

United Nation eGovernment Survey **Regional eGovernment Experts Workshop 2019** & Launch of the Arabic Edition Survey

9th of February 2019

Dubai-United Arab Emirates



UNITED NATIONS



**WORLD
GOVERNMENT
SUMMIT**



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Overview

The world has seen rapid strides in Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) and its effective use by the government and citizens in their day-to-day life. With telephones and computers yielding to mobiles, tablets and social media; governments and service providers have been compelled to proactively orient their services and service delivery using various sophisticated delivery channels. In their constant endeavor to provide effective services and stimulate sustainable development, countries are looking for reliable benchmarks such as the UN eGovernment Development Survey Report.

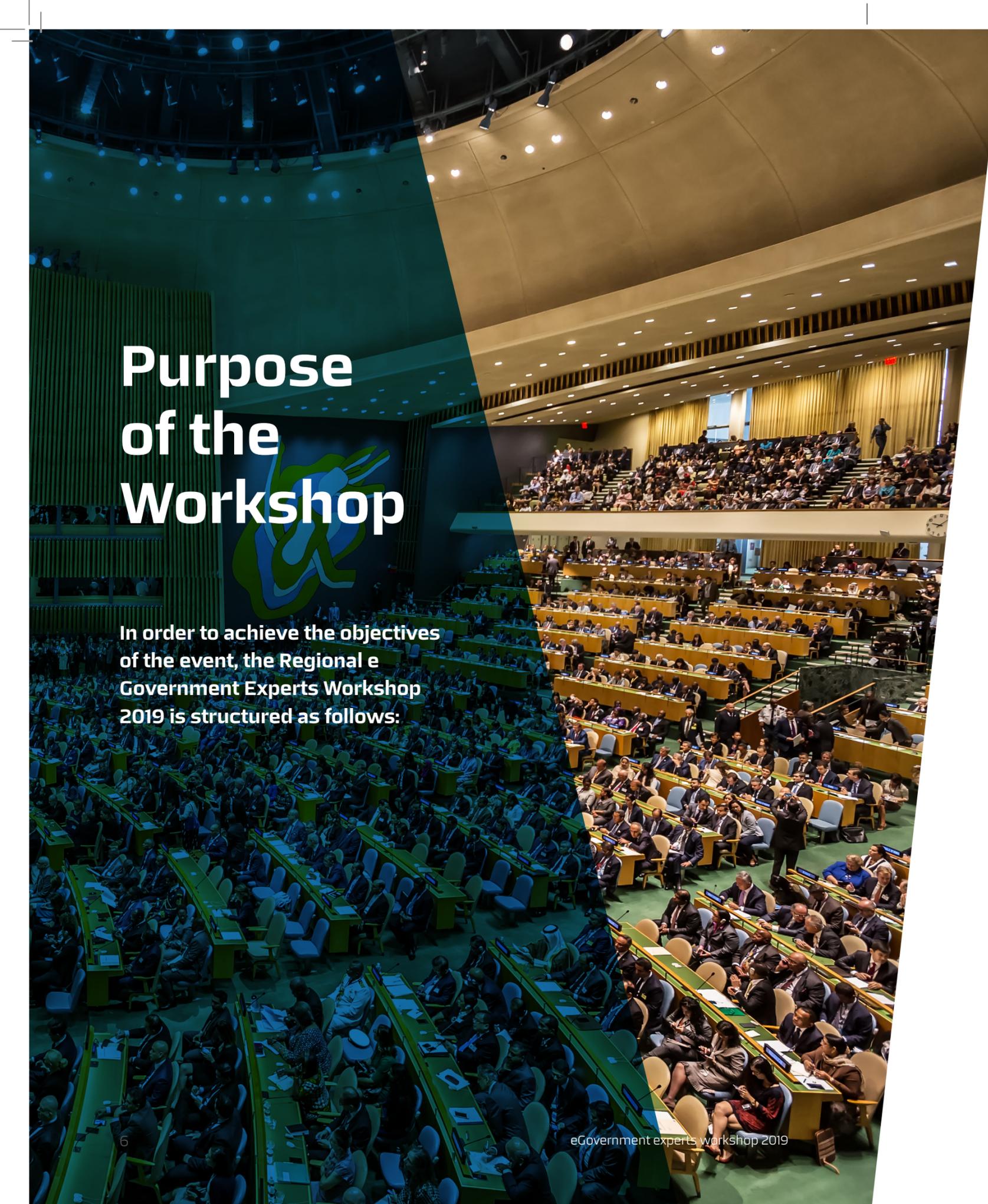
The three primary indices are also supplemented by the eParticipation index.

Even though many global indices provide a valuable perspective on Government programs that exist across the world, the United Nations Government Development Index is by far the most well-developed and accepted a global index. However, the index faces challenges by countries, researchers and other stakeholders concerning:

- Reliability and consistency of data inputs
- Methods of computing indices are adopted by the UN
- Interpreting the results of the survey over time. For instance, certain countries retain their ranking while others make significant strides in significantly developing and improving their rankings – though they may not be recognized yet, as their rank does not fall within the top ten.

Detail oriented stakeholders had noticed a gap within the eGovernment Development Index Report; following such observation, the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) took the initiative to gather experts in order to explore the challenges under one roof and share its outcome with the rest of the world. As a result, the framework of the Regional eGovernment Experts Workshop 2019 (ReGE19) was designed to bring key international experts together in order to explore issues and challenges concerning the eGovernment development indicators, learn from the best practices and share knowledge.





Purpose of the Workshop

In order to achieve the objectives of the event, the Regional eGovernment Experts Workshop 2019 is structured as follows:

- Series of presentations by UN Staff and eGovernment experts, followed by Round table discussions on topics aligned with the eGovernment Development Index indicators;
- Suggestions for improvement of the survey;
- Breakout sessions in which the method of computation, inputs, and parameters – that were used for computation of indices will be examined, and
- The final session will summarize all observations, suggestions, and recommendations which will be submitted to UNDESA to presented at the UN Expert Group

Following the decision of adopting the United Nation's eGovernment Development Index (EGDI) as a benchmark, TRA, representing the United Arab Emirates has taken the initiative to address some of the challenges associated with the index. It organized the ReGE19 in order to discuss UN eGovernment rankings and impact. The workshop aimed to develop a better understanding of the purpose of the report and to provide inputs from the countries that will be evaluated under the UN methodology.

With eGovernment being at the core of building a strategic sustainable development framework, the focus of ReGE19 is to identify ways of improving the eGovernment development indicators and effectively utilize them in the future by all member states.

The key objectives of the workshop

1. To explore issues, new opportunities, and challenges related to the eGovernment development indicators.
2. To learn from the best practices and experiences.
3. To share knowledge from experts in the eGovernment and ICT field.
4. To ensure that countries are using the UN indices to advance and enhance their service delivery and ensure that no one is left behind
5. To use such indices in their development strategy at a national level and embrace them in their Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

Agenda

9:00 am – 10:00 am (U-shape table)

1. **GENERAL SESSION**
 - a. Welcome speech, by H.E. Hamad Al Mansoori, Director General of Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA)
 - b. eGovernment Measurement and the International Indicators - Perspective on Indicators, by Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief, Digital Government Branch, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
 - c. Country Briefs by GCC eGovernment Leaders
 - d. Impact of the SDG's on the UN eGovernment Survey, by UN

10:00 am – 10:15 am

2. **THE LAUNCH OF THE UNITED NATIONS E-GOVERNMENT SURVEY 2018 IN ARABIC**
3. **SETTING THE SCENE**

Break

10:45 am – 13:00 pm (Round table)

4. **CONCURRENT (ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS) (2 HOURS)**
 - a. GCC Region- UN eGovernment Survey Major Findings – (Participants – GCC eGovernment Leaders and UN/International expert)
 - b. United Nations' E-Government Survey and highlight major findings from the most recent edition - OSI and the Sub Indicators
 - c. Global eGovernment Trends and Case Studies (Participants – Regional experts/Universities and UN/International expert)
 - eServices
 - Content
 - eParticipation
 - Open Data
 - SDG's

13:00 pm – 14:00 pm (U-shape table)

5. **WRAP UP SESSION (PRESENTATIONS U-SHAPE TABLE) THE SUMMARY OF ALL SESSIONS BY ALL MODERATORS AND CLOSING SESSION.**

Participants

GCC eGovernment Leaders

1. H.E. Hamad Al Mansoori – DG of TRA – UAE
2. H.E. Dr. Zakaria Al Khaja – Deputy CEO IGA – Bahrain
3. H.E. Dr. Salem Al Ruzaqi – CEO eGovernment – Oman
4. Mr. Yasser Alnassri – eGovernment – Oman
5. H.E. Ali Al Asiri – DG eGovernment – Saudi
6. Mr. Sultan Al Ghanim – eGovernment – Saudi

United Nations/International Expert (CEPA)

6. Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro - Chief Digital Government DESA
7. Mr. Deniz SUSAR
8. Dr. Ali Hamsa - CEPA Member
9. Mr. Ayman el Sherbiny-Chief, Information and Communications Technology Policy Section, ESCWA

Regional Experts/Universities

10. Mr. Salem Al Housani
11. Dr. Basem Shahin
12. Miss. Manal Al Afad
13. Eng. Ragia Abdel Wahab
14. Mr. Fadi Salem
15. Mr. Khaled Eid
16. Mr. Richard Kerby
17. Mr. Abdulla Al Hamed
18. Dr. Saeed Al Dhaheri
19. Dr. Eesa Bastaki
20. Saleh Jaffar

Opening Session

H.E. Mr. Hamad Mansoori, Director General of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) Statement

H. E. Mansoori welcomed the participants to Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, in this Regional eGovernment Experts Workshop 2019, where we meet as government officials, UN experts and academia to explore upcoming issues, new opportunities, and challenges related to the eGovernment development indicators. He stated that the value of this meeting stems from the fact that we learn from the best practices and experiences and have the invaluable chance to get knowledge from experts in the eGovernment and the ICT field.



He noted that the GCC countries have made great strides in digital transformation. He congratulated the attending GCC colleagues for their achievements and for the advanced e-services provided to the public, and their efforts in absorbing modern technology. He wished them continued success and prosperity.

He added that the UN's OSI rankings and similar indicators as something the GCC countries aspire to excel in. He emphasized that the target of the UAE has never been the rank itself, but to use such indices in the development strategy at a national level and embrace them as part of our own Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Mr. Mansoori noted the importance of working together and collaborating for the good of all. The UAE has always been team players, looking at ourselves as part of the region and the world, when it comes to the ultimate goals of sustainable development and the well-being of humanity. He gave the example

of the diversity in the UAE living in peace and prosperity. The UAE firmly believes in the SDG motto of leaving no one behind. This is further emphasized by the declaration by the UAE leadership that 2019 is the Year of Tolerance.

He urged the group to conduct open discussions about all the submitted insights and suggestions and to come up with a set of recommendations that will help strengthen the UN E-Government Survey.

Opening Session

Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Director, UNDESA Statement

Mr. Aquaro thanked His Excellency Mr. Mansoori, Director General of the UAE Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) for hosting the regional e-Government Experts workshop and thanked him for the translation of the UN e-Government Report into Arabic. He noted that the tenth edition was launched globally in July 2018 in English and he is pleased to present today the Survey in Arabic for wide audiences in Arab-speaking countries.



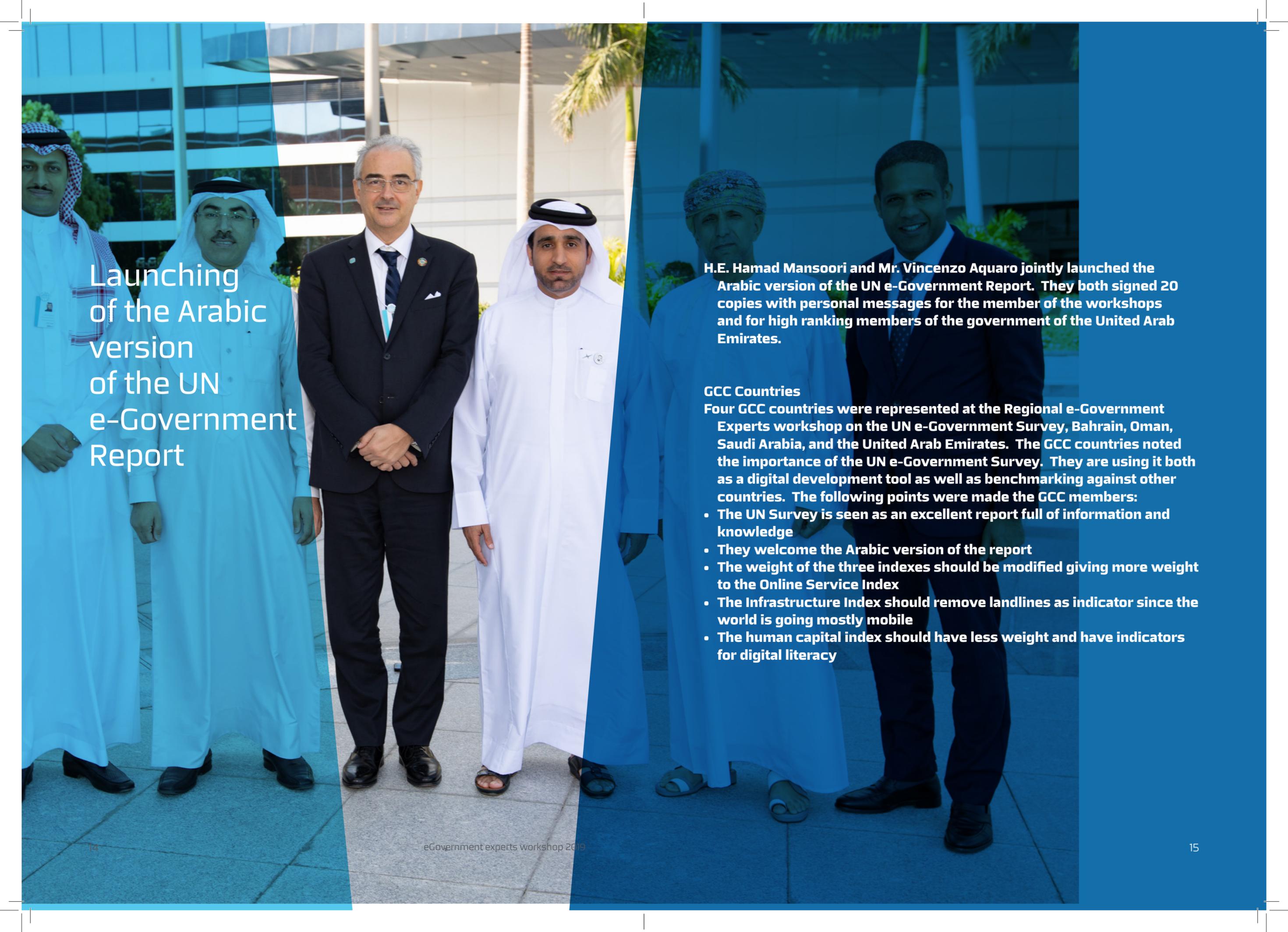
He stated that the Survey is the only global report to assess E-government development status of all Member States of the United Nations and it can serve as a universal digital development tool enhancing the wellbeing of people worldwide. It is particularly important to launch the Survey in Arabic here at the World Government Summit, hosted by the UAE, which is shaping the future of governments and creating a platform to discuss how innovation and technology can solve universal challenges facing humanity.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the vital role of innovative technologies and digital government as a catalyst for accelerating human progress, bridging digital divides, developing knowledge societies, and building trust in governance through increased public participation, transparency and accountability.

He noted that we are witnessing the simultaneous proliferation of big data, artificial intelligence, data science, the blockchain, robotics, and other frontier and fast-emerging technologies. These frontier technologies are building on and amplifying one another, affecting everything from our food systems, water and sanitation, energy to education, health care and social services.

The 2018 UN e-Government Report noted that there a slight progress in the Arab League countries compared to 2016 on the overall scores. However, looking at data in more detail we notice a digital divide too among the 22 countries. Only two countries in this region have very High EGDI scores, including the United Arab Emirates. At the same time, there are six countries with low EGDI scores countries below the average.

He again thanked TRA for hosting the workshop and translating the UN e-Government Report in Arabic.



Launching of the Arabic version of the UN e-Government Report

H.E. Hamad Mansoori and Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro jointly launched the Arabic version of the UN e-Government Report. They both signed 20 copies with personal messages for the member of the workshops and for high ranking members of the government of the United Arab Emirates.

GCC Countries

Four GCC countries were represented at the Regional e-Government Experts workshop on the UN e-Government Survey, Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The GCC countries noted the importance of the UN e-Government Survey. They are using it both as a digital development tool as well as benchmarking against other countries. The following points were made the GCC members:

- **The UN Survey is seen as an excellent report full of information and knowledge**
- **They welcome the Arabic version of the report**
- **The weight of the three indexes should be modified giving more weight to the Online Service Index**
- **The Infrastructure Index should remove landlines as indicator since the world is going mostly mobile**
- **The human capital index should have less weight and have indicators for digital literacy**

Impact of the SDG's on the UN eGovernment Survey



Mr. Deniz Susar presented a Powerpoint presentation on the Impact of the SDGs on the e-Government Survey. He noted that the GCC countries were doing extremely well and were well above the world average, but the overall situation of Arab countries was not as bright. The average of the Arab countries as a region was less than the world average. All the GCC countries were either the very high EGDI or high EDGI. On the e-participation index, all the GCC countries were either in high or very high levels. The three countries from the GCC that were in the very high level were Bahrain, Oman, and United Arab Emirates.

On the question of open government data, the Arab region improved from 2016 to 2018 by a considerable margin. More open data was available on the environment, education, health, social services, and labor. As a result, more Arabs had access to data and knowledge in previous years, and this trend is going upward in 2019.

One of the largest areas of improvement for the Arab region was providing online services to vulnerable groups such as:

youth, elderly, women, the poor and people of determination. The GCC has also stressed this aspect with the UAE taking the lead by declaring 2019 to be the Year of Tolerance and by increasing the number of services, information, and knowledge provided.

He noted that some of the key strategic digital issues that the leading countries, as in the case of Singapore were addressing were:

- Digital by Design
- Inclusion by Design
- Public Private People Partnership
- Cross-border Cooperation

He mentioned that Australia had three simple strategic priorities:

- Government that's easy to deal with
- Government that's informed

by you

- Government that's fit for the digital age

He ended his presentation by identifying the key messages from that Internet Governance Forum held in France in 2018 that all governments should plan for:

- Cybersecurity, Trust, and Privacy
- Development Innovation and Economic Issues
- Digital Inclusion and Accessibility
- Emerging Technologies
- Evolution of Internet Governance
- Human Rights, Gender and Youth
- Media and Content
- Technical and Operational Topics



eGovernment experts workshop 2019

Setting the Scene

Ms. Manal Al AFad, TRA made a presentation to outline the scope of the workshop.

She stated that the workshop would look at the following points:

- The future of the e-Government Survey
- Trends in Digital Transformation
- The correlation between the sustainable development goals and the Survey
- The Gulf Cooperative Countries (GCC) suggestions to improve the e-Government Survey

She noted that the workshop would be divided into two sessions following the opening statement. The first session on the GCC Region- UN eGovernment Survey Major Findings and the second on Global e-Government Trends and Case Studies. The first session will focus on the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) countries' suggestions on how to improve the UN e-Government Survey and would cover the following topics:

- How does the GCC view the UN e-Government Survey?
- What is the impact that the GCC are expecting from the Survey?
- Suggestions from the GCC on the Survey
- What are the priority areas for the GCC?

The session of the Global e-Government Trends and Case Studies will review the results of an INTERMID survey to a group of international digital transformation experts and what are the major issues that governments should be looking at in the next few years. This session would focus on the following topics:

- What are the important trends that should be looked at for 2020?
- How can these trends be measured?
- The importance of Open Government Data

Upon the conclusion of both sessions, the groups will reunite to have a wrap-up session, which will review the recommendations of both groups and will be endorsed by the group.

eGovernment and the GCC key areas of focus and recommendations

During the Regional e-Government Expert (ReGE) the areas of focus and recommendations below were discussed in details:



- **THE EGOVERNMENT SURVEY**
UNDESA should reconsider the distribution of EDGI as more weight to OSI and less weight to TII and HCI. This would make the report more focused towards digital transformation. There are some components in both TII and HCI that should be dropped, and there needs to be some new components introduced into the HCI to make it more relevant.
- **THE GCC STRATEGIC POSITION**
The strategic position of the GCC countries as leading in the Arab region of the OSI could lead to greater opportunities to share success stories with other countries in the Arab region that are below the world average. There are a number of case studies that could be shared with other countries in the region that will help those countries in their respective digital transformation.
- **FUTURE-FOCUSED GOVERNMENT**
The future-focused government on industrial revolution 4.0 and how to develop excellent education, lifelong learning, skills to create new jobs. A strategy needs to be in place in the Arab region that will look at the specific skills that will be required in the future and start the educational development process now. This will develop a cadre of IT savvy men and women in the region, which will enable the private sector to find quality talent.
- **DIVERSIFIED KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY**
A diversified knowledge economy to offer services to the least developed countries (LDCs). The GCC countries can play a major role in South-South cooperation, sharing knowledge, know-how, e-services, and content with LDCs.
- **HAPPY AND COHESIVE SOCIETY**
Continue developing a happy and cohesive society. The implementation of the Year of Tolerance will enable to country's diverse and innovative population to continue to live in peace and prosperity.
- **GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR FURTHER DIGITAL COOPERATION**
Support a global initiative for further digital cooperation. The GCC countries should be more active in the international forum that are related to digital government. This would allow them to collaborate and cooperate with a greater number of countries, where they can impart their respective digital transformation knowledge, showcase their respective success stories, and adopted innovative trends from other countries.

Global eGovernment Trends and Case Studies

During the Regional e-Government Expert (ReGE) Group deliberations, a presentation was delivered by Richard Kerby, INTERMID on the key trends facing the government in the next several. This presentation was prepared from the feedback received from international experts from governments, the private sector, academia, consultants, media, and international organizations. The trends below were discussed in details:

- Developing e-government services relying on AI (for predictive features or virtual assistant for disabled);
- Developing e-government services based on blockchain technology (for registries, traceability, certification, etc.);
- Implementing Digital ID;
- Using ICT & Internet in education at the primary and middle school levels;
- Improving Digital skills development within the public sector to support the digital transformation;
- Implementing privacy and ethics related issues (around the use of data and algorithm);
- Using government as a Platform: adoption of containers and micro-services to organize and provide services;
- Introducing user-centric service design;
- Introducing Public sector procurement and commercial reform;
- Increasing cooperation between national and sub-national layers of government to deliver public services;
- Using end to end data management implementations;

- Simplifying the concepts of artificial intelligence and augmented analytics;
- Rolling out of a combination of next-generation wireless technologies;
- Protecting against cyber attacks and cyber breaches;
- Improving the IT talent Pool;
- Implementing Cloud computing;
- Adopting an Innovative Approach to Data Fusion;
- Developing disaster recovery infrastructure;
- Introducing Social Credit Systems that can incentivize populations to support the development of the overall e-government strategy, and to build a more coherent society;
- Creating and supporting Arab Digital Economy Champions;
- Achieving all government services online based on once the only principle, and through opening government data;
- Adopting a clear road map for deploying 5th generation networks;
- Enhancing Personal data protection and freedom of access to information;
- Introducing “Ethical AI”;
- Creating a workforce of the Future / Digital Skills for Public Administration;
- Using biometrics in digital identity;
- Rethinking the Government digital strategy as the full effects of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), protecting users’ personal data will force Governments to set in; and
- Developing a clear strategy for managing user data and processes.

The group discussed the about trends as indicated by the International panel of experts and identified the top ten trends that government should identify as critical factors for them to fully implement a digital strategy and take full advantage of the new digital economy. The following are the key trends:

1. Developing strategies for new technologies and linking them in the overall development strategies

- a. Artificial Intelligence
- b. Blockchain Technologies
- c. Internet of Things
- d. Cloud Technologies
- e. Robotics
- f. Virtual Reality
- g. Augmented Reality
- h. Data Analytics

2. Focus on digital skills

- a. Lifelong learning
- b. Knowledge creation
- c. Skills required by the private sector

3. Inclusive data, some data can be biased towards certain groups, focus on:

- a. Culture
- b. Language
- c. Age
- d. Gender
- e. Income Distribution

4. Improving customer service, user-centric design, especially on the portals, to make sure people have a good experience

5. E-participation

- a. Engaging citizens
- b. Crowdsourcing
- c. Crowdfunding
- d. Living Labs

6. Investment on innovation,

- a. More incubators to guide young entrepreneurs
- b. Venture Capitalists
- c. Entrepreneurship

7. Sustainability

- a. Strong leadership
- b. Future-proof infrastructure
- c. Incubation
- d. Business requirements
- e. Future trends
- f. Innovation

8. Principle of Tolerance

- a. Open government
- b. Inclusion
- c. Inclusive policies and strategies
- d. Digital as a right

9. Not only focus on open government data (OGD)

- a. Develop Data Scientists
- b. Develop OGD policies and guidelines
- c. Data Sharing Platforms
- d. Develop a data culture

10. Review Telecommunications Infrastructure Index (TII) and Human Capital Index (HCI) components to be more in line with the priorities of digital government



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