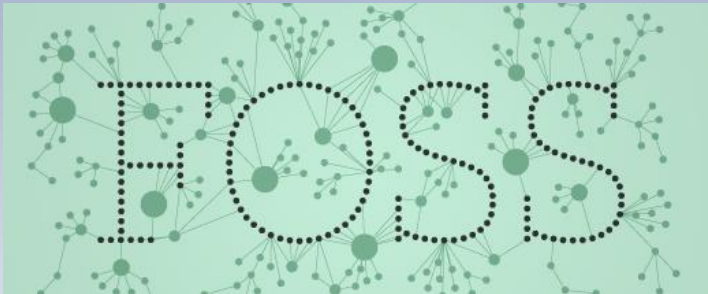# FOSS in Government

Opportunities & Challenges

Nahed Azab
The American University in Cairo

FOSS in Government … Why?

- Government should be the initiator
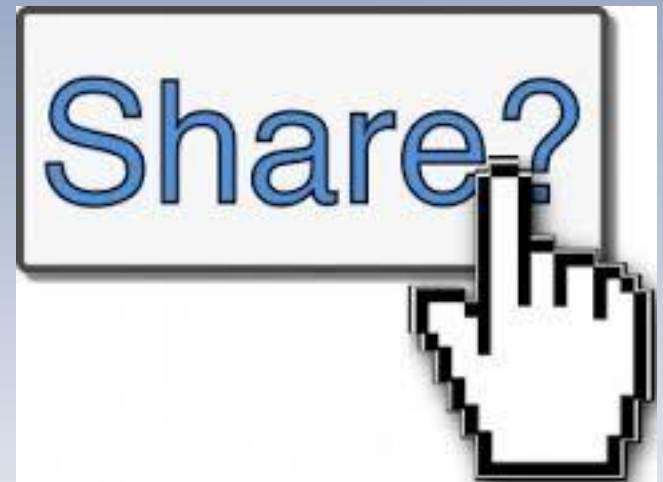- Address e-government challenges

FOSS in Government ... Why?

- Easy access to government services and information

- Towards safety of public and personal data

- Open standards
  - Knowledge sharing
  - Reliable information
  - Sustainability
  - Business process improvement

FOSS in Gov.

Open Government

- Freedom of Information
- Citizen engagement in public policy making
- Crowd sourcing
- Public monitoring

FOSS in Gov.

Critical Success Factors

Communication

People

Change Management

Policies

CSF

Localization

Leadership

Sustainability

FOSS in Gov.

FOSS in Government … Is It "*One Size Fits All*"?

- **Malaysia:** (1st nation by 2020, OSS maturity model, pilot projects, knowledge bank, OSS on both server & client sides, OSS applications developed locally)

- **South Africa:** (aggressive migration strategy, open content, incompatible custom-made applications, wrong assessment)

- **United Kingdom**: (NHS, library services, CIO council, create an OS profession, agreements with IT suppliers on opened software, consider government a one large entity, established a website to get citizens' feedback on FOSS strategy, license reuse, standardization kit)

FOSS in Gov.

FOSS in Government … Is It "*One Size Fits All*"?

- **India:** (boost software industry as a foreign exchange earner; recommend Linux use in government; no FOSS strategy or specific legislations; successful implementation in some Indian states: Linux in schools, treasury management, citizen facilitation centers, land records management systems; support by Indian figures; FOSS developed in 22 Indian languages)

- **United States of America:** (a pioneer country since 1980s; policies issued on the state level permitting (considering or favoring) FOSS acquisition, development and use; DOD encourages its various branches to consider open source; supply & demand rather than strict policies)

FOSS in Gov.

FOSS in Government … Is It "*One Size Fits All*"?

- **Australia**: (policy of informed neutrality & value of money, Justification for FOSS opting out, strategy execution instructions for top management, Loose implementation, priorities: better service, improve government operations, engaging openly, qualitative results)

- **Brazil:** (developed its own version of Linux; vital systems are FOSS-based; FOSS reasons: economic, developmental, ideological, "*anti-Americanism*", "*anti-globalization*", "*anti-capitalism*"; FOSS adopted by: the army, the main data processing entity at the government, Postal Service, state oil company, state-owned Bank, National Statistics Agency; project to convert 80% of departments' computers from Windows to Linux; presidential decree to enforce FOSS to all Brazilian federal departments; huge training & research funds; local government involvement)

FOSS in Gov.

First Steps …

1. Identify a responsible body
2. Project selection
   o Feasibility (resources, business processes, partners, etc.)
   o TCO
   o Reusability
   o Interoperability
   o Migration measures & risks

FOSS in Gov.

Challenges

- Culture of sharing
- Data integration
- Fear of change
- Business process change
- Privacy
- Limited resources
- Wrong expectations
- Vague implementation plans

FOSS in Gov.

Thank You!