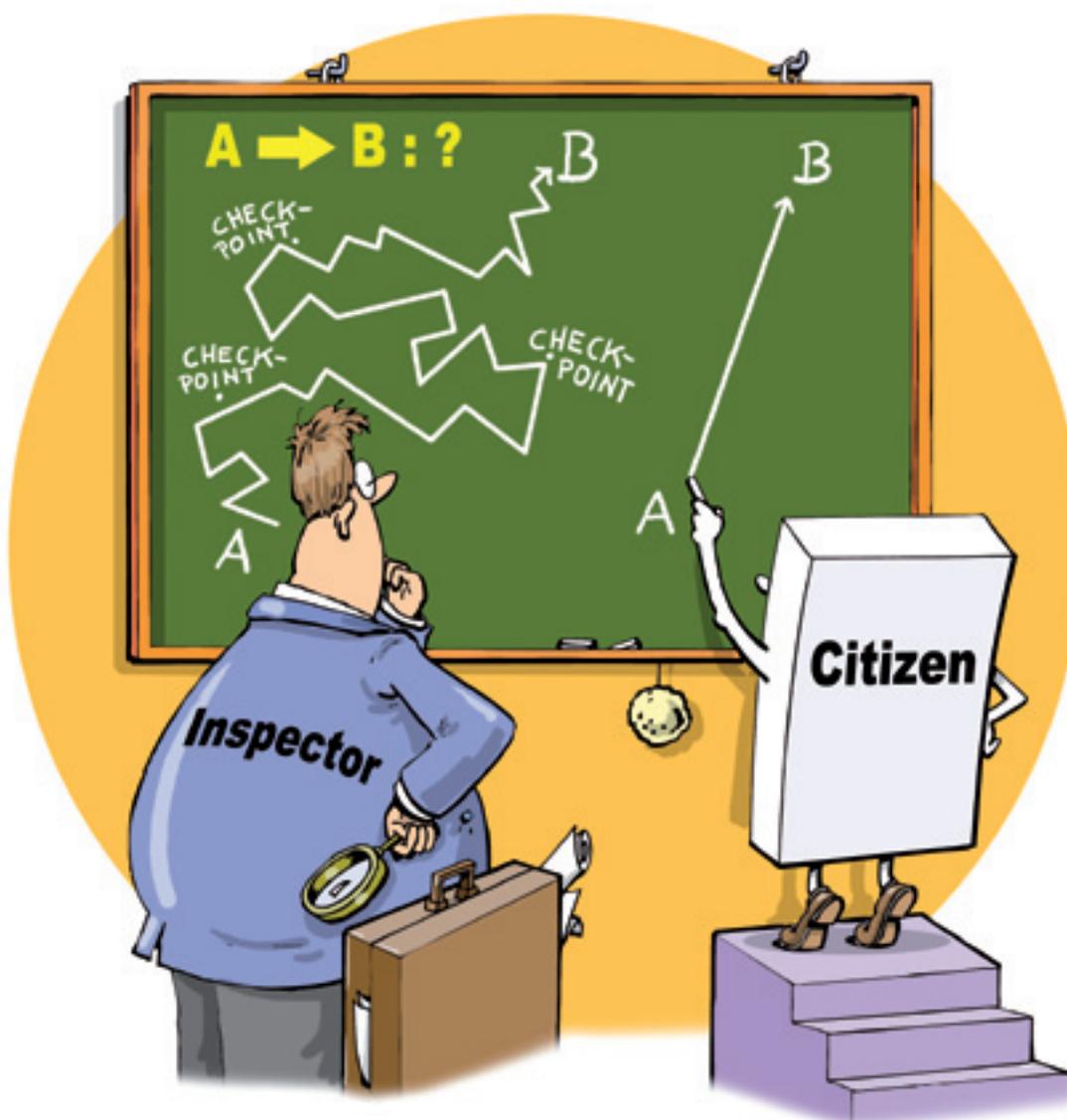


*Learning Points of the Euro-Med Workshop  
on Administrative Simplification Strategies:*

# BETTER PUBLIC SERVICES FOR COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISES

Brussels, 30<sup>th</sup> November – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011



## Objective of the Workshop

The Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprises sets out the framework for competitive enterprises in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Ministers agreed in 2011 to hold two workshops, of which this was the first, under the first area for action of the Euro-Med Charter (simple procedures for enterprises).

### Box 1: What the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise is about

1. Simple procedures for business
2. Education and training for entrepreneurship
3. Improved skills
4. Easier access to finance and investment friendly taxation
5. Better market access
6. Innovative companies
7. Strong business associations
8. Quality business support schemes and services
9. Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean networks and partnerships
10. Clear and targeted information
11. Sustainable enterprise development

There have been numerous analyses of what creates administrative barriers for enterprises, and how governments have been successful in reducing such barriers. Mediterranean countries expressed a desire to learn about practical tools that can be used to deal with complex administrative procedures and regulatory requirements in order to foster a sustainable business environment, for small and medium-sized enterprises in particular. Therefore this workshop had the objective of providing participants with practical tools they could implement to improve public service quality and make it easier for business to operate.

Workshop participants included senior policy advisers and public managers dealing with administrative simplification. Delegations also included representatives of business and employer associations. The following nations were represented at the workshop:

- Algeria
- Egypt
- Israel
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Morocco
- Palestinian Authority
- Tunisia



The workshop was organized by SIGMA, in cooperation with DG Enterprise and Industry and EuropeAid. The meeting began with a session to welcome the participants and outline the objectives of the workshop held by:

- Ms. Marie Corman, Policy Officer, Euro-Mediterranean Coordination, Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry, European Commission
- Mr. Julio Nabais, Senior Adviser, Sigma

### Which service quality and how to achieve it?

As a kick-off **Elke Loeffler (SIGMA expert)** facilitated a vision-building session that included an opportunity for participants to share their experiences.

Elke outlined that administrative simplification had different meanings for different stakeholders. The participants then took part in a group exercise for them to discuss experiences of bad service quality. The participants' highlighted experiences where they had been prevented from renewing identification cards due to problems with information in their files not being present on one sheet, despite it being on another. Another poor service highlighted was that a small business making high quality beds for hospitals cannot sell them in their home country but instead has to route them via London. This was due to commissioners preferring to enjoy a trip to another country.

When asked what their own definition of service quality was the groups developed the following definitions:



### Box 2: Definitions of service quality developed by the workshop participants

- Providing a service which is simple, swift, transparent and known to all
- Satisfaction of the customer
- Satisfying need in a good manner that keeps to specifications
- A formalised procedure that reduces cost, time, procedures and provides opportunity for redress
- Clear respect, reduced paperwork and a transparent framework
- Combination of work ethics, applying standards and clear work
- Cheap, efficient, and transparent process that achieves objectives
- Client satisfaction through new technology

The participants were then provided with several definitions of quality that have been created by various 'guru's' of quality. They included:

### Box 3: Definitions of service quality developed by 'quality gurus'<sup>1</sup>

- 'Conformance to specification' (Deming)
- 'Fitness for purpose' (Juran)
- 'Meeting or exceeding customer expectations' (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry)
- 'Bringing about a passionate emotional involvement between the customer and the service' (Pirsig)
- 'Professionals and citizens co-producing public services to achieve better outcomes which cost less' (Elinor Ostrom)

Each of these definitions has its own merits for different contexts. However, without a definition for quality there is no common language for discussion quality. Conversely, if there are too many definitions there is confusion when dialogue on quality takes place. Therefore it is paramount to agree a single definition within an organisation, discuss how to assess and assure quality, and then implement these agreements. An updated definition of quality may be warranted after the passage of time.

1 Bovaird, T. and Loeffler, E., (2009) — 'Public management and governance', Routledge, London.

### Participants’ view on the quality dimension of administrative simplification

Participants had been asked to take part in a ‘dots’ exercise upon arrival where they gave their views on the quality dimension of administrative simplification by putting a ‘dot’ on a whiteboard with statements on service quality. The main conclusions, as shown in Table 1, were as follows:

- There was strong agreement amongst participants that better service quality is central to administrative simplification
- Most participants felt that it is possible to increase quality and efficiency simultaneously.
- There was a great deal of uncertainty surrounding whether politicians are interested in service quality.
- When asked whether participants were committed to service quality but didn’t know how to measure success in achieving this there was a split in how they felt. Some felt that despite being committed to service quality they were not able to tell if they have succeeded, although a sizeable group disagreed.

**Table 1 : Participants’ views on quality dimension of administrative simplification**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Better Service Quality is a key issue of administrative simplification in my country	14	3	1	0	0
It is not possible to increase quality whilst increasing efficiency	2	2	2	2	6
Politicians are not interested in quality	0	6	8	1	0
We are committed to service quality but we do not know how to measure if we are successful	1	6	3	5	4
Citizens trust politicians to do what is good for their well being	0	2		11	9

### Panel discussion : The administrative simplification agenda for enterprises: challenges, approaches, success factors and good practice cases from EU and MED countries

This panel discussion was facilitated by **John Tatam** (SIGMA expert) and involved: **Mr. Jacob Fexer**, Policy Analyst, Private Sector Development, Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, OECD; **Mrs. Victoria Petrova**, Head of Unit SME Policy Development, DG for Enterprise and Industry, European Commission; and **Mr. Marc Canaple**, Head of Labour Law, Directorate for Studies, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Paris.

The panel discussion focussed on three key issues:

#### 1. Why is administrative simplification so complicated?

“One man’s red tape is another’s treasured procedural safeguard”<sup>2</sup> Victoria Petrova highlighted administrative simplification was a complicated process because the government had to be just and weighted in its work. What might be simplest

for business might have negative environmental or social consequences. Mrs. Petrova argued that the role of public authorities is to balance different social, environmental, and economic interests and act in a transparent and accountable manner.

“Government needs to do more”. Marc Canale argued that globalism and structural problems faced across the EU makes it a necessity to make life easier for

businesses. Mr. Canale argued in favour for allowing recourse to regulation. He warned of a fear in government that if too much simplification takes place civil servants will lose their jobs.

2 Kaufman, H., (1977) — ‘Red Tape: Uses and Abuses’, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

## 2. Where have governments been particularly successful?

**“One-stop shops are picking up speed in France.”** Marc Canale emphasized that progress has been made to simplify business procedures for SMEs in

### “One-stop shops are picking up speed in France.”

France in recent years through the creation of one-stop shops in 2010. The Guichet Unique (one-stop shop) centralises all the paperwork necessary to create any type of business. This service, accessible from the internet and physically through the *Centre des Formalités des Entreprises*, provides information on how to start a business and the administrative process to complete, an up-dated record of the position of your registration, and feedback on administrative requests.

**“The small Business Act for Europe as an area of success ...”** Victoria Petrova highlighted the imple-

### “The small Business Act for Europe as an area of success ...”

mentation of the Small Business Act for Europe as an area of success in lessening regulatory burden on SMEs. The Small Business Act is a set of 10 principles that should guided the design and implementation of policies at EU and national level. Mrs. Petrova highlighted that was a part of a series of initiatives seeking to make smarter regula-

tion (rather than removing it outright). she also highlighted that the EU is regularly consulting with EU business associations responsible for SMEs to ensure that their opinions and positions are known before a new legislation is being prepared.

**“Progress in the MENA region with company registration ...”** Jakob Fexer highlighted that the

### “Progress in the MENA region with company registration ...”

MENA region had made progress with company registration through reduced time and cost. He highlighted that in 2008 seven of the nine economies were able to deliver company registration in nine days and that in Israel and Lebanon it was possible for less than 50 Euro. Further improvements could be made through more effective use of regulatory impact assessments (RIA) in government.

## 3. What should be the top priority now in administrative simplification?

**Victoria Petrova** highlighted that transparency of processes and greater consultations with businesses were crucial. She also promoted ‘silent approval’ (if there is no response from public administration after

### ‘silent approval’ ... to be used by government.

a certain period this is taken as assent) to be used by government. Mrs. Petrova also emphasized that e-government and



one-stop shops had an important place in simplifying administrative procedures. She provided an example from a one-stop shop in Cataluña where the administration will solve the problem if it is something they are responsible for in one visit. This service is combined with an on-line checklist for what is required for registration to improve the quality and efficiency of the service provided.

**Jakob Fexer** said that introducing on-line tools for taxes, electronic systems for registration and other tools that utilised IT were options that should be used in the future. He highlighted that this would provide efficiency savings in light of budget problems.

**Marc Canale** highlighted three important steps: First the importance of putting a halt to new legislation. Second public agencies should share more information. This included the creation of a digital toolkit that would allow a company to go online so that it could mine for and find all the information it needed. Thirdly governments need to provide an advisory service for entrepreneurs who are not sure about legislation to obtain timely clarification of their queries.

#### 4. Participants' points of view

Following the panel discussion the participants were encouraged to make their view known. Here is a summary of the points made:

- a. **It is a major problem in many of the MENA countries that the government doesn't or appears unable to recognise the importance of SMEs to prosperity.**
- b. **Mechanisms of quality assurance are not good in most governments.**
- c. **Public servants have a lack of experience of business processes.**
- d. **Governments are under considerable legal pressure. Therefore they do not want to simplify procedures but instead want more assurance that they have protected themselves.**
- e. **Another problem is that it is difficult to hold public servants accountable. If there was more accountability this would provide a pressure that can be brought to bear on civil servants to improve their performance.**

The vivid debate among the participants crystallised the short-comings of administrative simplification but also an interesting strategy to move forward:

- The development of one-stop shops was almost ubiquitous in the MENA region. However, the participants' experiences with them led them to question the extent to which they help business. **These one-stop shops allow the naming of a company in a short period of time but the process of gaining a license can often take longer and it is the**



goal of a company to begin trading rather than just get a name. Participants also highlighted that one-stop shops are often implemented regionally which can lead to difficulties when processes are not harmonised across the country. The participants also highlighted that coordination was often lacking within the administration behind the one-stop shops. This fragmentation and segmentation result in confusion and agitation for businesses and administration.

- The participants also highlighted that although there had been a strong concentration in the MENA nations on creating new start ups, **there needs to be more done to ensure the sustainability of these companies through government investments and access to finance.**
- Participants also emphasized that **staff are often not in favour of simplification strategies as this represents change.** From their experience the delegations were unanimous in their belief that managing personnel and accounting for the human dimension were crucial to the success of their strategies.
- **Julio Nabais highlighted the interest for countries to use a general law on administrative procedures** that would provide general and common standards across the country. Alongside this Julio recommended for reviews of all procedures in place to be undertaken. This would allow for public agencies to remove or streamline procedures that are not required. He highlighted that this was taking place in the Balkans in countries such as Croatia, and that general laws already existed in countries such as Germany, Portugal and Italy.

## Starting the quality journey: defining objectives, performance indicators and targets for administrative simplification

Before the presentation of specific quality assurance systems Elke Loeffler stressed that any quality assurance system needs to be embedded in a sound performance management framework consisting of:

- **Objectives** which are general aspirations to be accomplished.
- **Performance indicators** which are variable that allow an organisation to measure how close they are to reaching their objective.
- **Targets** which specify the desired change by a quantity to be achieved within a specific time frame.

Targets should be 'smart': Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (or time-related).

Participants were invited to take part in an exercise to provide examples of objectives, performance indicators and targets related to their work which was done with great enthusiasm.



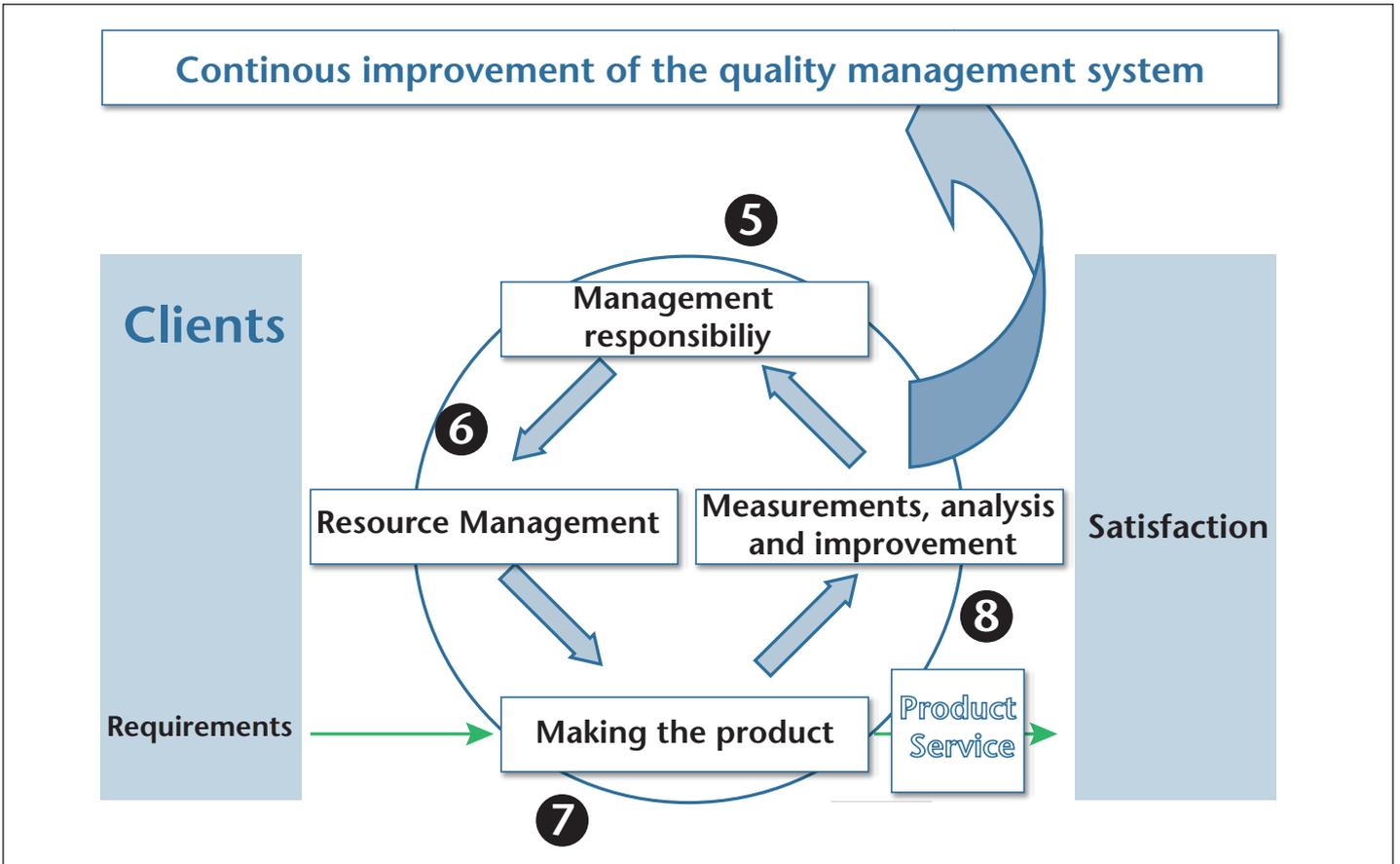


Figure 1 – ISO Model

**Using ‘quality’ tools effectively (1): Improving processes with ISO 9001**

Gilles Chevalier (SIGMA expert) gave a presentation outlining the ISO 9001 quality standards. Mr Chevalier emphasized the importance of beginning any effort to improve service quality by ensuring that an organisation knows who their clients are.

The ISO 9001 standard promotes a process-based approach for quality assurance. For organisations to operate efficiently, they need to establish and manage interconnected activities. These constitute a process, as they use resources, which are transformed into outputs.

The ISO 9001 standards use the Deming Cycle of continuous improvement (a method also known as Plan-Do-Check-Act (Figure 2). Mr. Chevalier discussed the cycle, beginning with the management responsibility to define what an organisation is trying to achieve (objectives). This requires resources to deliver a product or service. Once the product or service is produced, the organisation needs to measure

to what extent the key stakeholders are satisfied with the product/service.

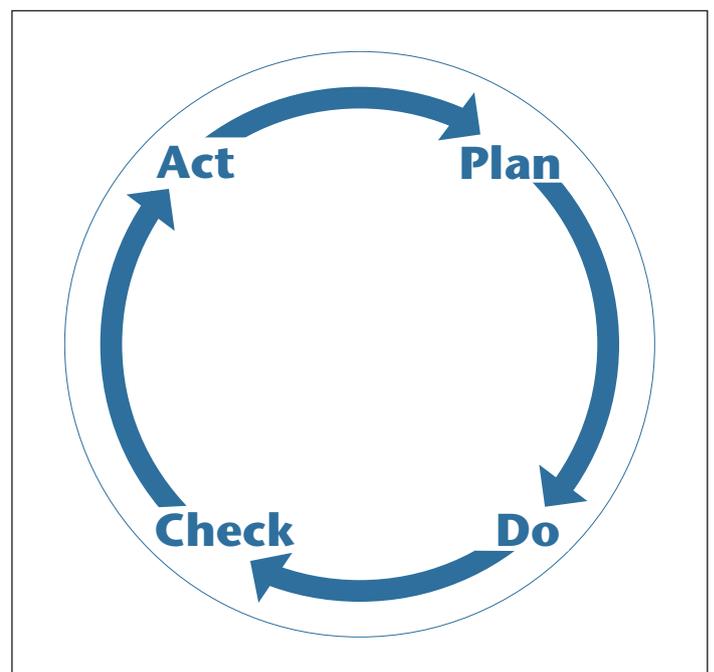


Figure 2 – Deming Cycle

ISO can be used to develop a new way of viewing services as the ISO 9001 standards involve the need to map vertical as well as horizontal processes (e.g. through the use of flow-charts). As a result, staff learn to regard colleagues who come next in the internal service process chain as 'internal customers'. The ISO 9001 standards can be used both for internal audits and external audits. Where an organisation is striving for an external ISO certification, the following steps are involved:

- documentation of organisational processes;
- internal audit of quality processes which check whether the actual processes correspond to the documentation, and;
- external audit of quality processes by an external ISO assessor.

However, Mr. Chevalier stressed that the ISO 9001 manual was not just for external accreditation – it can also be used as a simple check list within an organisation to assess whether real processes correspond to the documentation.

## Using quality tools effectively (2): Seeing quality with the eyes of the customer through feedback mechanisms

Obviously, the purpose of ISO 9001 is to improve customer satisfaction. Therefore, the subsequent session focused on methods to get customer feedback.

Elke Loeffler began this session with a question to the participants – **what do most elderly people with visual impairments need most?** This was to highlight how often public authorities think that they know what people want, but in reality that they can be wide of the mark. Elke illustrated this point by highlighting a study from the University of Birmingham by Willis and Dunstan on what public sector staff thought elderly people need most and what elderly people really want. 64% of public sector staff thought that elderly people most wanted more information about public services to them, and 54% felt they want more information about support in case elderly people need help. However, in reality 91% of elderly people want to know more people and de-



velop friendships, 62% want to talk with somebody about personal issues<sup>3</sup>.

There are multiple methods for gaining insights such as: complaints management and suggestion schemes; satisfaction surveys; focus groups; customer journey mapping; and citizen panels to name a few.

### Measuring progress in the Euro Mediterranean Charter for Enterprises

Mr Jakob Fexer closed the first day with a presentation on the policy assessment undertaken in the nine economies of the MED region that took place in a partnership with stakeholders from these economies and the OECD; EC; European Training Foundation; and European Investment Bank. This pilot project involved a cross-dimensional assessment across 10 policy areas that affect the life-cycle of a company. It

was focused primarily on policies that emanated from central government. The project sought to provide a comprehensive and analytical enterprise policy assessment across 77 indicators based on the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise (see Box 1).

The dimensions that were analysed regarding simple procedures are shown in Figure 3.

The overall assessment results published in 2008 indicated a process of convergence towards the charter’s policy guidelines is advancing across the region, albeit at different paces. Progress had been most pronounced in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia. Algeria and Syria were at the early stages of transition towards horizontal enterprise policy. Political instability and conflict was regarded to have hindered Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority from making progress. Results highlighted that Israel had a well developed and structured enterprise policy.

In making reforms to enable simple procedures for enterprises the assessment found that most MED countries have the building block in place for en-

3 Willis, M. and Dunstan, E. 2009 – University of Birmingham, <http://tinyurl.com/8xcbcgp>

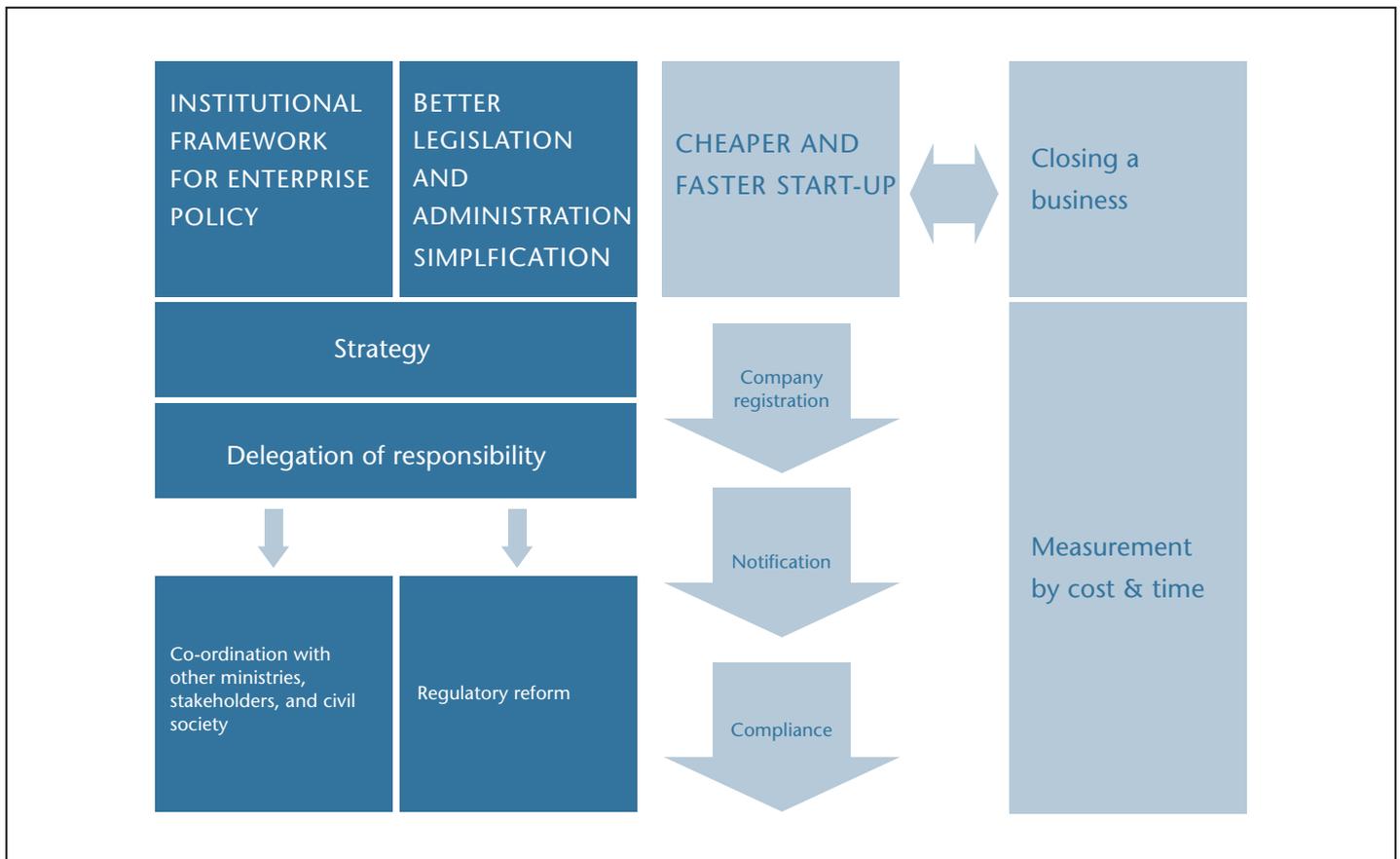


Figure 3 – Simple procedures for businesses

terprise policy. Mr. Fexer concluded that despite the challenges that the project had presented that its participatory approach and fostering of learning and exchange amongst these nations meant that it must be continued to help these nations develop coherent enterprise strategies.

## What is administrative simplification and good practices from OECD countries

**Miriam Allam (OECD/GOV)** gave an overall outline of what OECD countries are doing to promote administrative simplification. Most OECD countries have developed 'whole of government' national programmes seeking to reduce administrative burdens and embedded the removal of red tape in policy making process as part of wider modernisation and reforms of public administration. These nations have also developed and utilised measurement mechanisms to evaluate current strategies effectiveness in meeting objectives and to evaluate the impact and benefit of these strategies in the public interest. Linked to this has been the setting of targets towards enabling simplification. For example the Lisbon Strategy launched a joint strategy between the European Commission and EU member states to reduce the administrative burden on companies from existing regulation by 25% by 2012. This reduction has been estimated to create an increase of 1.4% in EU GDP<sup>4</sup>. OECD countries have also engaged each other to share successful methodologies. This has included sharing information of cost models that are used to quantify costs and benefits both ex-ante and ex-post. These countries have also created independent advisory boards to act as watchdogs monitoring assessing initiatives of the government and progress towards meeting targets.

Ms. Allam then highlighted two best practice examples – The Netherlands and Denmark. The Netherlands is a world leader in reducing administrative burdens. It was able to make the 25% reduction of administrative burdens in 2007.

## Box 4: The 'Dutch model' for successful administrative simplification

1. **Developing and using a method for measuring total administrative burden**, and mapping the distribution of burdens on individual regulations and ministries. The so-called Standard Cost Model (SCM) has since been taken on by other countries and the EC. The model enables targeting of the most onerous of regulations and monitoring the development of overall levels of administrative burden. Ms. Allam outlined that the standard cost model can be worked out as:

$$\text{Activity Cost} = \text{Price} \times \text{Quantity}$$

$$\text{Activity Cost} = (\text{tariff} \times \text{time}) \times (\text{population} \times \text{frequency}).$$

Tariff would equal the cost to business (hourly wage). Time would involve the number of working hours taken over a procedure. Population would mean the number of businesses the procedure affected. Frequency would mean the number of times this procedure had to be complied with. For example if the administrative activity takes 4 hours (time) to complete and the hourly wage of the member of staff is €12 (tariff). The price is  $4 \times €12 = €48$ . If this requirement applied to 125,000 businesses (population) and had to be complied with 4 times a year, creating a quantity of 500,000. Therefore the total cost of the procedure is  $€48 \times 500,000 = €24,000,000$ .

2. **Establishing quantitative targets.** These targets were ambitious and timebound. This target was widely communicated which meant that the government accepted to be held accountable to failure. The target was also shared amongst ministries which helped make it a strong catalysts for steering and monitoring simplification strategies across the government.
3. **A strong coordinating unit at the heart of government:** The inter-ministerial project team at the Ministry of Finance provided coherent coordination of the programme across the administration, and ensuring consistency in methodology and reporting.
4. **Independent review body:** that acted as an independent watchdog that monitored progress towards meeting targets and assessing individual ministries. The review body also assisted ministries with independent and horizontal advice on ways and means to strengthen the programme.

4 Commission of the European Communities (2007) – 'Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the European Union'. [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/smart-regulation/files/com\\_2007\\_23\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/smart-regulation/files/com_2007_23_en.pdf)

5. **A link to the budget cycle:** led to unavoidable deadlines for reporting and ensured that the programme would repeatedly come under the attention of Cabinet and Parliament.
6. **Strong political support:** The administrative burden reduction programme had clear and sustained support from the cabinet, its responsible minister, parliament, and relevant civil society organisations. The support helped prevent the programme from being politicised or slowed down.<sup>5</sup>

Ms. Allam also highlighted that Denmark was also a great example of an effective government strategy to make administration processes simpler for businesses. The Danish government set the target of a 25% reduction to be reached by the end of 2010. The result of its strategy was a 24.6% reduction. The goal of the Danish government was not to de-regulate but to regulate smarter with less burdens for businesses.

#### Box 5: Key features of the Danish administrative simplification strategy

- **Simplification of existing regulation:** Through action plans for simplification from individual ministries that was fed into an overall government action plan. Like the Dutch the Danish government used a SCM updates to focus action plans with yearly SCM updates of progress.
- **Better new regulation:** all legislation with administrative burdens exceeding 10,000 hours a year had to undergo greater scrutiny by the Economic Committee that like in the case of the Dutch Ministry of Finance coordinated the overall strategy. This new rule was a powerful signal to law makers and the threat of critique provided strong incentive to ensure legislation didn't exceed this limit. This helped create a culture change with administrative burdens being taken more seriously.
- **Better regulation at the EU level:** The Danish government has put together a strong coordination system for dealing with negotiations of EU regulations and their transposition. This maximises the influence of the country in the EU arena.

5 More information on this can be found in – OECD (2007) – 'Cutting Red Tape: Administrative Simplification in the Netherlands'

- **Use of E-government:** the Danish government created Virk.dk this allows reduction of costs by allowing business to use more digital solutions. Virk.dk provides a single entrance to the public sector giving an overview of public sector information to businesses, and access to all state and local level business forms.
- **Better communication to stakeholders and target groups:** this helps to make sure that qualitative dimensions of the effects of burdens that may not be shown through quantitative performance indicators are heard and fed into the work of the administration.
- **User driven innovation:** A 'Burden Hunter' project that emphasizes the experience of enterprises when satisfying demands imposed by regulations. This helps to provide a qualitative that can highlight how other factors than just expenditure of time can be regarded as a burden.<sup>6</sup>

Ms Allam then highlighted a selection of common technical barriers that act to prevent Governments from simplifying administrative procedures.

Ms. Allam concluded by emphasizing that a better public administration that is responsive to the needs of citizens and businesses: improved institutional procedures; had clear policies and political commitment; developed a new culture of regulatory management; clarified and improved the legibility of legislation; introduced new tools and practices (such as the SCM, one-stop shops, user-driven innovation, and digital technology); and promoted efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.

#### Using quality tools effectively (3): Improving organisational quality through the Common Assessment Framework

Ana Andrade (SIGMA expert) continued the quality journey by introducing the participants to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) shown in Figure 4. This framework enables public agencies to undertake an organisational self-assessment based on a comprehensive set of questions. CAF subscribes to the fundamental concepts of the European Foun-

6 More information can be found in – OECD (2010) – 'Better Regulation in Europe: Denmark'

dation for Quality Management but Ms. Andrade emphasized that CAF was lighter and easier to apply. The CAF has been used in over 20 languages and 40 countries – the full language versions can be downloaded at [www.eipa.nl](http://www.eipa.nl)

It aims to improve the performance of organisations through promoting:

- Results orientation
- Customer focus
- Leadership
- Management by facts
- Involvement of staff
- Continuous improvement and innovation
- Partnership working
- Corporate social responsibility.

Ana Andrade recommended carrying out self-assessments based on the CAF in ten steps. They are:

1. Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment
2. Communicate the self-assessment project
3. Compose one or more self-assessment groups
4. Organise staff training
5. Undertake the self-assessment
6. Draw up a report describing the results of self-assessment
7. Draft an improvement plan based on key priorities of the improvement proposals

8. Communicate the improvement plan
9. Implement the improvement plan
10. Plan the next self-assessment.

In organising the assessment process it is crucial to get the buy-in of senior management to implement the improvement plan.

### Using quality tools effectively (4): Improving customer orientation through service charters

**John Tatam (SIGMA expert)** presented service charters as a tool to improve public services by starting with the point of view of the customer. A service charter is a public document that sets out the standards of service users can expect from an organisation, and the redress action that customers can expect if standards are not met. Service charters help organisations to communicate quality standards they already meet to the public but also help to manage expectations of key target groups.

A high quality service charter has clear information on who is eligible, when and where the service is available, and pre-requisites required to receive the service (such as providing specific documents). There must also be a standards commitment on the level and quality of service commitment. For example this could include a commitment on the maximum time in which a service is delivered. A system of redress

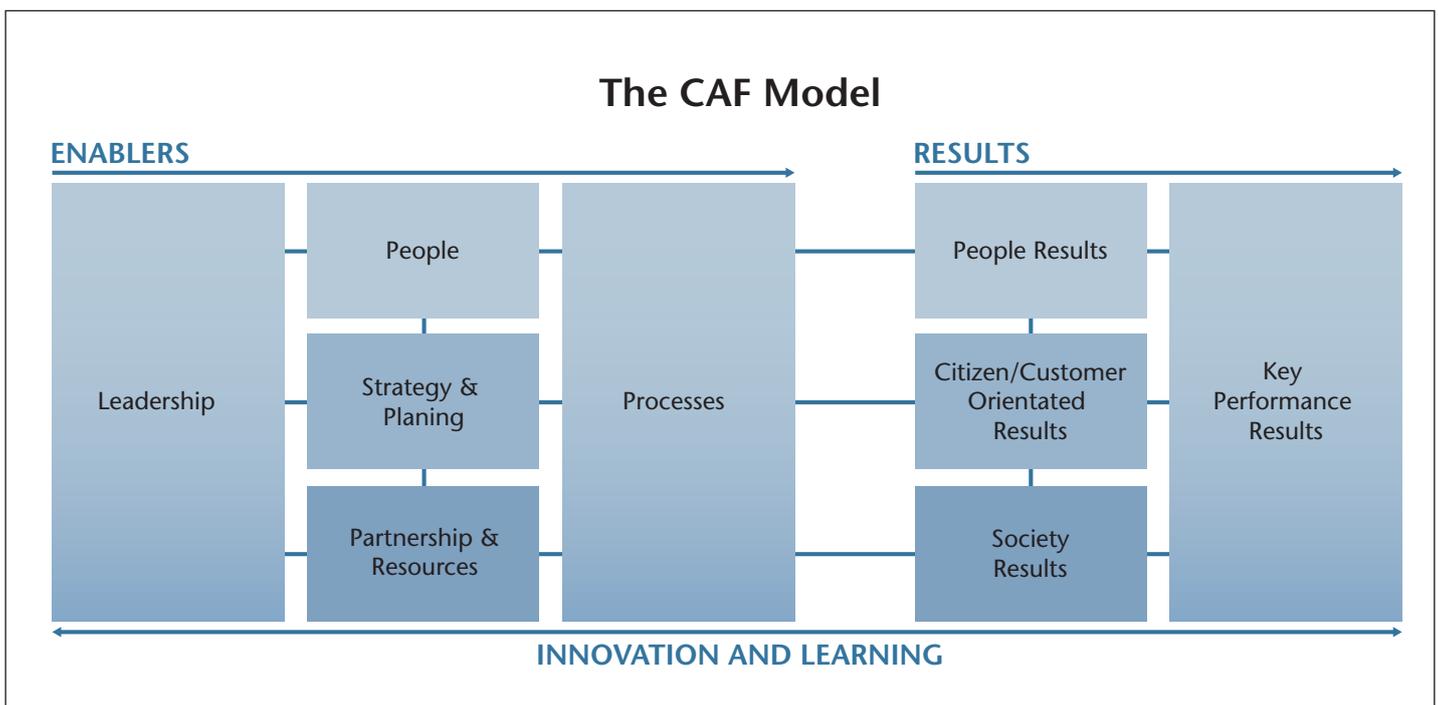


Figure 4 – Key dimensions of the CAF

must also be included in case the service provider falls short of promised standards, and this can include some form of compensation if this occurs.

John Tatam showcased an example of a service charter, of particular relevance to the participants on licensing services at Broxtowe Council in the UK.

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### Box 6: Charter of Broxtowe Council for Licensing Services

#### Our Commitment To You

The Council is committed to listening and responding to provide efficient and effective services to both residents and non-residents alike. In dealing with the Council you will be dealt with in a courteous and professional manner at all times and can be assured of equal treatment.

As a practical demonstration of our commitment, the Council has produced a number of customer Service Standards, which represent our pledge to you.

#### What You Can Expect From Us:

- You will be sent a full reply to your correspondence or a written acknowledgement within 7 calendar days of receipt.
- We ensure applications received are dealt with as speedily as possible and maintain up to date records.
- We will process applications and issue licences within the statutory timescale.
- We will keep a help line open during office hours on telephone number 0115 917 7777 extension 3241 or 3281 for all enquiries and the giving of advice or help with any licensing problems.
- We will operate an efficient and cost effective licensing service.
- We will maintain comprehensive records and information to ensure licenses are renewed on time and send reminders to renew licenses in ample time to receive an early response from the applicant.
- We will inform license holders of any change in the legislation or conditions of licenses and liaise with associations by way of consulting whenever appropriate.

#### How You Can Help Us:

- To enable us to process your applications within the required statutory timetables we need your

co-operation and it would be helpful if you could bear the following points in mind.

- Please submit your application in good time so that the document can be processed quickly, remembering that other authorities may have to be consulted on the application.
- Please ensure that you complete applications fully so that there is no delay in clarifying omissions.
- Please advise us of any changes of address or circumstances so that records can be kept up to date.
- Please ensure that you keep any appointment made for you at the time arranged. Failure to do so results in a waste of resources.
- Please treat our employees with courtesy – they are trying to help you.

#### What Happens If Things Go Wrong:

The Council is proud of its customer service record and if for any reason you feel it has not complied with this Standard please let us know in the first instance by contacting our complaints service.<sup>7</sup>

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John Tatam stressed that charters only drive performance improvement if they are more than a meaningless piece of paper hanging on office walls. As this applies to all quality tools service charters need the commitment of senior managers. However, they can be a powerful mechanism to increase customer orientation if they are implemented properly<sup>8</sup>.

### Define priorities for better service quality and administrative simplification in your country

Finally Elke Loeffler asked the participants to reflect on lessons learnt during the two-day workshops and to think about next steps to be taken. The participants defined the following priorities to improve service quality and administrative simplification in their countries:

- 
- 7 Broxtowe Borough Council –Licensing services, (<http://www.broxtowe.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=652>)
  - 8 Elke Loeffler, Salvador Parrado and Tomás Zmeskal (2007) – *Improving customer orientation through service charters: a handbook for improving quality of public services*. Paris: OECD, Ministry of the interior of the Czech Republic and Governance International (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/10/38370028.pdf>)

## BELebanon

- Very interested in looking at putting time constraints on processes to create incentives to act in a timely fashion, taking what they had learnt about indicators to help them analyse data and use this to move towards excellence of service.
- Seriously consider where to use tools such as feedback mechanisms, ISO standards, Common Assessment Framework, or service charters for relevant areas to improve service quality.

## Algeria

- Creating a list of documents that are required and should be available for registration and provision of a license. This should be jargon free, and enable businesses to have basic information that can make their jobs easier.
- In Algeria there has been a 500 strong stakeholder consultation with the recommendations hopefully being implemented.
- Need to provide greater technical support to businesses. One example they are looking to roll out is the government financing of 50 percent of expertise support. Eligibility is tied to a scoring system to ensure that quality enterprises receive funding.

## Morocco

- Train civil servants across departments to ensure systems for improvement are constantly updated and implemented
- Reduce the number of paper-based processes and increase the number of virtual services. These will take place as part of fundamental process reengineering which will bring clearer answers-> less time -> less paperwork. Move the process online to lighten the workload and to outline the processes before they go to a government office – when a suggestion was made by a Sigma expert for this to be designed collaboratively with SMEs the group were very positive that they would pilot this.

## Israel

- The key priority is for greater focus and measurement of outcomes.
- Co-production of monitoring and using each other's knowledge and capabilities
- Focus on better regulation and the use of the standard cost model
- Training and consultations with staff to ensure fundamental organisational change.
- Government needs to satisfy its clients, and increase trust through greater transparency, and being able to optimise wealth generation opportunities

## Tunisia

- Optimise process through evaluation
- Communicate more effectively through a network in order to get to know what the other's needs are.
- Within public administration ensure that all departments work on the same criteria so that they all know where they are (benchmarking).

## Jordan

- Greater communication between public and private sectors, but also public-public dialogue is just as important.
- Key change to ensure performance will be institutionalising Deming's Plan, Do, Check, Act -> it's necessary to improve monitoring and indicator sets to allow this to take place.
- Ensure that there is continuity and sustainability in how government departments interact.

## Palestine

- Adopt an organisational charter to provide quality services
- Ensure quick setup and oblige government to provide all information that can help business in these processes.
- The top levels need to report on success to explain how important that it is, and that it is possible

## Agenda for the next workshop

**Edward Donelan (SIGMA)** consulted with the participants on useful themes for the next workshop which will focus on regulatory reform. Participants highlighted that case studies on these reforms could be used to compare and contrast reform strategies. There was also a lot of interest in service standards and e-government solutions for administrative simplification.

**Julio Nabais (SIGMA)** summarised the key issues discussed during the two-day seminar and thanked the participants for their energy, active participation and excellent networking during the two days. Marie Corman (DG Enterprise and Industry) outlined the next events on administrative simplification and also thanked everybody contributing the workshop which was truly co-produced by all stakeholders involved.

Further details can be obtained from **Julio Nabais, SIGMA Adviser**

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