

Involving Users in the Early Stage of New Product Development in Public Sector Living Labs: The Case of Ministry Of Supply and Internal Trade in Egypt

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Abstract. One of the main challenges affecting the introduction of a new public service in Egypt is the distance between the government and the service users namely the Citizens. The Egyptian government doesn't have enough resources to carry out tailored user studies and has no mechanism to support the adoption of new ideas. Therefore, the main question was how can we bridge the gap between the government and their users (citizens) or in other words how can we involve users in the new products and services development process? This paper presents one of the earliest researches conducted in the field of living labs in Egypt. It employs qualitative research methods to present successful experience of user involvement in the early stage of new product development at the Egyptian

Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade. When the living labs context was applied, users were able to strongly impact all phases of development process by introducing a huge number of ideas within the idea generation phase, evaluating the collected ideas and finally selecting the best idea through online voting platform. Users were also able to participate effectively in the evaluation and testing of primary designs and prototypes and were enthusiastic to see their own ideas transform into final products and services. User involvement in the project had a positive effect on user satisfaction and on new products and services acceptance. Finally, Top management adoption of the project had a positive effect on the success of the whole process.