

Services and Citizens: Technology in Countering Corona

April 6, 2020

Speakers



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Cooperative Society for Digital
Transformation (raqmn).

Moderator

The most prominent recommendations

Intensifying awareness campaigns by cybersecurity agencies on how to protect individuals and institutions from malicious cyber-attacks during crises (Corona as a model).

The ministries of Interior, Justice, Human Resources & Social Development, and Communications and Information Technology should proceed with providing electronic services to the beneficiaries, as they did during Corona crisis.

Benefiting from the digital technologies in identifying the beneficiaries' needs, and trying to meet without conflict with the applicable regulations, while providing more facilities to process the beneficiaries' transactions.

Carrying out an evaluation study on the deficiencies in the services provided by the various authorities in the country during the Corona crisis to avoid any future emergency crises.



The webinar is on the International Aspar Forum YouTube channel



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First: Recommendations.

- Intensifying awareness campaigns by cybersecurity agencies on how to protect individuals and institutions from malicious cyber-attacks during crises (Corona as a model).
- The ministries of Interior, Justice, Human Resources & Social Development, and Communications and Information Technology should proceed with providing electronic services to the beneficiaries, as they did during Corona crisis.
- Benefiting from the digital technologies in identifying the beneficiaries' needs, and trying to meet without conflict with the applicable regulations, while providing more facilities to process the beneficiaries' transactions.
- Carrying out an evaluation study on the deficiencies in the services provided by the various authorities in the country during the Corona crisis to avoid any future emergency crises.



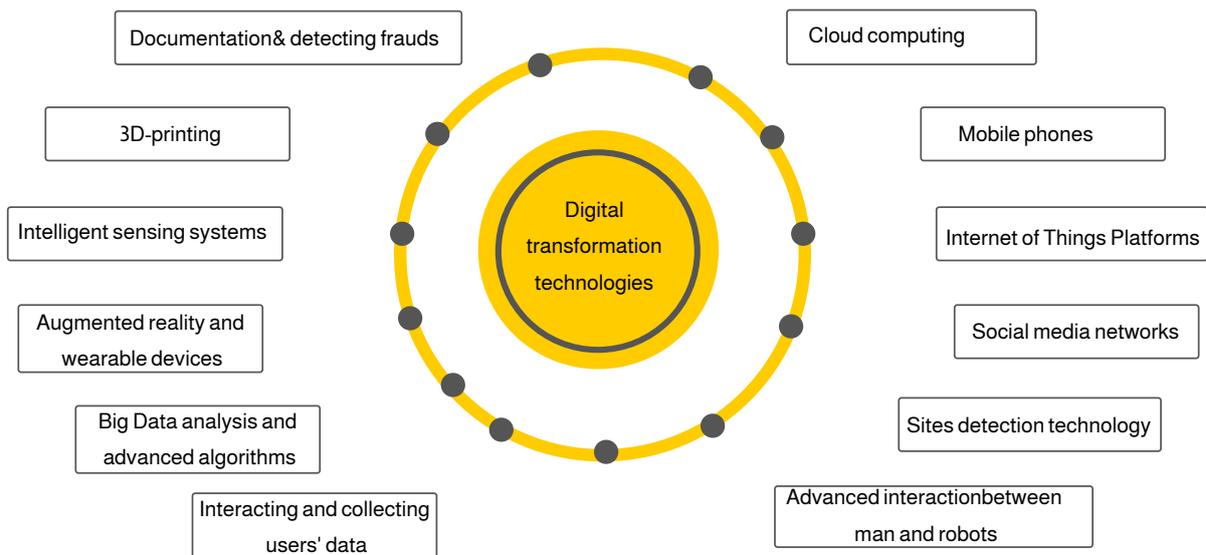
Second: Introducing digital transformation in Saudi Arabia: Concept and strategic goals.

- Digital transformation refers to investment in thought and behavior change to bring about a fundamental shift in the way we work. This is achieved by taking advantage of the great technical development that is taking place to serve beneficiaries faster and better. Digital transformation provides a huge potential for building effective, competitive and sustainable societies.
- This is realized through making fundamental change in the services of various parties including consumers, employees and beneficiaries, while improving their experiences and productivity through a series of commensurate processes, accompanied by a reformulation of the procedures necessary for implementation. Digital transformation requires enabling a culture of creativity in the work environment. It includes changing the basic components of work starting with the infrastructure, operating models, to marketing services and products.



- There is no doubt that electronic services and smart solutions form the backbone of future governments. They are one of the pillars of success of economic, development and social policy for any society.
- Real-time indicators confirm that Saudi Arabia has made great strides in the electronic services and the employment of smart solutions in government activities and transactions in line with the Saudi Vision 2030 and the major shift towards technology and knowledge. The Saudi leadership possesses a clear vision and ambitious goals that place Saudi Arabia among the top developed countries in these areas worldwide.
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made quantum leaps to accelerate digital transformation, adopt communication and information technology systems, and activate its uses to reach an information society and digital economy, in addition to achieving high rates of welfare for the citizens and the expatriates and making their life better. To realize this vision, the Kingdom worked on developing government work and spreading the concept of electronic transactions in various government agencies. This will set the Kingdom to be a digital model that achieves economic sustainability and global leadership, and improves the quality of life.

- The Kingdom has adopted national strategies for digital transformation and promising and ambitious five-year plans in cooperation with government agencies, and has developed three implementation plans: The first started in 2006 up to 2010 , and the second started in 2012 up to 2016 , and the third plan started in 2019 and it is still undergoing up to 2022. Among its most prominent strategic plans are digital health, digital education, digital commerce and smart cities.



Third: Ministry of Interior's e-services in countering the Corona crisis.

- The electronic portal of the Saudi Ministry of Interior is pioneering at the region level in the field of smart services and solutions, as it is used by millions of customers on a daily basis. The Ministry provides electronic services via the "Absher" platform where all citizens and expatriates can access.
- The Ministry also provided services for government agencies and the private sector. It is worth noting that, during the Corona pandemic, the electronic services delivered via "Absher" have been provided through a one-stop-shop platform that facilitates access and benefit from the various Ministry services that can be performed in no time.
- This includes the services delivered by its various departments, including traffic, passports, civil status and other services, in addition to the services provided to dependents and sponsored people. Among the services provided are those that require pre-registration, and others that do not, based on the type and nature of the service required, and following the instructions relating to each service. The services also included inquiries, booking appointments, printing electronic forms and reviewing the various instructions issued by the Ministry.



- Also, the Corona crisis demonstrated that the digital transformation in the Ministry of Interior has achieved its desired goals; which is evidenced by the provision of many electronic services to the citizens and to government agencies, and the level of efficiency of the performance of these services was not affected during the crisis.
- In addition, the activation of many electronic services that fall within the scope of the Ministry of Interior during the Corona crisis has also maintained the safety of service providers and beneficiaries alike. It has also contributed to the commitment of precautions and minimized the presence of employees and the public in the work environment. This ensured the continuation of the usual routine work, and the provision of all services with the required efficiency.

Fourth: Ministry of Justice's digital transformation in countering the Corona crisis.

- Supporting digital transformation programs is one of the strategic objectives of the Saudi Ministry of Justice. This is operationalized according to the standards applicable in the leading countries in the justice sector. The support targeting digital transformation programs in addition to automating judicial, documentary and executive procedures are one of the most important aspects through which these systems seek to raise the quality of judicial services provided to their citizens.
- The Corona crisis presented a real opportunity to put the strategic goal related to the digital transformation of the services of the Ministry of Justice into practice. This was evident through the (Najiz) portal that includes more than 120 services benefitting in one way or another more than one million subscribers. The portal is the electronic justice services platform through which all the services of the Ministry of Justice are provided through a unified portal in order to increase the beneficiaries' satisfaction of the of the Ministry of Justice (citizens, expatriates and business sectors). This is to facilitate the users' access and deal with electronic justice services in an easy and fast manner.



- During the Corona crisis and before, Najiz portal included many electronic judicial services, classified according to their judicial nature, such as court services, power-of-attorneys, real estate, implementation, etc. The portal team added new electronic services periodically so that the portal includes all judicial services as planned, while providing them in the best way possible. Also, the digital transformation by the Ministry of Justice has provided a set of services for the beneficiaries, the most important of which is the issuance of electronic power-of-attorneys, in addition to the service of inquiring about "my power-of-attorney" that allows the beneficiaries to verify their valid powers-of-attorneys.
- The beneficiaries are provided with the possibility of canceling the power-of-attorney which they do not wish to continue. This is in addition to verifying power-of-attorney, which allows agencies to verify the power-of-attorney electronically through a number of available technical channels; such as using the "Yasser" electronic government transaction network, the ministry portal, or the official application of the ministry.
- At the internal level of the Ministry of Justice, the employees are now able to carry out their work well under the precautionary conditions which coincided with Corona crisis without exposure to any kind of risk. This turned the Corona crisis into an opportunity for positive digital transformation with the potential for carrying transformation to the post-crisis phase.

Fifth: Digital transformation initiatives by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in light of the Corona crisis.

- Human resources (HR) digital transformation means changing HR processes and functions to become a technology-based and data-management mechanism. On the one hand, digital transformation relates to the transformation of HR operations themselves, and on the other hand the transformation of the work teams and the way of work. The transformation process includes the organization or the company as a whole and not just a transformation in human resource management only. All this is applicable if the goal is to achieve a successful digital transformation process.
- In this context, the digital transformation strategy adopted by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development focuses on the rapid transformation of the available services. This leads to the development of services internally so that they would be delivered within a short timeframe. It also leads to less paperwork, the use of systems and applications and the distribution of support groups onto various services. It also involves improving the usage of digital technology and the quality of services provided. This certainly would facilitate work flow, raise the percentage of job nationalization in the private sector, and achieve the greatest rate of digital transformation in the services provided.



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- It is noticed that the infrastructure of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development was ready for the digital transformation in tandem with the Corona crisis and the related measures, as remote work was activated, and staff members were already trained. The indicators tell us that the level of digital transformation in the Ministry has reached 91%, and most of the services provided by the Ministry have become automated.

- In this regard, two important platforms can be mentioned under the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development. The role of these two platforms have emerged with the breakout of the Corona crisis. In addition to the Future Work Company, the two platforms are as shown below:
- **1. "Qiwa" platform:**
- It is an electronic platform dedicated for providing the Ministry's solutions and services. It is intended to upgrade the electronic services provided to the human resources, upgrade and improve the services related to the workforce by standardizing and providing products and initiatives that are concerned with developing the labor market. It enhances the level of services provided to the workers and work owners, serving a wider range of workers and business owners in the private sector. It consolidates the efforts of automating the government procedures related to the work sector, and provides a standard source of data for the employees and business owners to facilitate the user's experience and obtain information easily. "Qiwa" platform includes 158 services, of which 80 are fully automated with no human interference.



- **2. "Musaned" platform:**
- It is an electronic platform and an integrated system that unprecedentedly facilitates recruitment procedures supervised by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development. Its aim is to facilitate the procedures of hiring house maids and increasing the level of preserving the rights of all parties. "Musaned" contributes to raising awareness of employers and housemaids by making their rights and duties clear. This entails that everyone who has a role in the recruitment process has clear responsibilities, rights and duties towards the others. "Musaned" platform is fully automated and includes 12 service.



- **3. Future Work Company:**

- The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development launched the Future Work Company, which is concerned with remote work technologies, and it plays a positive and significant role that has emerged in the Corona crisis. The company has started to work effectively, and it is expected that it will adopt many initiatives in the next stage. It also embraces the industry of innovative, unconventional and sustainable future business patterns.



Sixth: National Cybersecurity Authority in countering the Corona crisis.

- Cybersecurity is defined as: "the protection of networks, information technology systems, systems of operational technologies and their hardware and software components, the services they provide, and the data they contain, against any penetration, disruption, modification, entry, use, or illegal exploitation. This concept also includes information security, electronic security, digital security and the like".



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National Cybersecurity Authority

- Based on this understanding, the National Cybersecurity Authority was established in Saudi Arabia, pursuant to Royal Decree approving its regulation on 11/2/1439. Accordingly, the Authority would be the competent agency in the Kingdom for cybersecurity and the national reference in the field. Its fundamental aim is to enhance cybersecurity and protect the vital interests of the State. Such interests include national security, sensitive infrastructure, priority sectors, government services and activities. However, this does not excuse any public or private entity of their responsibilities towards their cybersecurity. They have to work and be in line with the scope of work or the tasks entrusted to the Authority.

- With the Corona crisis receiving focus and being linked with cybersecurity threats, we find that one of the results of this crisis and the accompanying measures has been the unprecedented dependence of individuals on technological means to communicate and engage in daily activities and various businesses remotely. This coincided with the exploitation of some opportunities by agencies and individuals to organize malicious campaigns to spread electronic viruses in light of the growing dependence of individuals and institutions on technology. It follows that in times of increased risk, cyber security teams must be alert and flexible, and realize that the threat of cyber-attacks is much higher than usual.



- Within the framework of the Corona crisis, the National Cybersecurity Authority and the Information Security Center have played important roles. This is especially with regard to warning against phishing scams and fraudulent e-mails aimed at stealing personal information of individuals and institutions, taking advantage of the circumstances in which Saudi Arabia and the world are countering the Corona pandemic.
- What captured attention was the interest paid by the authorities concerned with cybersecurity in Saudi Arabia to countering these increasing risks. They intensified awareness campaigns and sent warnings to various applications of certain electronic penetrations and how to deal with them. So, with the Corona crisis, several entities in Saudi Arabia, including the Operations Center of the National Cybersecurity Authority, were excluded from halting work in the government sector to preserve user data, prevent thefts, and prevent some applications from being hacked.

Seventh: Corona crisis in light of the strategy by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.

- Demand for electronic transactions has increased with the breakout of Corona crisis, and the importance of using technology, especially emerging ones such as the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence and robots, the blockchain, 3D printing, drones and others has multiplied. This comes in line with the priorities set by the strategy of the telecommunications and information technology sector in Saudi Arabia. This strategy aims at developing the Kingdom's digital capabilities in communications and information technology.
- They will be invested in an optimal way in the growth of future projects in order to achieve the Saudi vision 2030 and promote the effectiveness and performance of the public and private sectors. This is realized by enabling digital transformation to make the Kingdom among the leading countries in the world in the field of communications and information technology.
- The strategy of technology development focuses on building an attractive ecosystem to invest in emerging technologies and virtual and augmented reality to support the digital transformation process in several sectors such as industry, energy, health, and the financial and government sectors.



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وتقنية المعلومات
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