OpEd: The Transformation of the Public Sector Is a Challenge Facing All Governments; Saudi Arabia Is an Example of Huge Change

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The root and branch modernization and professionalization of the public sector required to usher in an era of diversified economic growth and increased opportunity is a change almost as big as Vision 2030 itself. It will have implications for the global discourse.

This week the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman started his American state visit in his vision for the future of Saudi Arabia and the opportunities it provides beyond it is an ambitious plan to liberalize the economy and introduce social reform and is a socio-economic change in the country’s history.

The scope and reach of these reforms demand a rapid modernization of the way Saudi is administered. And they raise interesting points to consider for all governments and...
now to harness technology and data to drive transparency, accountability and efficient decision making.

The Saudi Vision’s governance model promotes efficient planning within governments and enables coordination among them to achieve common national goals. The Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman initiated the Council of Economic and Development Affairs (CEDA) in 2016. This body has introduced a series of new government bodies, fostering a culture of greater efficiency. These bodies include the National Performance Measurement (Adaa), the Delivery and Rapid Intervention Center (DARI), and the Management Office of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs—all focus on supporting change.

Adaa was established to measure the progress and delivery of public entities within them to achieve greater efficiency. Adaa tracks progress on initiatives, programs, and internationally established measurements, supporting all ministries working towards the goals set out in Vision 2030. However, Adaa is also looking outwards and has created a platform that collects and visualizes global data to help support better data-led policy making.

The International Performance Hub (IPH) captures 1.2 million data points from leading organizations such as the OECD and the World Bank, using technology developed with Microsoft and Cognizant, covering a wide range of sectors including education, energy, society, and industry. It aims to help multi-lateral agencies make the transformation towards data-driven decision-making, a belief that is not just for fast-developing economies, but for long-established ones as well.

Importantly, Adaa has been praised by the World Bank for its extensive expertise in performance measurement. In some areas, such as quality assessment and visualization, the Bank views Adaa’s expertise as astonishing, saying it is what could be found in many OECD governments. This indicates our journey may have contributed to the discourse on public sector reform, from Boston to Beijing.

Easy, intuitive data delivery is key to making sure that the Saudi population is kept aware of government performance, which is essential for Vision 2030. That is why Adaa is also capturing citizens’ feedback to make sure that the voices of the different communities are heard in the evaluation. Beneficiary Experience employs several methodologies, including evaluation applications, mystery shoppers, and public satisfaction polls, focusing on something that governments across the world are increasingly focused on.

There are early, encouraging signs that reform is already working in Saudi Arabia. For example, women, for example, went up 11 percent in the last quarter due to deregulation and government efforts, highlighting the importance of data-driven decision-making.
Government online services have drastically increased. The WEF Global Information
Saudi Arabia now ranks 18th globally, compared to the less stellar 73rd position in 2
Kingdom is moving towards its goal to augment SME contribution to GDP: in the thir
operational income for the segment increased 11% compared to the same quarter o
million). We aim to improve the private sector contribution to GDP from 40% to 65%
The only way we will know if we achieve that, and the Vision 2030 program more br
and measure progress, regularly and transparently.

The task at hand is monumental. We want to move away from an economy based si
must completely transform the way we look at our resources and evaluate our econo
gerographic, cultural, social, demographic and economic advantages are all conduci
diverse and sustainable economy. But we need a public sector built on technology, re
established metrics to get there.

It’s easy to talk about scale and change, but people don’t believe talk, they believe r
measuring a broader sweep of indicators than ever before. We understand the work
understand our citizens are watching. As we change, we hope to share the lessons o
others—the complexities of the modern world will demand much of our public sector
similar transformation from government agencies and development communities ac

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Measurement in Saudi Arabia (Adaa). He is at the forefront of the performance revo
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Mohammed bin Salman. In his capacity as a leader of Adaa and the country’s forerr,
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