

## E-Gov And Public Sector Reform

During an open discussion session with the MoICT's E-Gov Team on October 6<sup>th</sup> 2003, the Team implied a linkage between Public Sector Reform and the ongoing E-Gov Initiative. Although both can be considered as interrelated, it was interesting to note that Public Sector Reform was designated as a prerequisite for the eventual success of our E-Gov Initiative.

The subject of Public Sector Reform has appeared in one form or another on the agenda of possibly every government in Jordan over at least the past twenty years if not more. One can only draw two conclusions from this; Either our Public Sector is un-reformable (which we hope is not the case) or the needed reforms are so immense that even after twenty or so years of work we still have a long way to go.

Implementing reforms requires a strong commitment. Reform is never an easy task and will almost certainly face resistance from various groups for differing reasons. The many issues that need to be taken into consideration include Higher Operational Efficiency, Transparency, Accountability, Cost Reduction, Better Service, Budget Balancing, Reducing Staff Redundancies as well as the sizable social impact of reforms on the community as a whole.

Historically, it is important to note that countries do not embark on implementing reforms just for the sake of reforming. The need is usually triggered by an event or a sequence of events that sometimes leaves them no choice but to comply. The E-Gov Initiative should be seriously considered as a prime trigger for implementing Public Sector Reforms. It should be the instigator and driver of the badly needed reforms and not just passive bystander ready and waiting to implement e-Services in a clean, lean and reformed Public Sector.

Setting Public Sector Reform as a prerequisite for the success of the E-gov Initiative will only serve to lengthen the implementation this complex process which is already well behind its declared schedule. It might even jeopardize it outright.

We certainly cannot afford to wait another twenty years, not even twenty months.