 and 9).
- the way ahead (provision 10).

In particular, the Recommendation's ten provisions aim to support adhering countries to:

- ensure that open government principles are rooted in a public management culture.
- identify an enabling environment that is conducive to efficient, effective and integrated governance of open government.
- promote the alignment of open government strategies and initiatives with – and their contribution to – all relevant national and sectoral socio-economic policy objectives, at all levels of the administration.
- foster monitoring and evaluation practices and data collection.

It is worth noting that, at the time of writing this report, two MENA countries have officially adhered to the OECD Recommendation: Morocco on 26 April 2018 and Tunisia on 26 July 2019. They are among the only five non-OECD countries to have adhered to this legal instrument.

The OECD has based its open government work on a **theory of change** (Figure 1.3): the four open government principles of transparency, integrity, accountability and stakeholders' participation, also thanks

to policy catalysts such as change management, digital government/ICTs, innovation and public communication, can lead to the following policy outcomes: quality of public services (intermediate outcome), quality of democracy, inclusive growth, trust in government and rule of law.
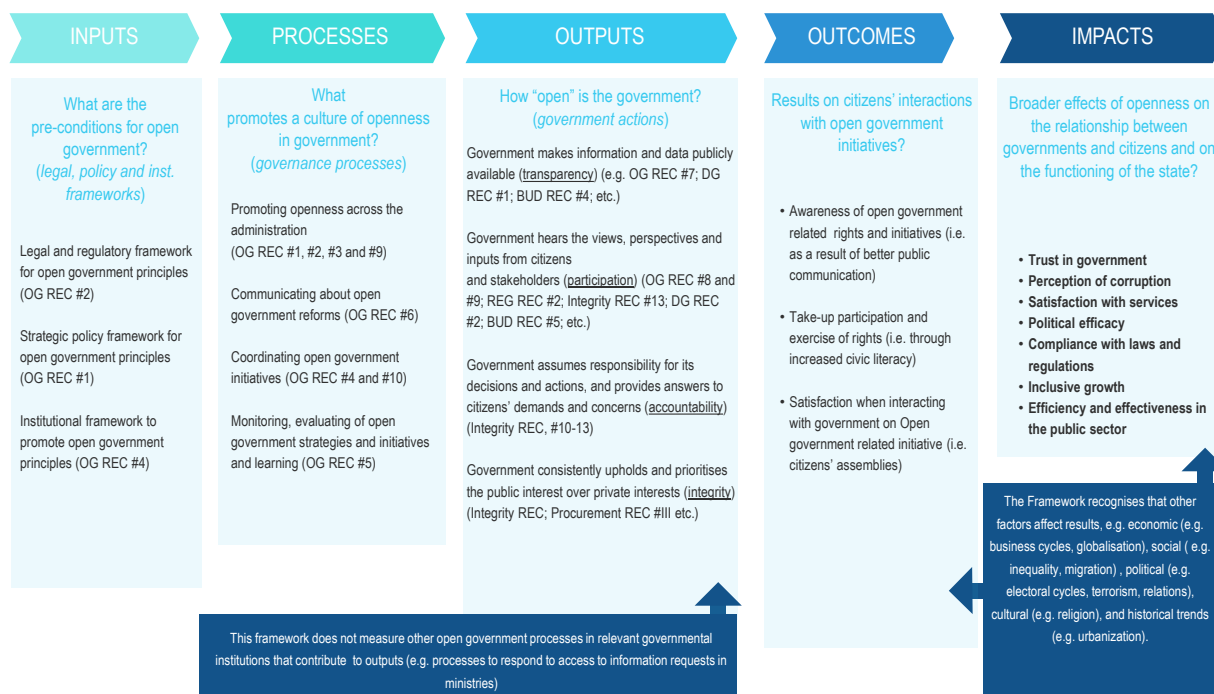
Figure 1.3. OECD Open government theory of change
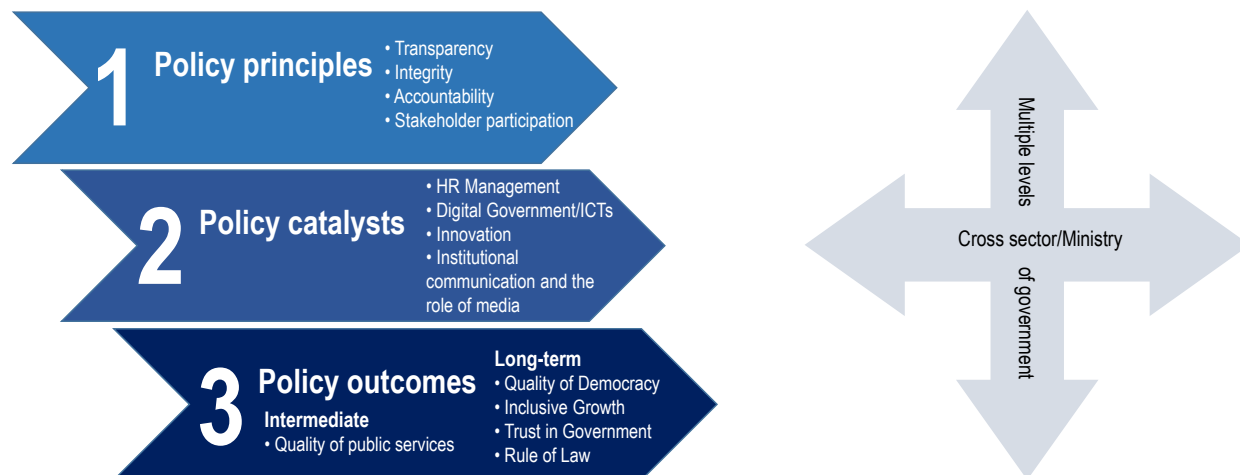
Source: OECD authors' own elaboration.

The OECD Secretariat is currently working on a "**Framework for Assessing the Openness of Governments**" (OECD, 2020[18]) which will be further discussed with member countries throughout 2021-2022. The proposed framework, which is based on the provisions of the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government, is structured as a theory of change and can therefore provide the basis for a model showing how the OG principles contribute to increased levels of openness and how openness, in turn, has a broader impact. When seeing this as an implementation model, which streamlines many aspects of the ESCWA framework (see below in this chapter), this framework can also represent a suggested "roadmap" for implementing OG reforms and assess how they lead to policy change results.

Figure 1.4. The suggested OECD Framework for Assessing the Openness of Governments

INPUTS	PROCESSES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACTS
What are the pre-conditions for open government? (*legal, policy and inst. frameworks*)	What promotes a culture of openness in government? (*governance processes*)	How "open" is the government? (*government actions*)	Results on citizens' interactions with open government initiatives?	Broader effects of openness on the relationship between governments and citizens and on the functioning of the state?
Legal and regulatory framework for open government principles (OG REC #2) Strategic policy framework for open government principles (OG REC #1) Institutional framework to promote open government principles (OG REC #4)	Promoting openness across the administration (OG REC #1, #2, #3 and #9) Communicating about open government reforms (OG REC #6) Coordinating open government initiatives (OG REC #4 and #10) Monitoring, evaluating of open government strategies and initiatives and learning (OG REC #5)	Government makes information and data publicly available (transparency) (e.g. OG REC #7; DG REC #1; BUD REC #4; etc.) Government hears the views, perspectives and inputs from citizens and stakeholders (participation) (OG REC #8 and #9; REG REC #2; Integrity REC #13; DG REC #2; BUD REC #5; etc.) Government assumes responsibility for its decisions and actions, and provides answers to citizens' demands and concerns (accountability) (Integrity REC, #10-13) Government consistently upholds and prioritises the public interest over private interests (integrity) (Integrity REC; Procurement REC #III etc.)	• Awareness of open government related rights and initiatives (i.e. as a result of better public communication) • Take-up participation and exercise of rights (i.e. through increased civic literacy) • Satisfaction when interacting with government on Open government related initiative (i.e. citizens' assemblies)	• Trust in government • Perception of corruption • Satisfaction with services • Political efficacy • Compliance with laws and regulations • Inclusive growth • Efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector

This framework does not measure other open government processes in relevant governmental institutions that contribute to outputs (e.g. processes to respond to access to information requests in ministries)

The Framework recognises that other factors affect results, e.g. economic (e.g. business cycles, globalisation), social (e.g. inequality, migration) , political (e.g. electoral cycles, terrorism, relations), cultural (e.g. religion), and historical trends (e.g. urbanization).

Source: OECD (2020[18]), *A Roadmap for Assessing the Impact of Open Government Reform*, GOV/PGC/OG(2020)5/REV1, OECD, Paris, https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=GOV/PGC/OG(2020)5&docLanguage=En.

According to the proposed model, the main **input** for open government is the "enabling environment", which comprises the legal, strategic, policy and institutional framework of a country. The legal framework could include legislation guaranteeing freedom of expression, of assembly and of association, laws on access to information and on open government data, on citizen participation and on integrity and anti-corruption, among others. The strategic policy framework could include an open government strategy, OG action plans (including OGD), major government strategies (like a national development programme) or sectoral policies promoting transparency, accountability and participation. As per the institutional framework, this would include a dedicated open government and open government data co-ordination structure and oversight institutions or organs, such as an access to information commission.

Once these inputs are in place, countries need to establish **processes** that transform inputs (e.g. laws and policies) into outputs (i.e. openness). These processes include:

- promoting a culture of openness across all levels of public administration (through awareness-raising and training initiatives);
- co-ordinating OG initiatives both horizontally (across ministries and branches of power) and vertically (at central and decentralised level);
- communicating about open government reforms internally and externally; and
- developing M&E and learning mechanisms to track implementation and measure progress on the ground.

If and when these processes are set up, the above-mentioned inputs will translate into outputs, in other words into "openness" of a government and of the state. But how do we know if a state is open? In line with the OECD definition, the framework considers that a government or a state can be considered "open" when its data, its actions, decisions and processes are transparent, accountable, participatory, and consistently demonstrate integrity. This openness must apply to all levels and sectors. More specifically and as per the open government principles, a state:

- is <u>transparent</u> when it proactively discloses information and data that help citizens make decisions on their own lives, do business and understand how public authorities make decisions and spend public funds; a transparent state provides information and data in ways that everybody can easily find, access, understand, use and reuse (including through digital tools), and establishes clear procedures to access the information that is not proactively disclosed.

- is <u>accountable</u> when it is responsive, assumes responsibility, explains its decisions and actions, and provides clear answers to citizens' and stakeholders' demands and concerns; it provides mechanisms for stakeholders to raise complaints, report irregularities and appeal decisions, taking action based on the complaints filed; an accountable state proactively seeks citizens' suggestions and feedback, indicating when inputs are included in the final decisions and explaining why other suggestions are rejected.

- is <u>participatory</u> when citizens and stakeholders can influence the activities and decisions of the state, when they can – safely, equally and without discrimination – contribute views to all the stages of public policy cycle and of public service provision.

- demonstrates <u>integrity</u> when all levels of the state consistently uphold ethical standards throughout their actions, prioritise the public interest over private interests (avoiding state capture by interest groups) and when their activities and decisions are guided by shared ethical values, principles and norms; a government/state that embodies integrity is one that encourages citizens, media and CSOs' oversight of its activities.

But once these four categories of outputs are in place, how can citizens benefit from them? How can a country take advantage of outputs related to transparency, accountability, participation and integrity? This is what the proposed framework defines as **outcomes** of open government, according to which citizens should be:

- <u>aware of their rights</u> and the opportunities provided for by OG policies and mechanisms in place, such as the possibility to request access to information, and be willing to make use of them; hence the importance for authorities to communicate and raise awareness of their OG reforms but also to promote civic literacy;

- <u>satisfied</u> with the experience of interacting with the authorities, for example when sending inputs in the framework of a consultation or when reporting a wrongdoing. This does not necessarily mean that the citizen's proposal has to be accepted; but it is crucial for citizens to feel that their inputs have been taken into account, hence the importance for authorities to provide prompt and clear explanations of how (and why) the final decisions have been made.

Finally, while objectives of OG reforms may vary from one country to the next, the framework identifies the most relevant measurable **impact** areas that increased levels of government openness can have, once the inputs and processes are in place and the outputs and outcomes are achieved. These impacts include:

- Higher levels of trust across all levels of state institutions (citizens believe that their State acts in the public interest);
- Decreased levels of perceived corruption;
- Increased levels of political efficacy (i.e., citizens' belief that they have a say in what their government does, similar to SDG indicator 16.7.2) [26];
- Increased levels of satisfaction with institutions and services such as education and healthcare, in line with SDG indicator 16.6.2;
- Increased levels of compliance with state laws, rules and regulations, which can, in turn, increase the level of revenues that the government and local authorities raise through taxes and other social contributions, such as social insurances, and allow authorities to decrease the resources allocated to policing;
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector, implying better capacity to successfully design and deliver policies and services while saving public spending by reducing waste due to poor choices or misallocation of funds;
- Inclusive growth: while economic growth depends on multiple factors, the OG impacts of increased compliance with rules and regulations and increased efficiency can allow the government to better manage public contributions, spending, assets and goods.

While it recognises that the ultimate impact and success of open government reforms can be affected by a number of elements, including economic conditions, social protection, security and other governance aspects (such as functioning of public institutions and election cycles), the proposed OECD framework can be a useful way to streamline open government reforms in the Arab states, along with the ESCWA framework, and assess the results they achieve at different stages of implementation.

In its **framework** for the implementation of open government in Arab countries, ESCWA identified the following dimensions of open government: "**accountability**, **transparency**, **inclusiveness**, **effectiveness**, and **contestability**" (ESCWA, 2019, p. 9[17]). This framework is assumed to be "*consistent with the context of the countries, specifically the level of information and communications technology (ICT) investment, e-government status, and the legislative and regulatory aspects, Arab culture and the level of interaction between citizens and the public sector. The framework can be used as a guideline for a transformation towards open government*" (ESCWA, 2019, p. 9[17]).

Box 1.1. The ten provisions of the OECD Recommendation on Open Government

1. Take measures in all branches and at all levels of the government to develop and **implement open government strategies and initiatives** in collaboration with stakeholders, and to foster commitment from politicians, members of parliaments, senior public managers and public officials, to ensure successful implementation and to prevent or overcome obstacles related to resistance to change.

2. Ensure the existence and implementation of the **necessary open government legal and regulatory framework**, including through the provision of supporting documents such as guidelines and manuals, while establishing adequate oversight mechanisms to ensure compliance.

3. Ensure the **successful operationalisation and take-up of open government strategies and initiatives** by: (i) providing public officials with the mandate to design and implement successful open government strategies and initiatives, as well as the adequate human, financial and technical resources, while promoting a supportive organisational culture (ii) promoting open government literacy in the administration, at all levels of government, and among stakeholders.

4. **Co-ordinate**, through the necessary institutional mechanisms, open government strategies and initiatives – horizontally and vertically – across all levels of government to ensure that they are aligned with and contribute to all relevant socio-economic objectives.

5. **Develop and implement monitoring**, evaluation and learning mechanisms for open government strategies and initiatives by: (i) identifying institutional actors to be in charge of collecting and disseminating up-to-date and reliable information and data in an open format (ii) developing comparable indicators to measure processes, outputs, outcomes and impact in collaboration with stakeholders (iii) fostering a culture of monitoring, evaluation and learning among public officials by increasing their capacity to regularly conduct exercises for these purposes in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

6. **Actively communicate on open government strategies and initiatives**, as well as on their outputs, outcomes and impacts, in order to ensure that they are well-known within and outside government, to favour their uptake and to stimulate stakeholder buy-in.

7. **Proactively make available clear, complete, timely, reliable and relevant public sector data and information** that is free of cost, available in an open and non-proprietary machine-readable format, easy to find, understand, use and reuse, and disseminated through a multi-channel approach, to be prioritised in consultation with stakeholders.

8. **Grant all stakeholders equal and fair opportunities to be informed and consulted and actively engage them** in all phases of the policy cycle, service design and delivery. This should be done with adequate time and at minimal cost, while avoiding duplication to minimise consultation fatigue. Further, specific efforts should be dedicated to reaching out to the most relevant, vulnerable, underrepresented or marginalised groups in society, while avoiding undue influence and policy capture.

9. Promote **innovative ways to effectively engage with stakeholders** to source ideas and co-create solutions, and seize the opportunities provided by digital government tools, including through the use of open government data, to support the achievement of the objectives of open government strategies and initiatives.

10. While recognising the roles, prerogatives and overall independence of all concerned parties, and according to their existing legal and institutional frameworks, explore the potential of moving **from the concept of open government toward that of the open state.**

Source: OECD (2017[19]), "Recommendation of the Council on Open Government", *OECD Legal Instruments*, OECD-LEGAL-0438, OECD, Parishttps://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0438.

The ESCWA framework consisted of **four successive stages: 1) Openness, 2) Participation, 3) Collaboration and 4) Engagement** (Figure 1.5). The measures needing to be implemented as the preliminary steps were detailed, as well as the objectives and procedures of the four successive stages (ESCWA, 2019[17]) (Box 1.2). It stresses that stage 4 needs a full implementation of the previous 3 stages and that only stage 4 ensures the achievement of the "*total engagement of citizens and other non-government actors in government work, by providing comprehensive access to data and services, engaging all parties in policymaking and decision-making, building a citizen-centred and accountable government, ensuring open government sustainability and making an effective contribution to the achievement of the SDGs*" (ESCWA, 2019, p. 53[17]).

Figure 1.5. ESCWA framework for Open Government
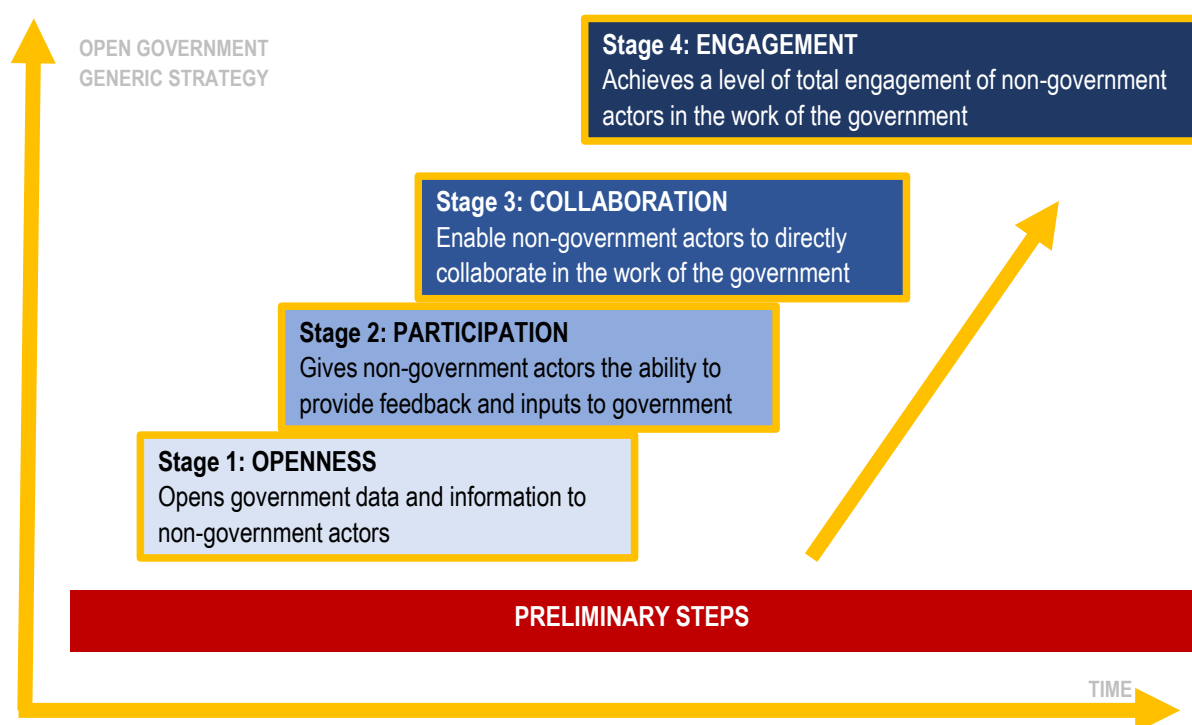
Source: ESCWA (2019[20]). *Capacity Development Material on Participation, Collaboration and Engagement,* E/ESCWA/TDD/2018/TP.3., ESCWA, Beirut, https://www.unescwa.org/publications/capacity-development-material-participation-collaboration-and-engagement.

"Engagement makes it possible for non-government actors to take the initiative and the lead in creating public value, as long as this is legally compatible and complies with society's values and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs, which all Arab countries have agreed to" (ESCWA, 2019, p. 54[17]).

The ESCWA structured these four stages' generic framework with reference to six strategic objectives, as follows (ESCWA, 2016, p. 1[14]):

1. Developing policy and strategy.
2. Providing institutional frameworks.
3. Setting up legal and regulatory frameworks.
4. Upgrading government capacity.
5. Rolling out technology features and channels.
6. Improving public capacity.

Box 1.2. ESCWA Framework for Open Government

Preliminary steps

- Designing a general framework for open government based on a declared policy document, while outlining the national vision for and overall approach to open government and the principles needed for implementation;
- Elaborating a change management strategy across government is required to addresses both working procedures and mindsets, ensuring coordination and cooperation among various public sector agencies;
- Increasing the capacity of government employees to learn how to use data dissemination tools, as well as interpret feedback from non-government actors;
- Elaborating a clear policy will be needed for embedding ICT use across government, the use of social media;
- Raise awareness among non-government actors, through information and publicity.

Stage 1: Openness

- General objectives:
  - Focus on open data, its dissemination and quality;
  - Build a culture of cooperation among government agencies;
  - Raise public awareness about the importance of openness and the accountability of governments;
  - Encourage innovation and offer innovative services.
- Operational procedures: a) Government departments data inventory; b) Quality assurance of available data; c) Data dissemination and d) Management and evaluation.

Stage 2: Participation

- General objectives:
  - Enhance interaction with citizens, civil society organisations, and enhance receipt of feedback and suggestions;
  - Improve decision-making mechanisms;
  - enhance inclusiveness;
  - Intensify use of ICTs, particularly social media, to increase efficiency and timeliness;
  - Combat corruption, build trust and openness methodology.
- Operational procedures: a) Mechanisms for dealing with social media outlets and b) Implementation of participatory programmes.

Stage 3: Collaboration

- General objectives:
  - Involving all parties: government, the private sector, civil society/NGOs and the public;
  - Deliberations of public policies and decisions;
  - Responding by providing the right services according to the needs of the beneficiaries;
  - Work towards achieving an agile government and rejuvenating its institutions.

- Operational procedures: a) Collaborative technology use and b) Implementing collaborative projects

Stage 4: Full engagement

- General objectives:
  - Comprehensive access to data and services;
  - Engagement of all parties (citizens, civil society organisations/NGOs, private sector alongside government) in policy-making and decision making;
  - Build a citizen-centred and accountable government;
  - Open government sustainability;
  - Effective contribution to the achievement of sustainable development goals.
- Operational procedures: the operational procedures at the first 3 stages continue to be maintained, strengthened, expanded and transferred to new platforms (e.g., mobile platforms).

Source: ESCWA (2019[17]), *Social Protection Reform in the Arab Countries*, ESCWA, Beirut, https://www.unescwa.org/publications/social-protection-reforms-arab-countries-2019.

It also set monitoring and evaluation criteria for each of the stages. In addition, ESCWA assessed the impediments to the implementation of open government (Table 1.1) (ESCWA, 2018[2]; Lee and Kwak, 2011[21]).

Table 1.1. Impediments to the implementation of Open Government

Type of impediment		Indicator
Social, economic and political impediments	**Willingness**	Does the government have the political will to implement institutional reforms?
	Justice	Do all citizens have fair opportunities to participate in decision-making processes?
	Degree of trust	What is the level of trust between citizens and the government?
	Incentives	What are the incentives for citizens to participate?
	Capacity	Do citizens have a minimum digital literacy and the ability to manipulate information in a way that enables them to participate in decision-making processes?
	Legal framework	Is the necessary enabling legal framework in place at the country level (Law concerning the Right of Access to information)
Technical impediments	**Readiness**	Is there a certain level of cyber readiness at the country level (diffusion and usage of ICTs)?
	Convenience	Is the technology appropriate to the socio-economic context (use of traditional media)?
	Stability	Are the information and communication technology programs financially stable and socially sustainable in the long-term?
	Security	Do the technological solutions used ensure the information security requirements?

Source: ESCWA (2018[2]), *Fostering open government in the Arab region*, E/ESCWA/TDD/2018/INF.1, ESCWA, Beirut, https://www.unescwa.org/publications/fostering-open-government-arab-region.

The stakeholders of open government

The key issues of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, participation, collaboration, engagement, accountability and contestability of Open Government (OG) involve different stakeholders which need to be clarified in the frameworks and procedures related to implementation and assessment of impact.

The fist main stakeholder in OG, i.e. the "government", is understood differently in the different approaches. Some approaches consider government as the central executive branch of the state and others include in

this term all state pillars (i.e. the legislative, the judiciary and the executive, assumed independent from each other) and levels (central, regional and local).

The second main stakeholder of OG, often referenced as "the citizens", is also understood differently. It can include the individual citizens as such, but also the "social partners", often referred to as the "civil society", grouped in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), unions and syndicates, and various interest groups (such as the users of public services), media, academia, in addition to private "economic partners", such as large or small companies, business associations, or groups of sectorial economic interests.

Open government often focuses on the central executive body, so excluding the legislative and judicial branches, as well as the local/decentralised levels. Such focus introduces limitations, as it omits for example the close interaction between the local legislatures and executive bodies and their local constituencies of citizens and local stakeholders; which is the closest level of governance to the citizens.

In this context, the OECD encourages countries to move from open government, focussed mostly on the central executive power, to Open State that includes also the legislature (parliament), the judiciary, independent state institutions (including oversight bodies) and sub-national governments (such as provinces or regions) (see Box 1.1, recommendation 10). All these branches and levels should "*collaborate, exploit synergies, and share good practices and lessons learned*" to promote the core principles (OECD, 2017[3]).

ESCWA does not differentiate between Open Government and Open State, addressing all pillars and levels of state/government and all governed, including private sector enterprises, NGOs and individual citizens (ESCWA, 2018[2]).

In this report, the concept of open government is used to refer to all branches and all levels of the state, as well as to all stakeholders.

Measurement, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of open government

The OECD and ESCWA, as well as the other institutions involved in the development of open government frameworks had made efforts to establish methodologies for measuring the progress in implementation of open government strategies, initiatives and action plans, as well as for assessing and evaluating its impact. The OECD had pointed to a "*prevailing gap between the initial step of monitoring open government initiatives and a sound evaluation of the results to enhance transparency, accountability and citizen participation*" (OECD, 2016, p. 111[4]). The first aspect concerns the performance management of the strategies, initiatives and action plans, while the second addresses the social, economic and governance outcomes. The OECD noted that "*a conceptual confusion between monitoring and evaluation appears to be relatively common*" (OECD, 2016, p. 121[4]).

The majority of OECD countries self-monitor their open government initiatives and such monitoring differs among countries. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM)[27] of the OGP, overseen by an International Experts Panel (IEP), is one of the preferred monitoring mechanisms of OGP members. The IRM produces annual independent progress reports for each country participating in OGP and make technical recommendations for improvements[28].

However, the OECD observed that "*few countries actually evaluate the impact of open government initiatives*" (OECD, 2016, p. 119[4]). The evaluation procedures, where they exist, are diverse: self-assessment, IRM, citizen and stakeholders survey, as well as independent assessment conducted by non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Also, not all countries make public the results of the impact evaluation.

The OECD also noted that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) must be conducted at both the whole of government and at sectoral levels (for example for the Ministries of Health or of Finance). However, not all

OGP members have a single central institution responsible for the co-ordination and monitoring of open government action plans, which creates difficulties for the monitoring, as well as for the evaluation and for following up on OGP commitments.

Given the wide range of goals that governments intend to achieve through open government reforms (Figure 1.6)[29], the OECD identified elements, still to be standardised in indicators, that can be used to build an evidence-based evaluation of the impact of policymaking, accountability and voice.

Figure 1.6. Objectives that countries wish to achieve through Open Government
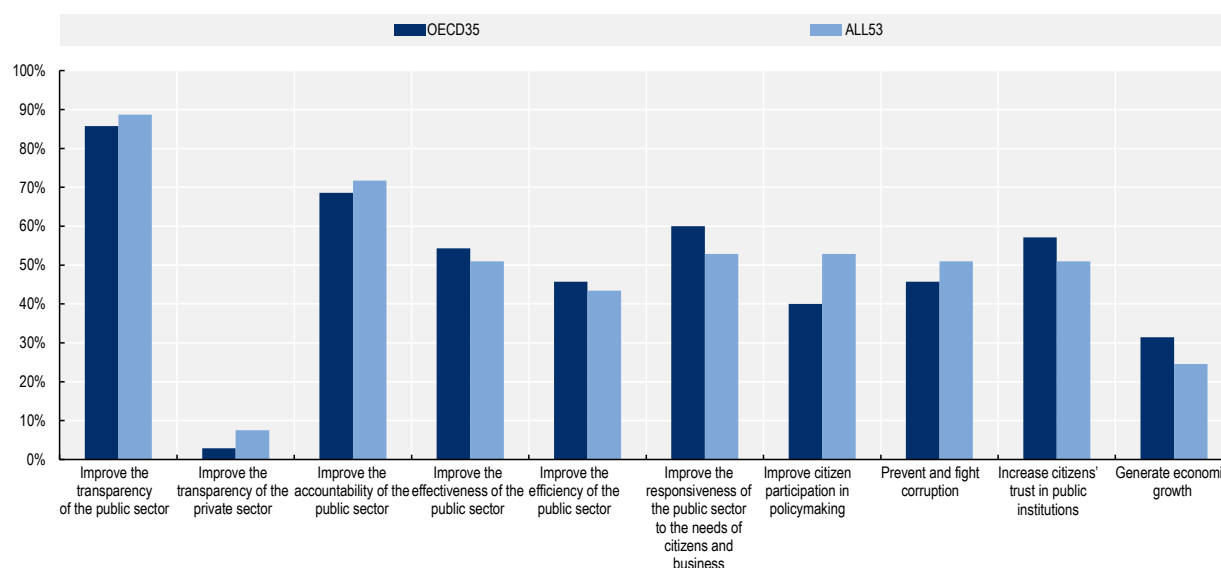
Source: OECD (2016[4]), *Open Government: The Global Context and the Way Forward*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264268104-en.

On another level, the OECD assesses the main advancements and challenges related to the design and implementation of open government data (OGD) policies in its member and partner countries (OECD, 2019[22]).

As mentioned earlier, the OECD Secretariat recently started working on an OECD Framework for Assessing the Openness of Governments (OECD, 2020[18]). This work is expected to lead to the design of the first-ever OECD Openness Index, which will analyse the level of openness governments have achieved, and of Results Indicators showing the broader effects of openness on the relationship between governments and citizens and on the functioning of the state. The OECD Openness Index will estimate how open government reforms contribute to specific outcomes and impacts, based on specific statistical models and isolating the effect of potential confounding factors.

The ESCWA proposed measurements for the monitoring of the implementation of its open government framework in national initiatives and for each of its stages (ESCWA, 2018[2]). Some initiatives, especially at stage 4, are more focussed on the measurement of OG impact.

1. Openness: quantitative: such as frequency of visits, number of downloads, number of published datasets, etc.; qualitative: public understanding of open government initiatives and services; overall public satisfaction on interaction with government; culture change of government departments towards openness, data accuracy and consistency, timeliness and relevance of data.

2. Participation: quantitative: number of visitors, fans and followers of social media; the number of ideas presented by the citizen; ratio of publications to remarks; voting rate; trends in public

participation; number of "out of control" cases like harassment and abusive comments; qualitative: changing the culture of government departments towards openness; general satisfaction with government interaction; benefits of general comments; published innovative ideas.

3. <u>Collaboration</u>: quantitative: number of cases of cooperation between institutions and citizens; the number of instances of collaboration between the public and private sectors; the number and variety of external partnerships; and the number of value-added services that had been created; qualitative: extent of the quality and innovation of collaboration inputs and public satisfaction with government interaction.

4. <u>Full engagement</u>: mostly concentrated on outcome/impact, such as the increase in public participation and collaboration, both public and private; level of integration between open government services and procedures; tangible benefit of citizen engagement tools and applications; evaluation of the overall user experience; continued citizen participation over time; impact of the open government application at the level of transparency, accountability and trust; impact of the open government on the level of the open government responsiveness to the demands of citizens; and the impact of open government application on productivity and innovation.

Other institutions have also developed specific indicators in relation to the implementation of open government. Most are focused on impact more than monitoring. This is the case for example of the Open Government Development index (OGDI), the E-Government Development index (EGDI) and the E-Participation Index (EPI) developed by UN DESA[30], of the Government Electronic and Mobile Services index (GEMS) developed by UN-ESCWA, of the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WB WGI), the World Justice Project index (WJP), the Open Data Barometer indexes of the World Wide Web Foundation and Open Data Institute, and of the Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International (TI CPI). In addition, SIGMA, a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union, developed the Principles of Public Administration, which include a methodological framework in the area of accountability[31].

A 2016 worldwide assessment of open government led to a proposed methodology (Williamson and Eisen, 2016[15]) for analysing the progress in its implementation, tackling the question "does open government work?". The methodology addresses the issue through the relation between the government/state institutions and the stakeholders/society through six features/questions:

1. Have the proponents identified the specific <u>principals</u> (e.g., segments of the public, civil society, media, and other stakeholders) intended to benefit?
2. Is the information revealed by the initiative important to the principals?
3. Is the information accessible and publicised to the principals?
4. Can the principals respond meaningfully as individuals?
5. Are governmental agents supportive of the reform effort?
6. Can the principals coordinate to change their governmental agents' incentives?", as the "willingness of officials to support reform is not independent of the mobilisation of informed citizens".

According to this methodology, the success of open government initiatives is linked to the responses to these questions (Figure 1.7), three broad categories of impact are defined: "*budgetary savings (including reductions in corruption), improvements to public services, and broader and deeper public participation*". These are not exclusive outcomes, but those that make "*a real difference in people's lives*" (Williamson and Eisen, 2016[15]). Budgetary savings can be assessed by accounting for whether the money top-level officials allocate for a particular purpose is actually spent on that purpose by local officials; public service improvements by higher educational attainment, better community health, or more reliable infrastructure; and public participation by broader and deeper public engagement in the political process, increased confidence in government and a strengthened social contract.

Figure 1.7. Steps to a successful open government initiative
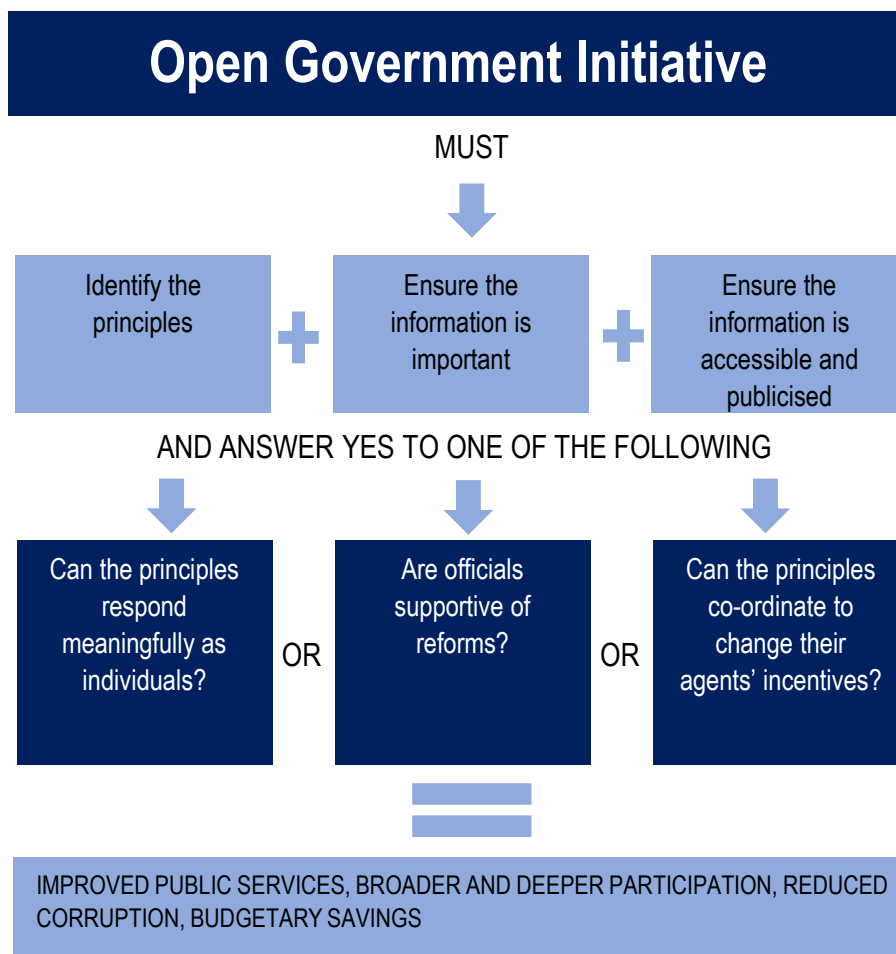
Source: adapted from (Williamson and Eisen, 2016[15]), "The impact of open government: Assessing the evidence", *Working Paper December 2016*, Center of Effective Public Management at Brookings, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/gs_20161208_opengovernment_report.pdf.

The COVID-19 crisis and open government

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented social, economic and governance situation. It led to restrictions and confinement and had a strong impact on public management and transparency, but also on the use of ICTs for remote activities. Facing a unique challenge, governments are testing and implementing new policies and approaches in a moment of peak uncertainty. While civil society and citizens are observing a shrink in the civic space in many countries, the principles of transparency, accountability, participation and engagement have come under intense pressure; On the other hand however, this tension could also meaningfully contribute to better outcomes[32].

The OGP has launched an initiative to share examples[33] on how the OG principles are applied in the context of the pandemic. In the same spirit, the OECD launched a call for evidence on the release and use of Open Government Data (OGD) by different actors (such as entrepreneurs, media, researchers, CSOs, and the public sector) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic[34] and is tracking innovative responses to the crisis[35]. A first assessment was made by the OECD of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on government transformation[36]; however, the results were mixed. According to the assessment, all stakeholders are experiencing a shock with regard to the basic workings of the state and the delivery of service by the public

sector, which will "*likely change the default expectations of what is "normal" and how things should or could be*". It acknowledged UN experts warning on the democratic compromises resulting from the emergency situation that need to be "*proportionate, necessary and non-discriminatory*"[37]. It referenced the V-Dem's Pandemic Backsliding Project[38] assessing how much state responses to the pandemic undermined democratic principles to reflect the "*increasing calls for the removal of restrictions to access to information and civic freedoms – many of which are not deemed proportionate, necessary and non-discriminatory – and heightened concerns about censorship, the use of emergency laws to delay the enactment of data protection laws, and other government abuses of power in their responses to the pandemic. At the heart of these debates, in OECD member countries and beyond, there are concerns about privacy and surveillance*".

The OGP formulated a guide on Open Government and the Coronavirus (OGP, 2020[23]). Acknowledging the pandemic's impact on civil society organisations (CSOs), it states that "*it is essential that the freedoms of association, assembly, and expression are respected in the context of these dramatic public health measures. A healthy civic space is even more important in times of crisis, from incubating innovative pandemic responses to ensuring vulnerable communities receive vital support. Government changes to civic space must take a transparent, accountable, participatory, and legal approach to ensure that the freedoms of assembly, association, and expression are upheld despite the pandemic*". For this, it elaborated recommendations on <u>open response</u>, involving legal principles and processes and institutions, as well as on <u>open recovery and reform</u>.

The Arab countries implemented policies and measures dealing with the COVID-19 crisis. For the purposes of this report, it is meaningful to assess how such policies and measures were in line with OG principles and framework.

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[24] https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Mexico_Action-Plan_2019-2021_EN.pdf

[25] https://www.unescwa.org/sub-site/open-government-arab-region

[26] In particular the second tier of SDG indicator 16.7.2 is "Responsive decision making" to be measured through the question "How much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?"

[27] https://www.opengovpartnership.org/fr/process/accountability/about-the-irm/

[28] OECD (2016, p. 123[4]). Also, see the report on "what the IRM data tells us about OGP results", https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Technical-paper-1_Executive-summary_final.pdf

[29] (OECD, 2016, p. 133[4]) based on country responses to "2015 OECD Survey on Open Government Co-ordination and Citizen Participation in the Policy Cycle", OECD, Paris.

[30] https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/Compare-Countries

[31] SIGMA, The Principles of Public Administration: A Framework for ENP Countries. https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/principles-public-administration-european-neighbourhood-policy.htm

[32] https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/a-guide-to-open-government-and-the-coronavirus/

[33] https://www.opengovpartnership.org/collecting-open-government-approaches-to-covid-19/

[34] http://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/use-of-open-government-data-to-address-covid19-outbreak.htm

[35] https://oecd-opsi.org/covid-response/

[36] http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/the-covid-19-crisis-a-catalyst-for-government-transformation-1d0c0788/

[37] https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25722

[38] https://www.v-dem.net/en/our-work/research-projects/pandemic-backsliding/