Youth4Governance

Restoring Statecraft, Rebuilding Trust

6/24/2025

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Executive Summary (1/2)

In 2025, the Youth for Governance (Y4G) program worked closely with Lebanon's Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) to support the successful execution of the long-delayed municipal elections. These elections represented a pivotal moment in demonstrating a return to State delivery and rebuilding citizens' trust in public institutions.

The Y4G team supported MoIM across legal, operational, and digital tracks. A legal study scoped the mandate of the Central Operations Room, focusing on its coordination and oversight role. Additionally, a centralized complaints management system was introduced for effective logging, tracking, and escalation of citizen and polling staff inquiries, allowing for quick response time, traceability and transparency.

A 24/7 chatbot was launched to capture FAQs and swiftly address citizens' questions, reducing the volume of calls and complaints and enhancing public accessibility. To further support MoIM's oversight capabilities, interactive dashboards were developed, enabling the analysis of complaint patterns and facilitating strategic decision-making. Concurrently, a media monitoring system was established to accurately capture and respond to public sentiment and emerging electoral issues.

Executive Summary (2/2)

Learning from the electoral operations and needs, Y4G introduced pilot AI agents to support internal activities, compensating for staff limitations and improving the Ministry's overall efficiency. This technology can be further developed and enhanced to be deployed and embedded within the ministry's processes and 2026 elections.

Building on a successful electoral experience, Y4G proposes comprehensive recommendations to ensure long-term governance improvements. These recommendations are structured around strategic pillars that include clarifying and updating legal frameworks, developing robust operational coordination processes, enhancing institutional knowledge retention, fostering innovation through digital transformation, taking a proactive risk management approach, building capacity, and consolidating strategic communication plans.

Ultimately, the Y4G program recommends a whole-of-government approach, emphasizing collective institutional responsibility in improving voter engagement and strengthening citizen trust. The success of the 2025 municipal elections provides Lebanon with a foundational model of electoral governance, transforming temporary solutions into resilient and sustainable institutional practices, moving from voter skepticism towards renewed democratic confidence.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities staff. Behind the scenes, we witnessed their energy, commitment, and professionalism, quietly and tirelessly working to bring democracy to life. Their efforts were the driving force behind this success.

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01

Youth4Governance

The Youth4Governance

Initiated in 2021 by USJ alumni & Siren, Youth4Governance is a State building program where students implement projects within public institutions to support efficiency, accountability, and innovation.

From Crisis Management to public Management

28 students conducted a perception study surveying opinions among the general public, civil servants, and **Central Inspection** staff on Lebanese public administration.

Click **here** for the full report.

The free fall into new Forms of poverty

42 students performed a survey across Lebanon to assess the reach of the ongoing Emergency **Social Safety Net** project in Lebanon.

Click **here** for the full report.

The Cliffhanger

30 students were mobilized to reconstitute the **Traffic Management Office (Nefaa)** as a model of good governance, fiscal responsibility, and public service delivery.

Click **here** for the full report.

The Silent Giant

15 students worked with the **Ministry of Environment** to enhance quarry oversight through legal reform, AI tools, and digital dues collection systems.

Click **here** for the full report.

Y4G 2025: Governance in Motion

In 2025, Y4G's mission was to assist the Ministry of Interior organizing Lebanon's long-postponed municipal elections. The mission: transform a moment of institutional urgency into a live demonstration of governance in motion.

Context

The 2025 municipal elections were more than a vote; they were a real-time test of Lebanon's governance infrastructure. Behind every ballot was a logistical chain, a legal procedure, and a coordination mechanism. Y4G supported the Ministry to help build and stress-test these systems, translating democratic theory into institutional action.

Mission

Help the Ministry of Interior meet a high-stakes national moment by enabling agile planning, digital execution, and policy-to-practice transformation within the system.

Methodology

Policy Meets Engineering: Each team combined legal researchers and developers to co-design digital tools rooted in institutional logic ensuring that every dashboard, chatbot, and tool wasn't just usable, but actionable within the elections.

Agile Structuring, Institutional Anchoring: While anchored within public institutions, the team operated with agility, building prototypes, testing, and iterating to learn from a changing reality.

Field Engagement at MoIM: Interns and supervisors worked directly from the Ministry's premises, including during election operations. This proximity allowed the teams to better support the MoIM in the election preparation process.

02

Introduction

Lebanon’s Operational Nerve Center

The MoIM established in 1943, holds a structurally unique position within the Lebanese state, combining oversight of local governance, identity systems, as well as internal and border security under one institution.

Statecraft Since Day One
Established in 1943 with Lebanon’s first post-independence cabinet, the Ministry has been at the heart of state continuity for over 80 years. Since then, 66 ministers have rotated through a portfolio that combines security, civil order, and local governance.

Reengineered to Govern Locally
In 2000, a pivotal reform Decree 4082 (based on Law 247) officially renamed the Ministry (previously named as Ministry of Interior) and redrew its map. The change wasn’t cosmetic: it was structural. The Ministry’s mandate expanded beyond public order to include direct oversight over Lebanon’s entire local governance architecture; from governorates down to mokhtars.

Core Domains of The Ministry

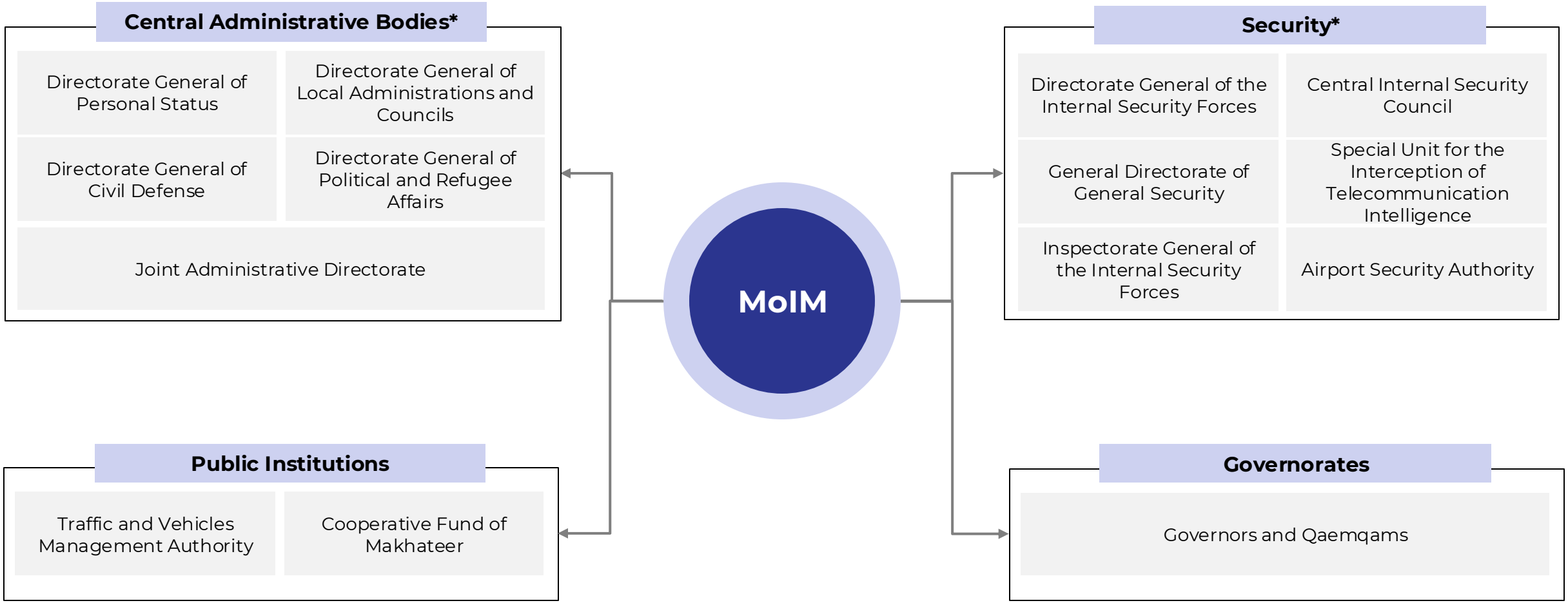
Security
Ensures public order and internal security through coordination of police, civil defense, border control and crisis response mechanisms.

Identity
Administers civil status, population registries, and national documentation managing the legal identity of citizens and residents.

Local Governance Oversight
Supervises Lebanon’s entire local governance framework from municipalities and unions to electoral operations and municipal financing.

The Ministry's Institutional Organization

The MoIM supervises a broad institutional network spanning administrative directorates, security agencies, operational authorities, and regional governance.



Core Administrative Directorates in the MoIM

The Ministry of Interior operates through five specialized directorates that collectively anchor the state's ability to deliver civil services, manage crises, and oversee local governance.

Directorate General of Personal Status	Directorate General of Civil Defense	Directorate General of Local Administrations and Councils	Directorate General of Political and Refugee Affairs	Joint Administrative Directorate
Responsible for civil status affairs, nationality, and population statistics	Responsible for responding to emergencies and disasters, minimizing harm to people and property, and ensuring the continuity of public life nationwide	Responsible for implementing local governance laws, supporting municipalities, local councils, reviewing municipal decisions, and promoting citizen participation in local development	Responsible for overseeing all stages of the electoral process, developing elements of internal policy and associations, and addressing refugee affairs	Responsible for managing administrative, financial, legal, and ministerial correspondence functions, including staff affairs, budgeting, legal advisory, media and public relations, and oversight of private security companies
Civil Registry & Population Data Management	Emergency Response & Disaster Management	Local Governance & Municipal Oversight	Electoral Management & Refugee Affairs	Administrative Governance & Internal Operations

Core Security Entities and their roles

The MoIM oversees a multifaceted security structure balancing law enforcement, intelligence, border control, and national coordination.

Directorate General of the Internal Security Forces	
Public Order & Law Enforcement	Responsible for maintaining security and order, enforcing laws, supporting justice, and protecting public institutions, prisons and diplomatic missions nationwide

Directorate General of the Internal Security Forces	
Intelligence & Border Control	Responsible for information analysis, security and judicial investigation support, border and foreign national management, media oversight, and technical services

Inspectorate General of the Internal Security Forces	
Internal Oversight and Integrity	Responsible for monitoring ISF conduct, investigating complaints, and promoting institutional integrity and human rights

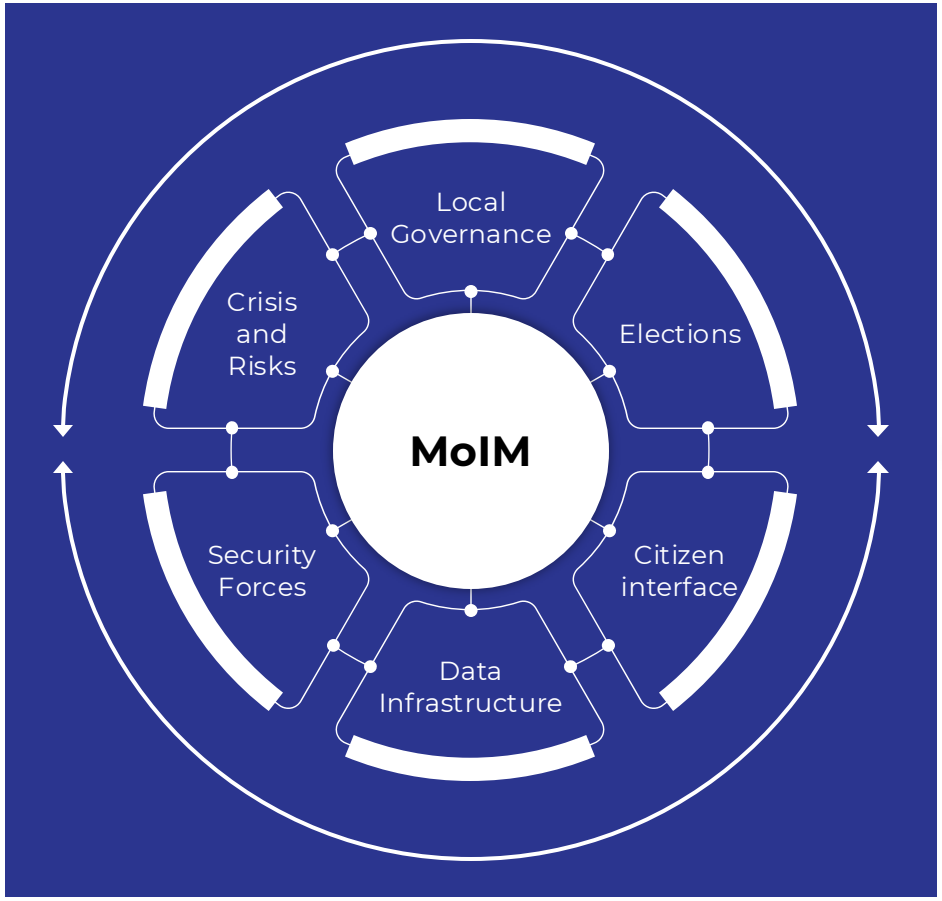
Airport Security Authority	
Border & Critical Infrastructure Protection	Responsible for securing Beirut–Rafic Hariri International Airport through a joint force of all armed forces personnel

Central Internal Security Council	
National Security Coordination	Responsible for interagency coordination, information sharing, and joint decision-making on national security issues

Central Internal Security Council	
Surveillance & Communication Security	Responsible for authorized phone interception and recording through a specialized unit under the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities

The MoIM's Multilayered Authority

The MoIM operates as the state's backbone, merging territorial reach, institutional control, and data authority into one continuous system. Its layered mandate allows it to operate across administrative, territorial, and functional levels.



Territorial Layer

Administrative presence across all governorates, cazas, and municipalities. The MoIM extends the central state's authority into every region through governors, qa'emmaqams, and municipal oversight.

Societal Layer

Acts as the daily point of contact between the state and the public. Handles personal status, permits, and interfaces with citizens, refugees, residents, civil society organizations and private sector.

Temporal Layer

Ensures continuity of state function across routine operations, election cycles, crises, and transitions.

Informational Layer

Holds and governs strategic state datasets: identity, vehicles, municipal records, and electoral information; enabling both service delivery and national-level policy planning.

Centralized Delivery of Local Democracy

From ballot printing to security coordination, the MoIM organizes Lebanon's most decentralized elections through centralized processes.

Central Planner and Legal Authority

The MoIM holds the legal mandate to organize municipal elections. It sets the electoral calendar by decree, defines the legal parameters for candidate eligibility, and supervises the registration and validation of municipal lists through its regional governance directorates.

Operational Coordinator

MoIM coordinates a nationwide operation spanning 1065 municipalities. It mobilizes human resources across the public sector, assigns electoral officials, secures logistical chains for ballot and box distribution, and activates coordination with multiple agencies to secure voting days.

Electoral Field Supervisor

Through governors, kaemakam, and municipal officers, the MoIM ensures direct oversight of polling station setup, staff presence, and compliance with procedures. It provides field guidance and escalation paths for incidents, maintaining coherence between central instructions and local execution.

Incident Monitoring and Rapid Response

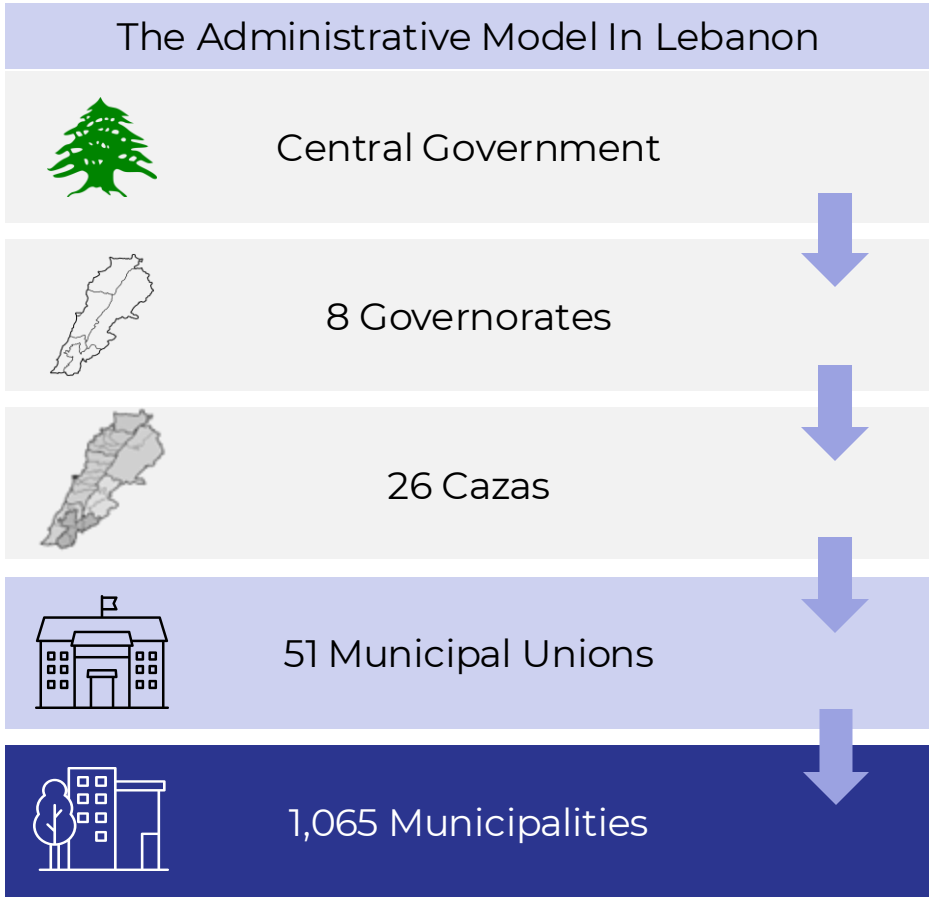
Runs a central coordination room that monitors field conditions in real time, escalates issues via the 1766 hotline, and activates protocolled response teams where needed.

Layered Governance: Lebanon's Centralized-Decentralized Model

Lebanon adopts a mixed model combining deconcentration at the governorate and caza levels with decentralization at the municipal level extending the state's administrative footprint across five tiers.

Lebanon's public administration is structured around five interconnected tiers:

- **The Central Government** sets national policy, oversees public institutions, and coordinates inter-ministerial functions.
- **Governorates** serve as the intermediate regional layer, headed by appointed governors who coordinate between central ministries and local actors.
- **Cazas** operate as sub-governorate units responsible for implementing decisions and managing service delivery at a more localized level.
- **Municipal Unions** offer a platform for joint service management across multiple municipalities, covering areas such as infrastructure, markets, and environmental services.
- **Municipalities** form the foundational unit of local governance, tasked with urban planning, waste collection, permitting, and local development initiatives.



The Municipality: Mandated to Govern

While municipalities form the backbone of local governance, their autonomy is filtered through layers of administrative and financial control. Lebanon adopts a mixed model where decentralization exists in principle but deconcentration prevails in practice.

LEGAL FOUNDATION

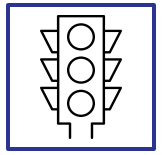
Municipalities are defined by law as local public administrations with legal personality and administrative and financial autonomy. They operate within a designated geographic area and exercise the powers granted to them by law.

According to **Article 1 of Law No. 118/1977**, municipalities are considered independent entities that carry out local administrative functions. They are entrusted with managing affairs of public interest within their jurisdiction.

Before there was a Lebanese Republic, there were municipal elections: introduced in 1864 under the Mutasarrifa, they laid the groundwork for local democratic governance.

SCOPE OF WORK

Municipal councils are empowered to manage all matters of public interest within their jurisdiction. According to Article 47 of Law 118/1977, they have the right to deliberate, propose, and express opinions on issues concerning their locality. This includes:



Service Delivery: Municipalities may plan and manage roads, sanitation, lighting, public parks, slaughterhouses, and market regulation.

Regulatory Functions: Councils regulate public hygiene, construction permits, local transportation, and licensing.

Economic Development: They can collect local taxes, fees, and promote tourism, commerce, and rural development.

PRACTICE VS. PRINCIPLE

While municipalities are meant to serve as intermediaries between central authority and local constituents, their actual autonomy remains limited.

They operate under tight **financial constraints**, subject to centralized approval mechanisms, delayed fund transfers, and limited access to independent revenue streams.

Moreover, their **administrative discretion** is curtailed by overlapping oversight layers from the Court of Accounts to MoIM reducing their ability to act. Instead of functioning as autonomous governance hubs, municipalities often remain tethered to central directives, leaving a structural gap between their legal mandate and operational reality.

How Do Municipal Elections Happen?

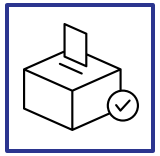
Running municipal elections requires navigating a fragmented legal and administrative landscape, where overlapping laws and unclear roles challenge effective implementation.

Legal framework

Each municipality forms a single electoral district.

Elections are governed by a combination of the Municipal Law and the Parliamentary Elections Law.

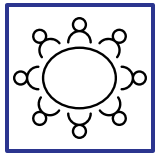
Municipal elections operate under the majority system unlike legislative elections.



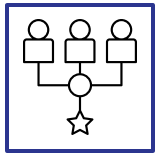
Results may be contested before the State Council, which validates or annuls outcomes.

Administrative process

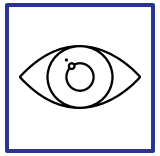
The Minister of Interior announces election dates and designates polling centers.



Supervisory bodies and governors coordinate with the Ministry for logistical preparation.



The Ministry sets the call for elections by decree, as well as the number of municipal council members.



The Ministry supervises logistics, prepares polling centers, and forwards election-related decrees to local authorities.

From Lists to Results: The Election Lifecycle

Municipal elections unfold over 3 core phases: pre-election groundwork, election day operations, and post-election verification.

Pre-Election

The pre-election phase lays the legal and logistical foundation for municipal elections, from preparing voter lists to officially opening candidacy and announcing electoral timelines.

1. Prepare Electoral Lists
2. Open candidacy period
3. Launch awareness campaigns
4. Assign and train electoral staff
5. Distribute election material
6. Coordinate with stakeholders

E-day

Election Day operations are split into two phases: preparation and voting. The first ensures polling stations are fully set up and verified; the second governs the orderly and secure casting of ballots by eligible voters.

1. Open polling station
2. Ensure secure & transparent voting
3. Address complaints
4. Respond to incidents
5. Close polls
6. Count votes
7. Announce results

Post Election

The post-election phase governs vote counting, verification, and results declaration. It ensures ballots are processed, validated, and publicly tallied followed by formal reporting, material handover, and result finalization by the designated committees

1. Compile and submit results
2. Handle complaints and appeals
3. Certify and Publish results
4. Conduct internal assessments
5. Debrief with stakeholders
6. Archive data and document

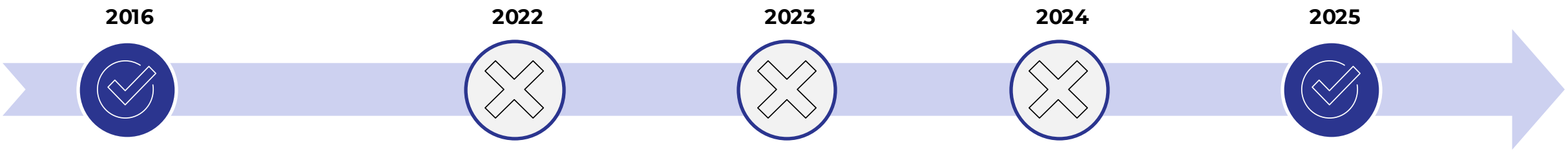
Lebanon’s Municipal Cycles

Since 2016, many municipalities have continued to operate despite expired mandates, while others stopped functioning altogether as mayors and council members resigned during the country’s overlapping crises.

Interrupted Continuity

- Since 1952, Lebanon has only held six full municipal election cycles.
- After elections in 1952 and 1963, there was a 35-year gap before regular cycles resumed in 1998.
- Municipal elections were then held consistently every 6 years until 2022.
- Out of a possible 13 municipal election cycles since independence, only 6 were fully conducted. More than **60%** of local cycles have been either skipped or delayed

A Cycle of Postponements



Last full municipal elections held. Marked the end of the previous 6-year cycle.

First postponement Municipal elections delayed due to overlap with parliamentary elections

Deadlock and vacuum Further postponement amid presidential vacancy and lack of political consensus

Escalation and extension In April, Parliament extended municipal mandates to May 2025, citing war in the south and budgetary constraints as primary reasons.

Scheduled return to elections Represents the first municipal electoral event since 2016

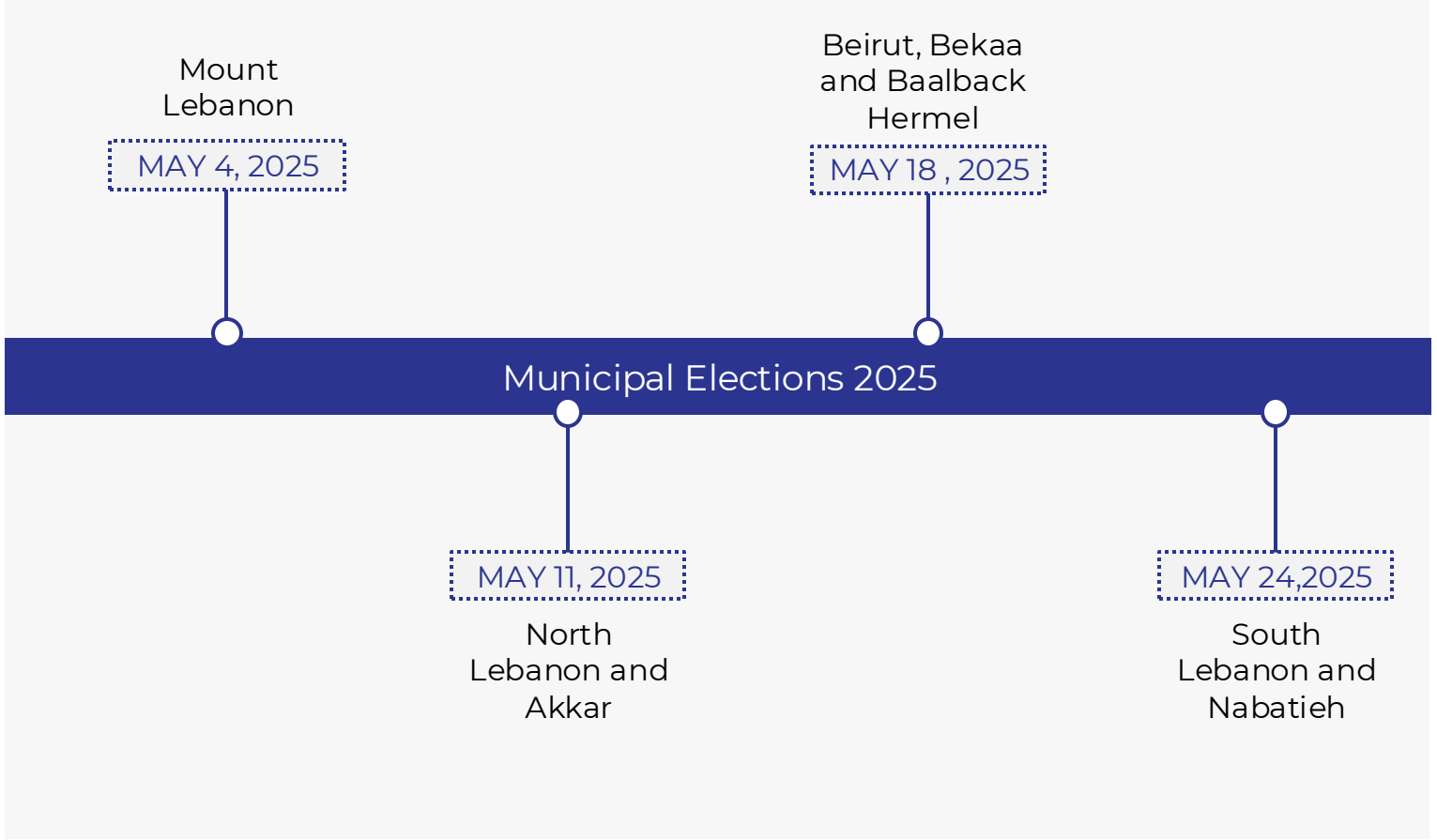
From Stagnation to Execution: 2025 as a Governance Pivot

A new president, a functioning government, and a fixed electoral calendar have aligned, creating conditions for institutional reactivation through municipal elections.

Joseph Aoun elected President on 9th of January 2025 ending a 3 years presidential vacancy and restoring executive leadership.

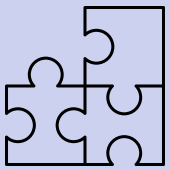
New cabinet formed under Prime Minister Nawaf Salam; Ahmad El Hajjar appointed Minister of Interior signaling prioritization of electoral coordination.

Municipal elections officially scheduled in March 2025 two months ahead of the first voting round marking the first major milestones for the new government.



Municipal Elections of 2025: A National Test

Amid institutional fatigue and political transition, Lebanon's municipal elections became a rare moment to measure whether the state could still deliver, respond, and govern.



A Vote Amid Fragility

After nearly a decade without municipal elections, Lebanon entered 2025 with a weakened state, a fragmented administration, and deepening public distrust. Institutions tasked with organizing the elections were facing resource limitations, digital infrastructure gaps, and communication challenges. Yet the moment carried weight: not just to elect local officials, but to prove the state could still function.

More Than a Democratic Ritual

Lebanon's municipalities are the first and often only point of contact between citizens and the state. Their elections are not symbolic: they are operational. Can the government coordinate across agencies? Can it respond to complaints, manage risks, and communicate with the public? In short: can it govern?

A Stress Test for the Administration

At the heart of the challenge was not just the vote itself, but the machinery behind it: the administration, long strained by political deadlock, financial collapse, and institutional neglect. The 2025 municipal elections became a stress test for the state's operational core.

An Opening for Reform

The 2025 municipal elections exposed both the fragility and the potential of Lebanon's public sector. Amid this tension, a narrow but significant space emerged one that allowed for structured, embedded reform to take root from within the system itself.

2025 in Numbers: 4 Sundays, 1000+ Elections

The 2025 municipal elections span four consecutive Sundays, covering 1,063 municipalities, requiring coordination across more than 10 public institutions, and mobilizing over 5,000 civil servants to manage 2,000+ polling centers nationwide.

1,065
municipalities

1,487,588
Voters

14,414
Civil Servants Mobilized to 26,000 roles

10+
public institutions involved

4
Voting Rounds over 4 Weekends

1,890
Polling Centers

12,849
elected seats

9 years
since last full municipal elections

03

Paving the Way

Turning Past Elections Into a Starting Point

Y4G's starting point was to build a structured understanding of how elections unfold, starting with the Ministry's previous complaints archive, consolidated by monitoring reports from past elections, and mapping legal decisions issued during the last municipal elections.

To understand how elections function in practice, Y4G started where most problems surface: complaints. The complaints archive at the Ministry was cleaned, deduplicated, and classified into core categories (security, administrative), with granular tags such as misconduct or equipment failure. To expand the analysis, Y4G also reviewed and consolidated reports from the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) for past municipal and legislative elections, mapping incidents to each step of the electoral process. Lastly, Y4G mapped all decisions issued by the Minister of Interior and Municipalities during the 2016 municipal elections, helping identify which decisions may need to be replicated or revised in 2025.

Analysis of Previous Complaints			LADE Reports Review	Legal Decisions Review
1200 Complaints Analyzed. Structured into administrative and security complaints and into subcategories.	**8** Reports Produced. Covering all governorates and distributed to the governors, offering insights into the complaint profiles of their respective governates	**87** FAQs Extracted. Highlighting frequently asked questions raised by citizens, candidates, and heads of polling stations.	**11** Observation Reports Mapped. Identifying the types of incidents recorded by LADE and pinpointing when they occurred across the electoral process.	**40+** Legal Decisions Tracked. Providing the Ministry with a roadmap of which legal decisions to issue and when, based the last municipal election.

This multi-source review gave the Ministry a clearer picture of where issues arise, what citizens and electoral stakeholders ask most, and which legal steps need to be taken, paving the way for more responsive planning, faster issue resolution, and legally grounded municipal elections.

Lessons from the Past

The previous elections exposed some issues across the complaints system spanning legal clarity, administrative coordination, and frontline accessibility. Reviewing them allowed to address them upfront.

Procedural Confusion	Beyond the law, the absence of unified SOPs detailing role distribution among stakeholders, sometimes led stakeholders to adapt on the ground.	This resulted in varied practices and interpretations across districts.
Security	Security deployments followed formal plans but lacked mechanisms for real-time coordination with the Ministry during unfolding situations.	Response times varied, and local discretion shaped implementation differently across areas.
Complaint Handling Itself	The process for handling election-related complaints, including procedural or technical ones, lacked a clear internal escalation structure.	Citizens and staff were not always clear on where to report issues or how follow-up would occur.
Administrative Gaps	Operations often relied on individuals' experience rather than shared tools or documentation from prior elections.	This highlighted the need for consistent templates and stronger institutional memory.
Accessibility and Logistics	Election logistics were handled effectively, though coordination remained largely manual.	In high-pressure moments, this created risks of bottlenecks and limited real-time visibility.

The Y4G Mission

At a time of renewed political momentum and institutional fatigue, the 2025 Youth4Governance program worked hand-in-hand with the MoIM. The goal: rebuild trust, strengthen oversight, and support state functionality where it matters most: elections.

Strategic Missions	Operational Levers	Institutional Outcome
Coordination as Statecraft: Rebuild vertical and horizontal coordination channels across central, regional, and municipal levels.	Activation of joint coordination mechanisms between the MoIM, governorates, and qaemaqams, using structured reporting, dashboards, and escalation protocols	Reaffirm institutional presence across the territory by positioning the MoIM as the leading authority of electoral delivery equipped with the protocols, systems, and operational authority required to organize credible, coordinated elections.
Communication as Legitimacy: Support MoIM to communicate clearly with citizens and media in real time, restoring public trust in administrative action.	Establishment of a multi-channel citizen support system, including chatbot deployment, call center support, and real-time media response protocols.	
Technology as a Governance Tool: Deploy smart systems to enhance planning, delivery, and responsiveness without overreliance on manual workflows.	Development of integrated electoral dashboards for operational oversight, escalation tracking, and misinformation monitoring.	
Administrative Continuity: Build resilience in the MoIM's electoral planning by systematizing procedures, knowledge transfer, and operational documentation.	Institutionalization of SOPs across operational units and election teams; supported by onboarding documentation, templates, and knowledge transfer	

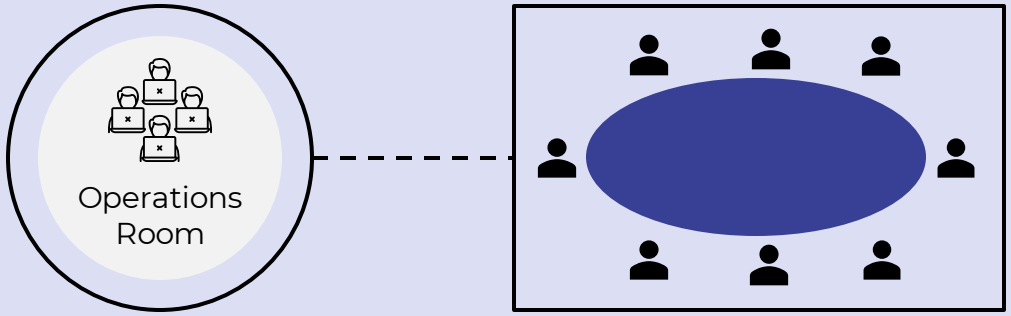
04

OPS Room and Legal Framework

Orchestrating Order: The Operations Room's Daily and Electoral Duties

A look into the Operations Room's essential functions, from daily data operations to its strategic role in the electoral process.

Ministry of Interior and Municipalities



The MoIM houses a Central Operations Room, which is closely linked to the Central Internal Security Council, chaired by the Minister of Interior. Approximately seven employees work in this unit, operating in rotational shifts throughout the day to ensure continuous coverage.

The Operations Room carries out a range of functions, including practical and technical tasks, as well as overseeing and managing the electoral process.

Functions of the Operations Room

Daily Functions

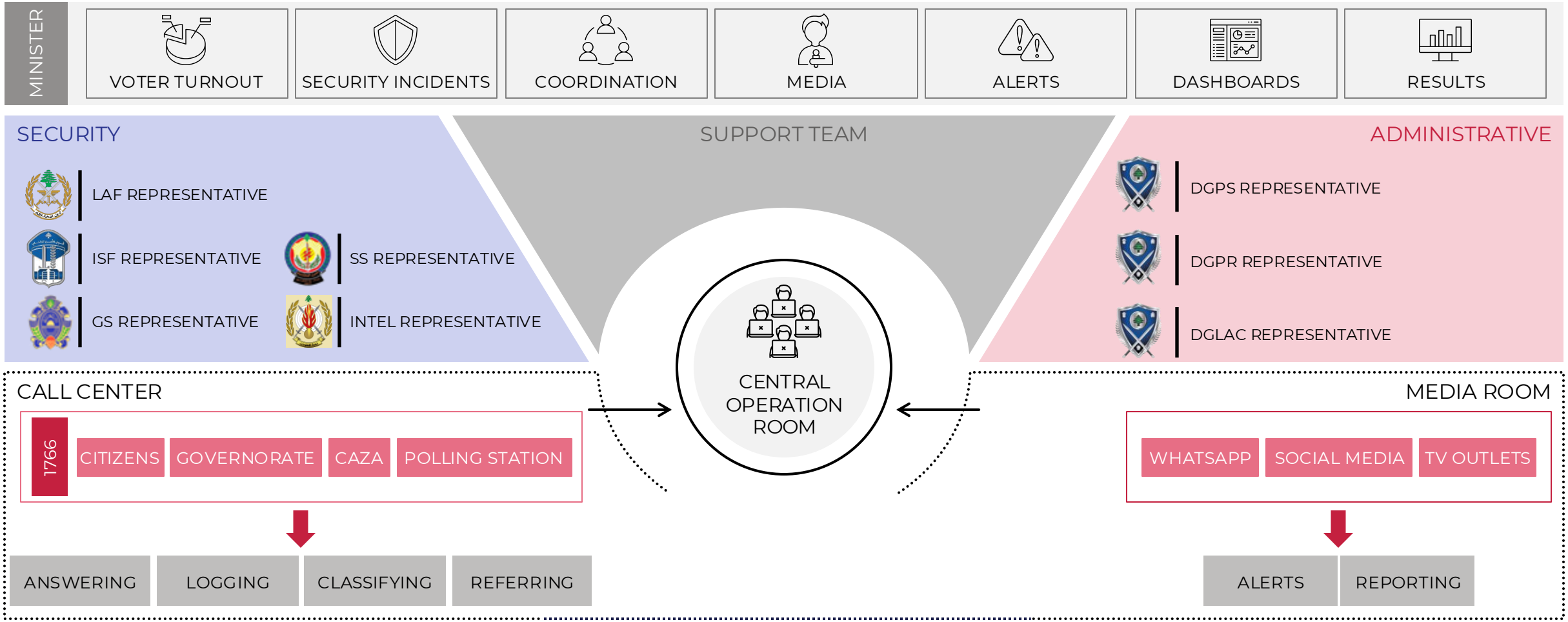
- Collects and stores telegrams reporting real-time developments from the field.
- Covers both internal updates (e.g., announcements about ministry employees) and broader national announcements.
- Provides summarized reports to the Minister upon request.
- Handles three types of vehicle-related telegrams:
  - Radar speed violations
  - Vehicle inquiries
  - Tinted car window requests

Electoral Functions

During elections, a special committee is formed in the Operations Room at the request of the Minister of Interior to manage the entire electoral process. It handles security and administrative complaints, monitors media coverage, and coordinates with relevant agencies to ensure smooth and effective execution.

Coordinating in Real Time: the Ops Room Role During Elections

The Ops Room was built to coordinate elections across three levels: strategic, operational, and tactical, under pressure and in real time.



Orchestrating Order: The Operations Room's Electoral Duties

The Ops Room oversees every aspect of election day: staff mobilization, box readiness, and last-minute fixes. It ensures polling stations open on time, with everything and everyone in place.

Minister of Interior and Municipalities

ISF Central Internal Security Council – مجلس الأمن الداخلي المركزي

Mission:
Ensure national security, law enforcement coordination, and crisis response.

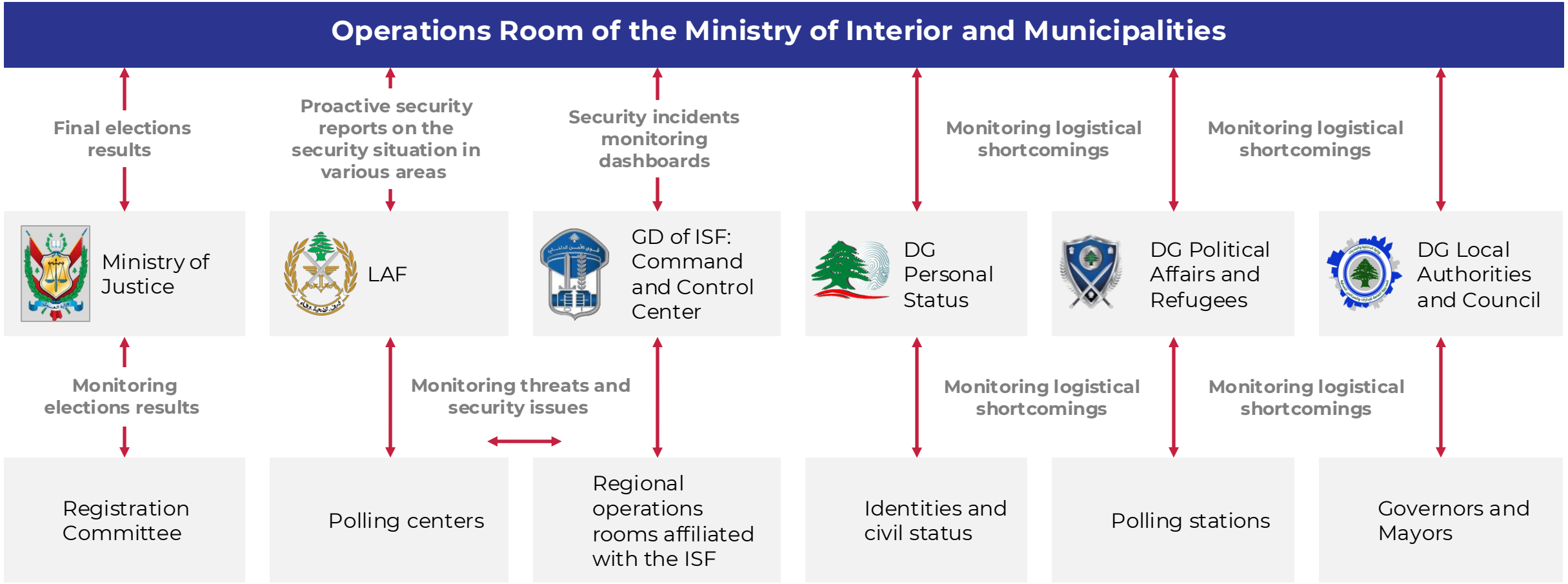
Central Operation Room

Operational Support	Media & Complaints Management	Security Coordination
• Support all logistical and procedural aspects of the election. • Provide real-time legal and operational guidance.	• Monitor media coverage and coordinate with journalists. • Handle call center escalations and analyze complaints.	• Address security incidents and alerts. • Ensure participation of security agencies. • Coordinate inter-agency response.

- LAF
- ISF/GS/SS
- CD/Red Cross
- Judicial
- Institutions
- Local Authorities
- Media and CSOs

Central Operations Room's External Communication

Real-time communication, threat monitoring, and logistical coordination across Lebanon's municipal elections.



Elections Operations Room: Structural and Operational Challenges

While the Operations Room plays a central role in managing elections and crises, there is room to strengthen its structure, capacity, and operational effectiveness. The MoIM and Y4G teams focused on many of these throughout the electoral journey.

Strategic Perspective

Due to pressure, the Operations Room is focused on short-term operational matters; the challenge was to focus, as much as possible on a longer-term perspective.

Detailed Structure and Functions

The structure and functions of the Operations Room needed to be further articulated to anchor its mandate and reinforce its institutional role.

Detailed Roles and Responsibilities

Staff roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined, sometimes leading to confusion, which had to be addressed to enhance performance.

Standard Operating Procedures

SOPs needed to be further detailed to optimize the Operations Room efficiency and effectiveness in normal and crisis times.

Incident Classification and Escalation

Data classification and clear escalation channels were needed to help better triage and prioritize issues for effective processing.

Logistics-Centric Focus

Due to pressure of time and resources, attention seemed focused on logistics (e.g., ballots, envelopes). Teams tried to refocus on transparency and fairness of elections.

From Paper to Digital

Reliance on manual documentation slows down operations and increases the risk of errors. Digitization was introduced where possible to help speedy processing.

Centralized Information System

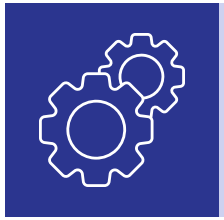
Fragmented data across departments prevent real-time access and coordination. Efforts were deployed towards Interoperability.

Streamlined and Automated Systems

Absence of automation and digital tools was challenging; some streamlined solutions were deployed but more is needed.

Further Steps Toward an Institutionalized Operations Room

Institutionalization requires both legal grounding and clear operational protocols to guide coordination and decision-making during elections. Some of this work was initiated during the electoral preparation and the effort should be pursued.



Standard Operating Procedures

- Defines the operational procedures regulating the Central Operations Room during municipal elections.
- Ensures integrated coordination between relevant administrations and security agencies.
- Facilitates a rapid response to emergency incidents.
- Guarantees that the electoral process proceeds in line with legal and administrative standards.

Legal decisions

- Preparing a reference document containing all legal decisions relevant to the electoral process.
- Providing the document to Operations Room members as a practical guide for informed decision-making on election day.

05

Complaints and Inquiries Management

1766: A hotline under pressure

The hotline fielded thousands of calls during election month - from voters, staff, and candidates - providing real-time insights and pressure points for improvement.

Stakeholders	Type of Request
Citizens	Request voting information or report issues such as logistic problems, bribery, or security-related incidents.
Candidates	Inquire about nomination deadlines, required documents, and other procedures.
Polling station staff	Inquire about election rules and guidelines on election day.
Delegates	Inquire about permissions, counting rules and report issues to Ministry.

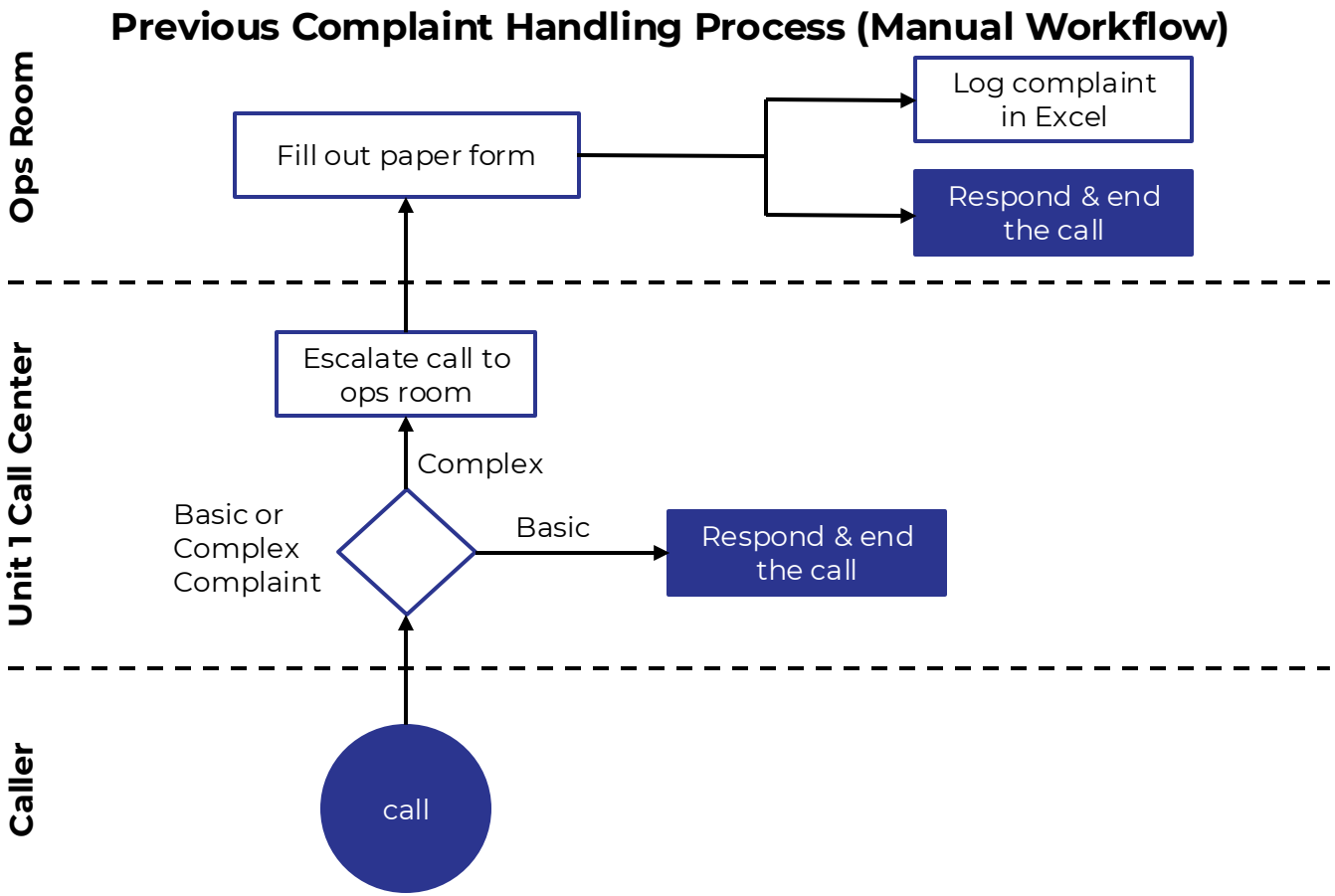
Call Center

Enhancements needed

- **Limited data handling and traceability.**
- **Complaint classification by type and urgency for proper management.**
- **Clear protocol to route complaints for effective escalation.**

Zooming In: Legacy Complaints Workflow and Its Limitations

The old multi-layered complaints' management process enabled basic resolution and escalation but lacked structured documentation, limiting institutional learning and issue tracking.



Legacy Process Overview

- Complaints through the 1766 hotline were handled first by six trained operators.
- **Simple issues were resolved directly**, while **complex or sensitive cases were escalated to the Operations Room**. There, officers were expected to fill out a standard form.
- The form is later passed to IT staff for **manual entry into an Excel file,** the Ministry's only tracking system.

Challenges of the Previous Process

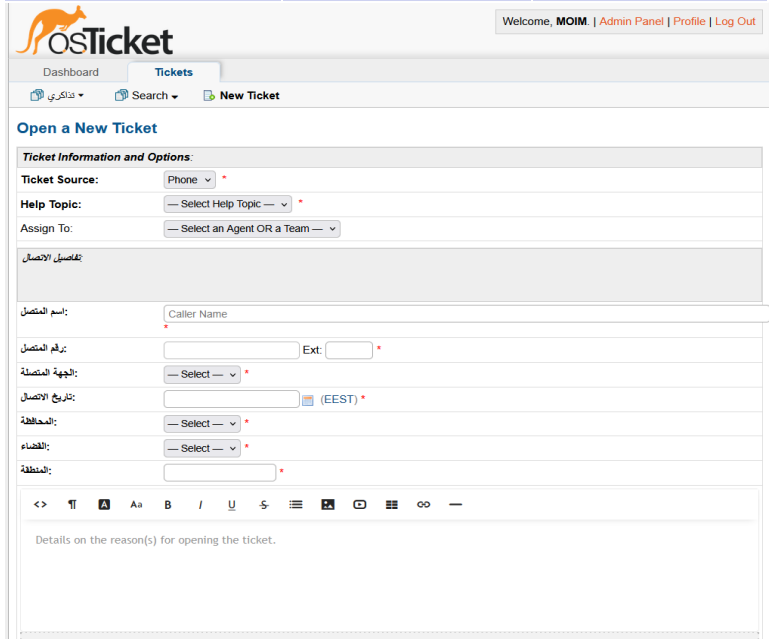
- The manual, paper-based process led to **frequent errors and missing documentation**, especially for equipment issues.
- Reliance on Excel delayed resolution, **limited reporting**, and hindered institutional learning and **long-term improvement**.

Osticket: From Legacy Workflow to Digitized Solution

To address the limitations of the old complaints process, an open-source ticketing system named osTicket was implemented and customized to handle all complaint types, adapt to user roles, and log high volumes of electoral complaints in a structured format.

System Needs

Customizable and Scalable	Easy to Learn and Use	Secure



Features

Customized Forms for administrative and security complaints with tailored fields

Predefined Dropdowns for fast and consistent ticket entry

Advanced Search to easily locate and review previous complaints

Seamless Escalation to the Operations Room with built-in tracking and resolution updates

Benefits

Improved Institutional Efficiency
Faster resolution and clearer workflows strengthened overall complaint handling.

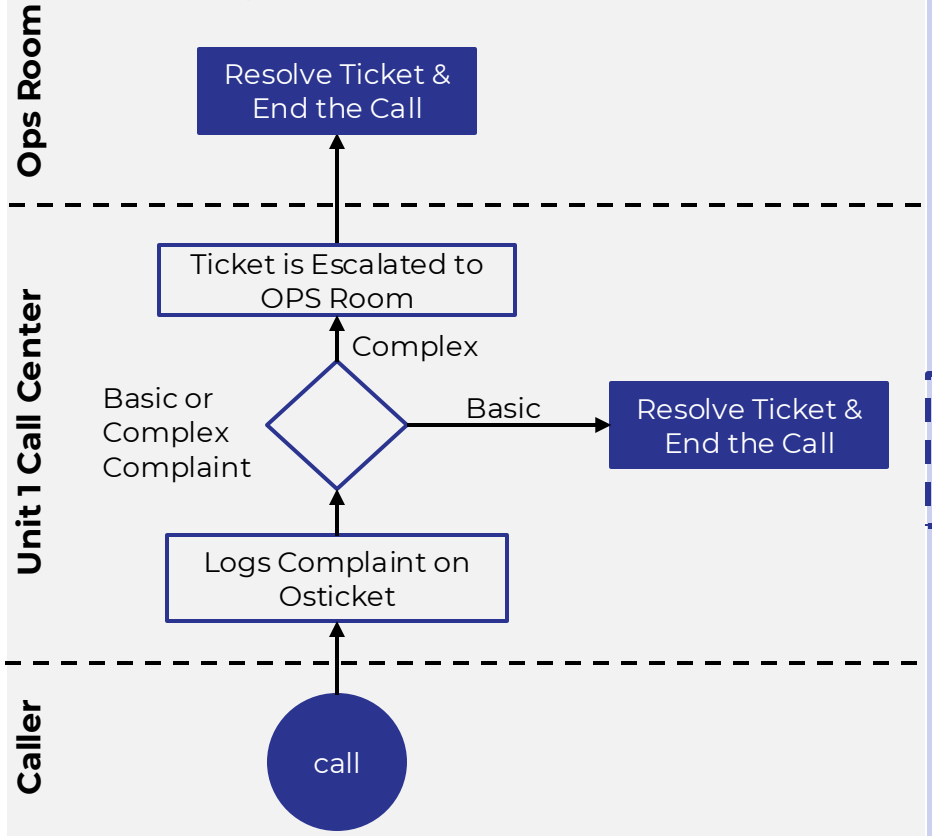
Structured Digital Archive for Learning
Archived complaints enabled institutional memory, trend analysis, and continuous improvement.

Real-Time Analysis Capabilities
Live insights into complaints before, during, and after election days supported timely response and decision-making.

New SOPs for Escalation and Resolution

With the implementation of the new complaints management system, standardized operating procedures were also developed to clarify roles, accelerate ticket handling and escalation, and eliminate manual documentation inefficiencies.

Improved Process with Osticket



Improved SOPs

1. When a call is received, the unit 1 operator opens a new ticket and fills in the required fields, including the main category (Administrative or Security) and its subcategory.
2. The operator then tags the ticket according to urgency: Basic, Complex, Important, or Critical.
3. If the issue is Basic or Complex and can be resolved on the spot, the operator provides the response, logs it in the system, and closes the ticket.
4. If the issue requires escalation, the ticket is forwarded to the OPS Room and the transferred to the relevant administrative or security extension.
5. In the OPS Room, the issue is handled, the response is logged, and the ticket is marked as resolved after follow-up if needed.

Escalation Criteria

Disruption of Voting Process: Whether the issue stops or delays the voting process.

Number of Polling Stations Affected

Need for Coordination: If external authorities' involvement is required.

Safety Risk: whether the issue caused any physical or psychological threats to people or property.

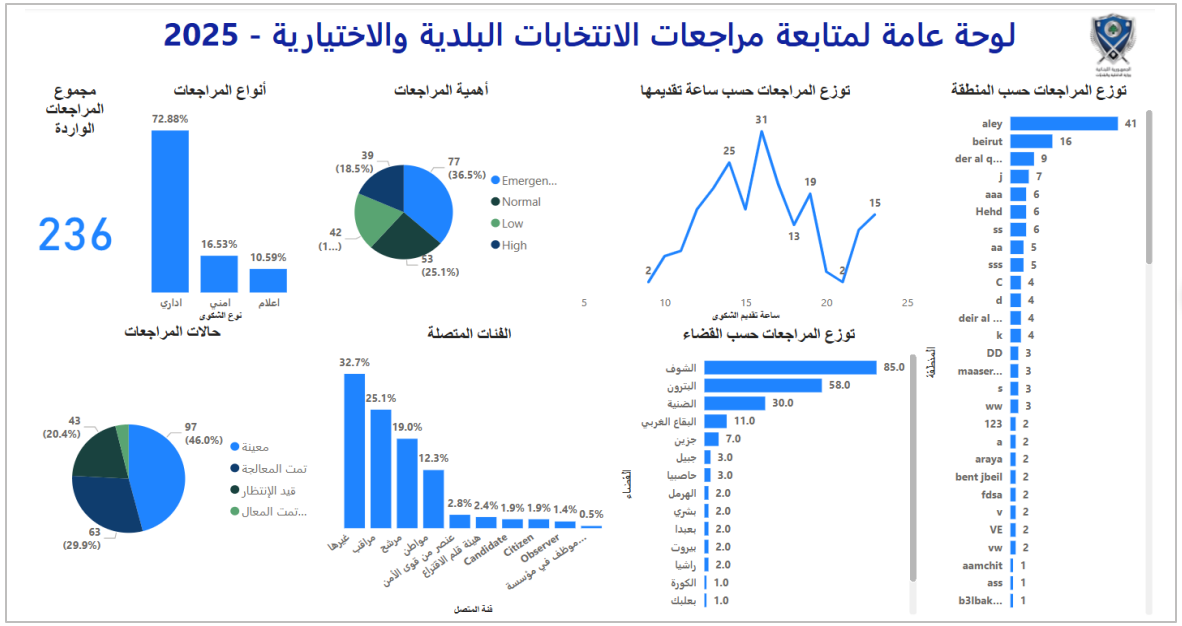
Repetitiveness: Whether the issue is recurring in the same or different locations.

Duration of Issue: Whether issue has persisted for a long time without resolution.

Public or Media Attention: Whether the issue has attracted media or public interest.

Turning Complaints into Insightful Oversight

A key advantage of the new system was a centralized complaints database. This digital archive powered real-time dashboards, turning raw data into insights that helped the Ministry track trends, coordinate responses, and ensure transparency.



Dashboard Benefits

Operational Clarity
Visual breakdowns by complaints category, subcategory, location, time and urgency enabled precise tasking across units.

Proactive Decision-Making
Real-time data allowed the Ministry to identify trends and intervene before issues escalated.

Improved Coordination
Aligned call center, field teams, and leadership around the same live data.

Post-Election Insights
Provided structured data for institutional learning and long-term improvements.

Institutional Accountability
Transparent, timestamped complaint tracking reinforced trust and enabled post-election reviews.

The System in Action: Results from Election Day

Despite the high volume of inquiries and complaints, the Ministry, supported by its new complaints management system and structured escalation workflow, was able to respond to over 95% of inquiries and process issues efficiently across all levels.

Call Center

95%
Answered Rate

43 seconds
Average Call Time

9 seconds
Average Wait Time

Complaints & Inquiries System

5326
Total Complaints

5024
Administrative

302
Security

06

Media Monitoring

Beyond the Call Center: Where Signals Are Missed

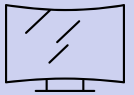
Monitoring media and social platforms allows the Ministry to pick up on public concerns that never reach the call center, closing the loop on missed signals and unresolved complaints.

Types of Unreported Complaints

- Footage of Security Incidents
- Public Opinion on the Elections
- Bribery Allegations
- Reports of Medical Emergencies
- Voting Eligibility Inquiries
- Logistical Issues Reports
- Security Related Complaints
- Candidacy Inquiries
- Voting Information Request

Social Media

Cable News



News Papers and Outlets

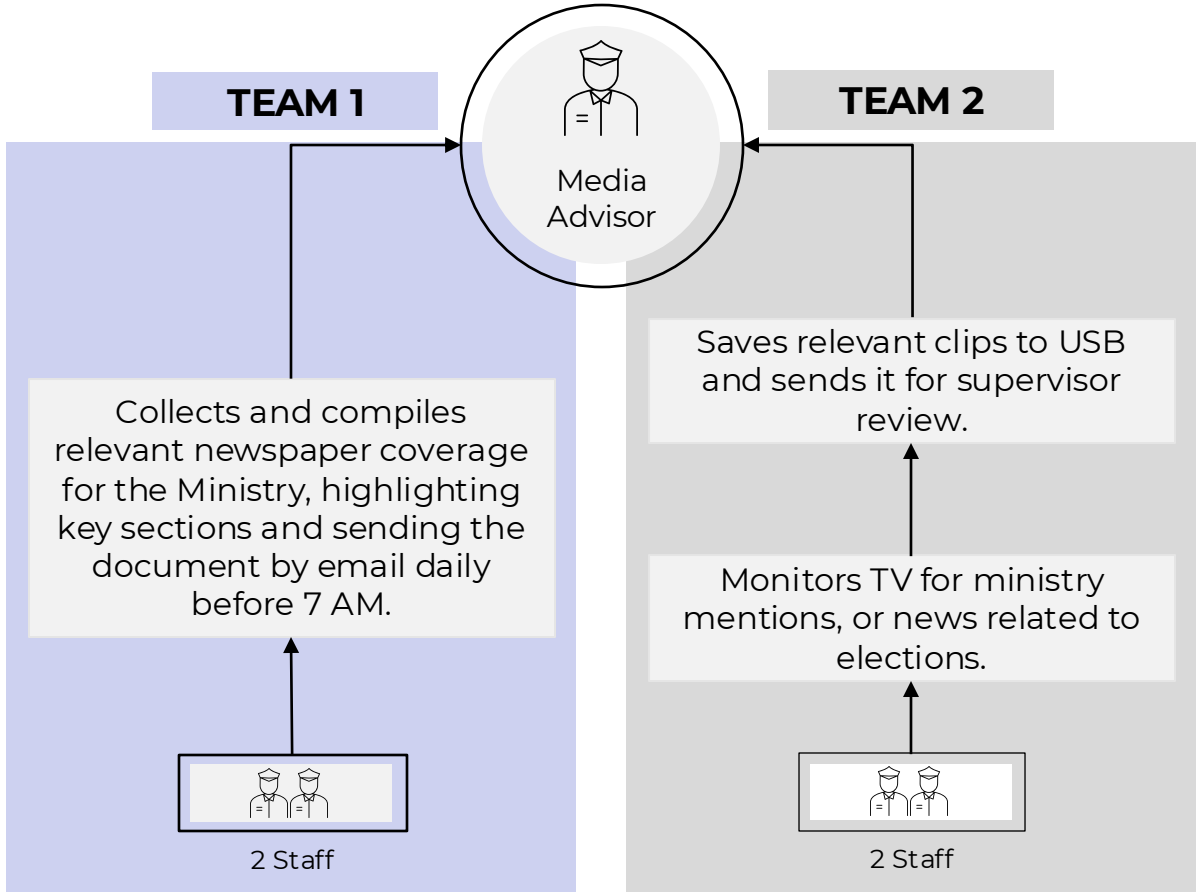
MoIM Call Center

The Importance of Media Monitoring

- **Complementing Internal Visibility**
  Gives the Ministry an external lens to catch blind spots and citizen concerns, especially around logistics, operations, and perception.
- **Real-Time OSINT from the Field**
  Incidents often surface on social media and WhatsApp groups faster than through official channels. Monitoring these platforms allows the Ministry to tap into open-source intelligence (OSINT) and detect real-time developments, especially in hard-to-reach or underreported areas.
- **Countering Misinformation Proactively**
  Election seasons fuel false narratives. Active monitoring lets the Ministry respond quickly, ensuring the public gets accurate, trusted information.

Current Media Monitoring: Workflow and Gaps

Media monitoring was previously conducted manually by two separate teams within the Ministry. While this approach ensures valuable input, there is an opportunity to enhance its structure, timeliness, and analytical depth to better support real-time insights and strategic reporting.



The old media monitoring process at the Ministry, though established, presents critical limitations in its ability to capture and act on media content, particularly during the fast-paced environment of election days.

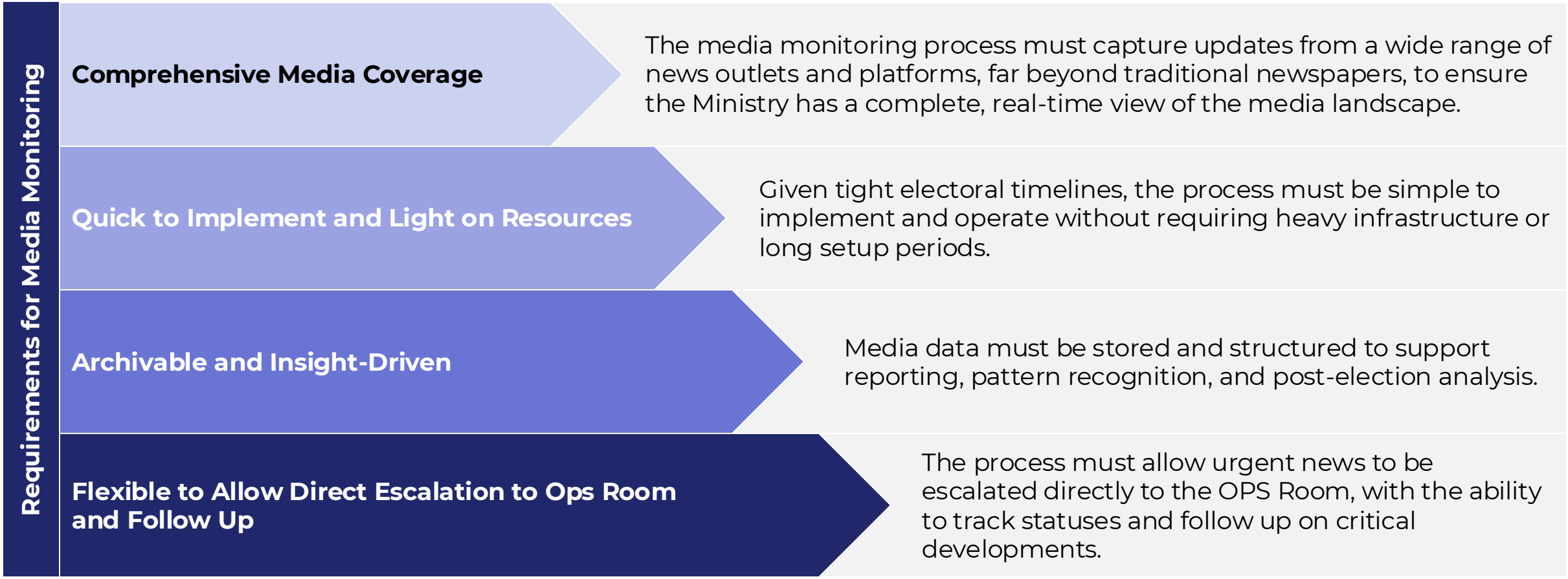
Limited Media Coverage
The Ministry's monitoring is largely restricted to cable news and newspapers, offering little to no visibility into social media platforms, where a significant portion of election-related information, public sentiment, and incident reporting now occurs.

High Friction, Slow Response
Even within traditional media, the process of sharing insights was slow and fragmented. Media content was either delivered in scheduled 7 AM reports or transferred manually via USB after specific video clips are extracted, hindering the Ministry's ability to respond quickly to emerging issues.

Lack of Structured, Searchable Data
The old workflow produces unstructured and unlabeled outputs, with no centralized repository or digital archive. This not only limits real-time media insight generation but also prevents effective historical tracking and analysis.

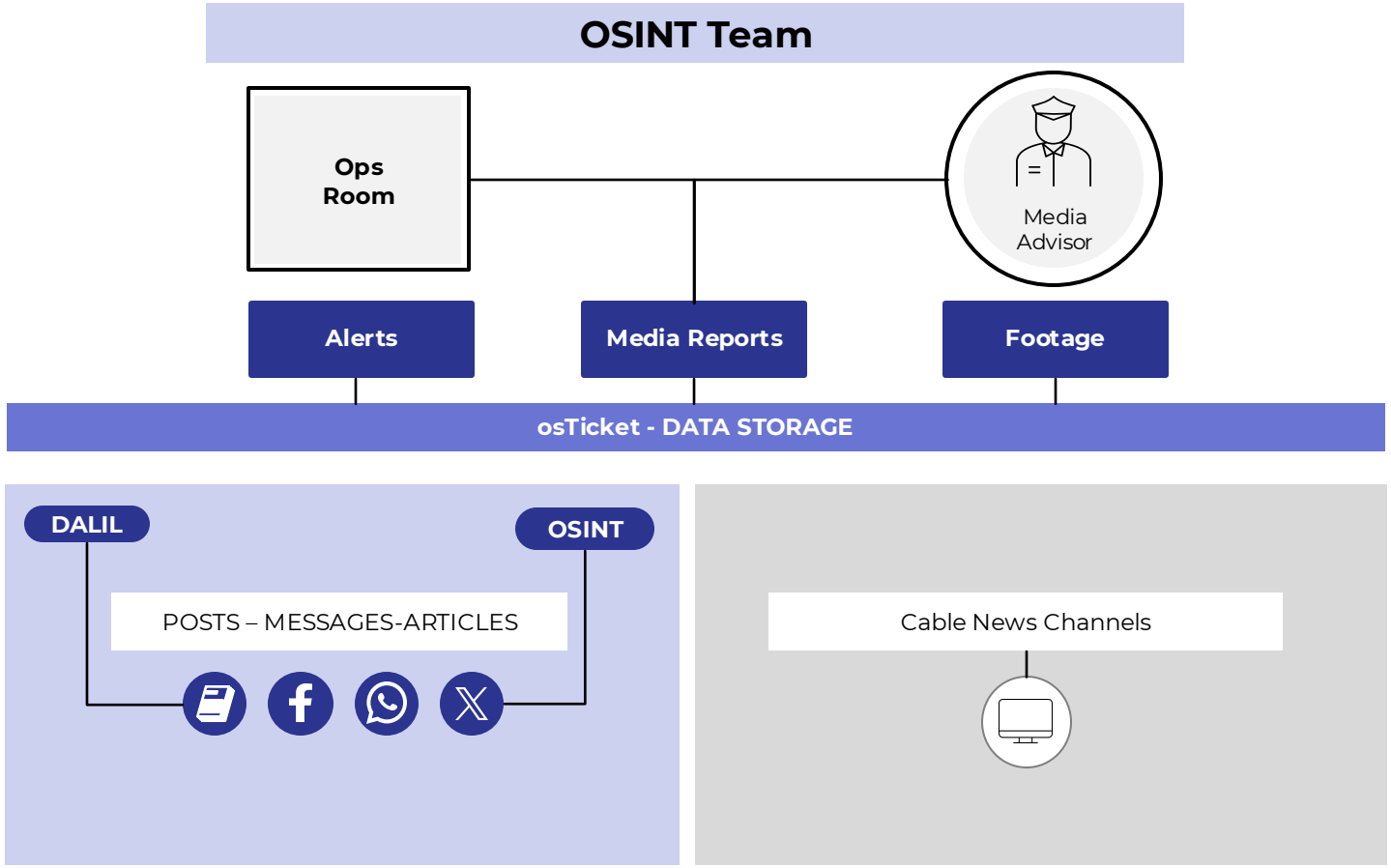
Requirements for Electoral-Grade Media Monitoring

The new media monitoring process had to ensure broad media coverage, easy deployment, long-term archiving, and direct alerting to the OPS Room.



Organizing the Noise: Real-Time Monitoring in Action

To meet the Ministry's monitoring needs, the new process extended the osTicket system - originally used for complaints - and the use of AI tools to centralize media alerts and support faster, more structured decision-making in the OPS Room.



Teams Structure and Functions

1- Platform Monitoring:

- WhatsApp: Tracks key local groups for real-time updates.
- Facebook & Instagram: Monitors public content and hashtags.
- X: Tracks incidents via keywords (e.g., chaos, fight) and monitors sentiment around the electoral process.

2- Ticket Logging & Escalation:

- Relevant posts are logged into osTicket by the media team.
- Urgent issues are escalated to the OPS Room for action.
- Resolutions are handled and updated directly by OPS Room agents in osTicket.

3- Reporting:

Based on logged posts, reports are generated on election day and between rounds to provide the Ministry with actionable insights on alerts, sentiment, and media trends.

Turning Media Data Into Action: Reports and Dashboards

Implementing the new media monitoring process and expanding source coverage enabled structured, insight-driven reporting. This included critical updates, media reports, and sentiment dashboards, all supporting responses throughout election day.

	Frequency	Purpose	Benefit
Real-Time Media Dashboard	Real-time (live throughout the day).	Provides live overview of media insights during election day.	Coordinates timely, informed interventions.
Daily Media Report	Once per day (before or after election day).	Summarizes key electoral coverage and highlights MoIM-related narratives.	Track evolving public discourse and narrative shifts leading up to or between election rounds.
Election Day Reports	Every 3 hours throughout election day.	Captures unfolding election alerts and events	Keeps MoIM informed for rapid response.
Election Day – End of Day Report	Once at the end of election day.	Summarizes election-related media activity.	Supports performance review, accountability, and improvement.
End of Election Period Report	Once, after the final election round.	Compiles all reports into comprehensive national overview.	Captures media dynamics and informs long-term electoral strategy.

07

Communications

Communication: Bringing the Ministry Closer to the Public

With the first municipal elections in nearly a decade, information gaps across stakeholders placed heavy strain on the call center, highlighting the need for a coordinated communication strategy to bridge gaps and reduce operational load.

Inbound Communication

Citizens

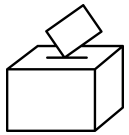
Requests information on voting requirements, polling location, and voting procedures.

Candidates

Requests information on candidacy deadlines and required documents for nomination.

Governors and Qaemaqams

Requests information on polling station locations, setup timelines, and logistics.



Heads of Polling Stations

Requests clarification on voter eligibility, ID validity, setup procedures, and vote counting protocols.

News Reporters and Agencies

Requests information on media permits, media laws, and rights related to election coverage.

Overwhelmed Call Center

Outbound Communication

Establish the Ministry as the primary source of electoral information for all stakeholders.

Multi-channel dissemination of key electoral updates, targeted by stakeholder group.

Comprehensive Communication Strategy

- The Ministry during election period receives thousands of inbound calls, from questions about voting procedures and candidacy requirements to logistical updates and media inquiries, **placing significant strain on its operational capacity**.
- This reactive communication model **consumes call center resources** that could **otherwise be directed toward more urgent or high-risk electoral issues**.
- By proactively sharing clear, timely updates and information across multiple channels, the Ministry can **ease the burden on operators, improve stakeholder reach, and reinforce its position as a trusted source of electoral information**

Measures Implemented to Expand Electoral Communication

Given the limited time before elections and the urgent need to disseminate electoral information, a set of measures were implemented to position the Ministry as a key source of information and reduce call center pressure from basic inquiries.

	AI-Driven Chatbot	Media Space at the Ministry	Social Media Presence
Information	• **Voting Procedures** Guidance on how to vote on election day. • **Required Documents** List of eligible documents needed to vote. • **Laws & Deadlines** Key electoral laws and official cutoff dates. • **Polling Location Finder** Polling station details based on voter information.	• **Real-time Turnout Dashboard** Live turnout by governate, casa, and region. • **2025 Turnout vs. 2016** Comparative trends per casa shared at key intervals of the day. • **Complaints Display** Live feed of the same complaints dashboards used in the OPS room. • **Civic Info Campaign** Videos on municipal roles and voter information.	• **Turnout Comparison** Turnout data from the 2016 elections was processed to enable sharing 2025 vs. 2016 trends by casa at key intervals throughout election day.
Objective	The objective of the chatbot is to serve as an intelligent digital assistant, providing citizens with instant access to accurate electoral information.	The objective of the media space at the ministry was to grant media outlets shared access to information and ensures consistent messaging across all news sources.	The objective of increasing the MoIM's social media presence was to be able to diffuse key electoral information with high reach and also provide a space for people to interact with the ministry and increase the connection with citizens.

Vision

Foster stronger ties between the Ministry and the public by combining 24/7 availability with proactive, multi-channel communication.
This approach positions the Ministry as the primary, trusted source of timely and accurate electoral information, reinforcing transparency and credibility with both citizens and media outlets.

08

Operational Support

Electoral logistics and readiness

Running election day takes a massive push: polling staff must be confirmed, boxes verified, and everything in place before doors open.

12,849
Municipal Council Seats.

3,196
Mukhtar Position.

1,890
Polling Centers.

13,341
Polling Stations.

26,000+
Staff Assignment.

Ensuring Polling Staff Availability

Each polling box required two trained public employees. The Ministry used SMS forms and a dedicated call center to confirm availability and assign staff ahead of election day.

Verifying and Distributing Election Boxes

A day before the vote, polling station heads received digital checklists to confirm box contents. Any shortages were flagged early, allowing quick intervention and avoiding day-of disruptions.

Outbound Call Center: A Hidden Operational Bottleneck

While the Ministry's call center mainly handles complaints, verifying polling staff, issuing notifications, and ensuring electoral box readiness required large outbound efforts, often creating bottlenecks due to high call volumes, tight timelines, and limited staff capacity.

Call Center Used at 3 Different Stages

01 Call center to check the availability of the public sector employees

02 Call Center to notify head of polling stations and reserves

03 Call center to confirm that the electoral boxes and polling centers fully equipped with all required materials.

Operational Impact

Delays in Confirming Participation
The volume of outbound calls made it difficult to confirm staff availability in a timely manner, putting pressure on staffing schedules.

Fatigue Among Call Center Teams
Given the number of outbound calls within tight timeframes, call center agents were often overwhelmed, raising the risk of errors and missed follow-ups.

Slower Resolution of Supply Shortages
Reporting missing items from electoral boxes took longer, delaying interventions from the central team and local administrators.

Risk of Operational Gaps on Election Day
The limited capacity to track all polling stations in real-time created a risk of unresolved issues carrying over into election day.

Reducing the Load Through Simple Tech Measures

To reduce strain on the call center, the Ministry introduced simple tech-based measures - like SMS forms and automated sorting - that accelerated staff confirmation, box verification, and shortage resolution.

Improved Process

Updated Employee Data

The Ministry consolidated and filtered records of active (non-retired) civil servants to create an eligible pool of polling staff candidates..

Mass Messaging with Participation Form

Bulk SMS with a digital form was sent to gather employees' willingness to serve, along with their preferred location and availability.

Filtered Selection and *Takalif* Issuance

Responses were easily filtered by availability, location, and ministry needs to assign heads of polling stations, assistants, and reserves, followed by the issuance of Takalif.

Pre-Election Day Box Verification

One day before each election round, a mass message with a digital checklist was sent to polling station heads to confirm box contents and polling room readiness.

Real-Time Shortage Resolution

Shortage reports were easily sorted by region and directed to the relevant Qaemaqam for rapid follow-up and resolution.

73,020
SMS Sent

21,000
Calls Made

1,687
Drop-outs Replaced

618
Issues with Boxes Fixed

28
Polling Delays

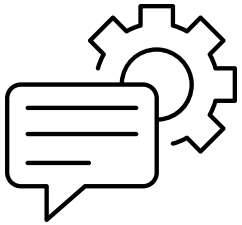
09

Election Debriefing and Reporting

Closing the Elections and Capturing Lessons

Daily briefs helped adjust operations between rounds, while end-of-cycle documentation created a reference for future elections.

Feedback to MOIM staff: End of Election Day Briefings and Insights



At the close of each election day, Y4G supported the Ministry with executive briefings and lessons-learned presentations, capturing key figures, challenges, and improvements for the next round.

Supporting MoIM Staff's drive to build institutions: developing blueprints

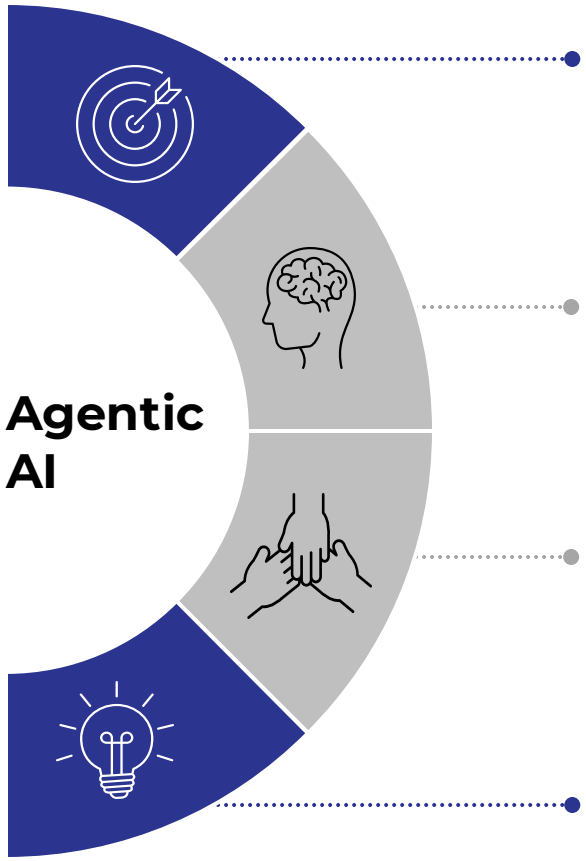
At the end of the electoral month, the team contributed to the drafting of the ministry's first electoral blueprint capturing processes and detailed steps.

10

Agentic AI

What is Agentic AI

Agentic AI refers to tools that can independently carry out multi-step tasks by reasoning, using tools, and adapting to changing situations.



Goal Driven

Autonomous

Interactive

Contextually Aware

The Agentic Process

Receive Goal

Given a high-level objective and a list of available tools

Plan and Act

Breaks the goal into tasks and executes them autonomously.

Self Monitoring

Tracks progress, adapts to errors or new conditions in real time.

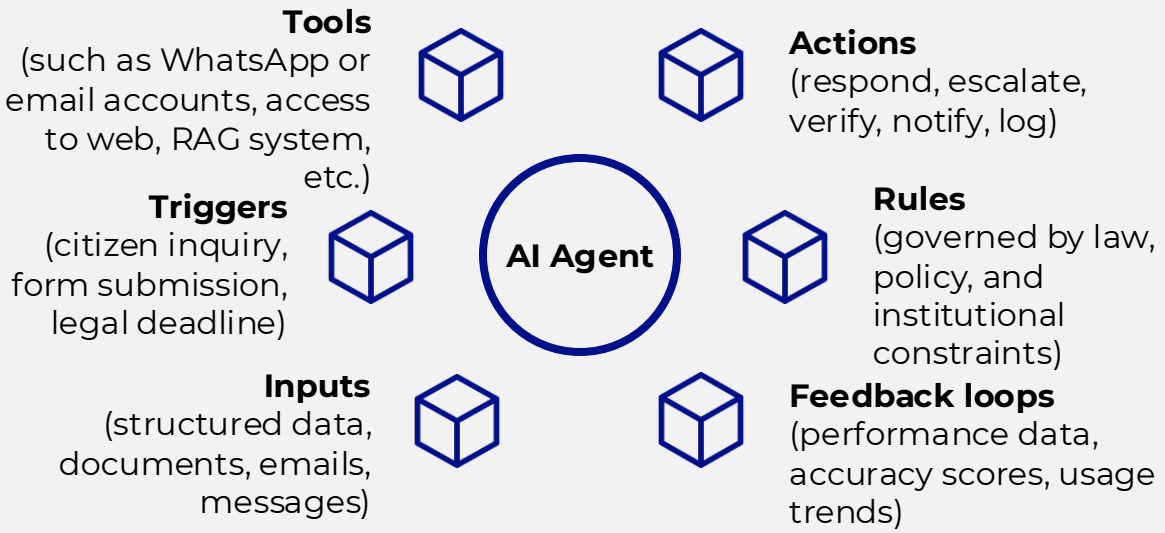
Deliver

Produces a structured result.

Agentic AI: Modularity as a Core Design Principle

Agentic AI is built on modular, mission-specific agents, each designed to perform a precise task. This design enables rapid deployment, seamless integration with existing systems, and scalable impact across institutions.

Core Design Principles of Agentic AI



Agentic AI is built on a **modular design**. Each agent functions as a **small, standalone digital unit** that performs one specific administrative task, similar to a **digital civil servant.**

- **Mission-Specific:** Each agent handles a well-defined function (e.g., scheduling, compliance, inquiries).
- **Autonomous:** Agents operate independently within set rules and don't require constant human input.
- **Modular & Scalable:** Agents can be deployed individually, added, removed, or adapted without disrupting the broader system.
- **Flexible Deployment:** They can work:
  - Independently (in low-infra environments)
  - With legacy systems (via APIs or connectors)
  - As part of a coordinated AI control layer.

The Agentic model supports **rapid deployment, better targeting, and seamless scaling** across institutions including **municipalities, ministries, and oversight bodies**.

Agentic AI: Virtual Teams of Agents

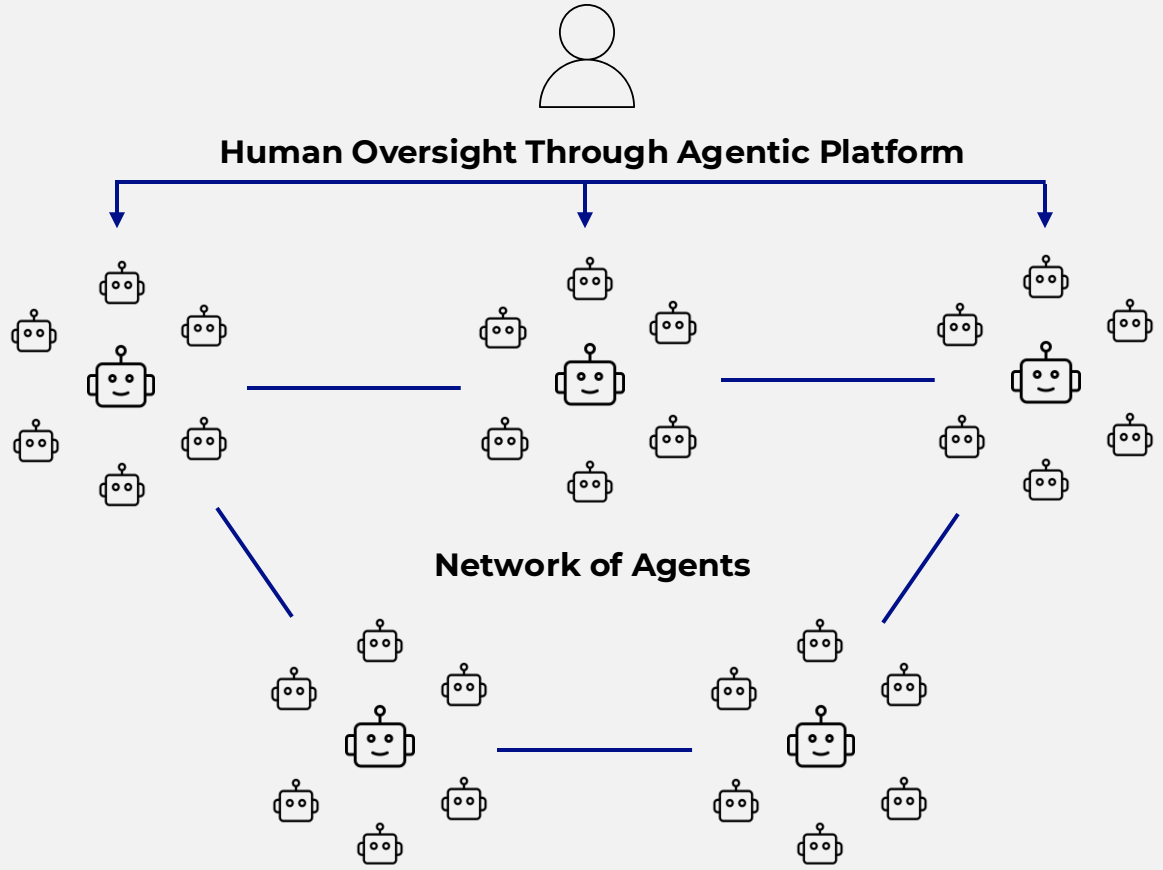
Agentic AI's modular design enables agents to work not only independently, but also in structured teams and clusters, mirroring institutional workflows. This hierarchy allows for scalable, coordinated execution of complex public sector operations.

Human Oversight
All agents, teams, and clusters operate under an "Agentic Platform" with human supervision over performance, rules, and ensure alignment with set policies

Cluster of Teams
Multiple agent teams grouped by function (e.g., elections, permits) coordinate like a digital department, working together on broader, cross-cutting programs.

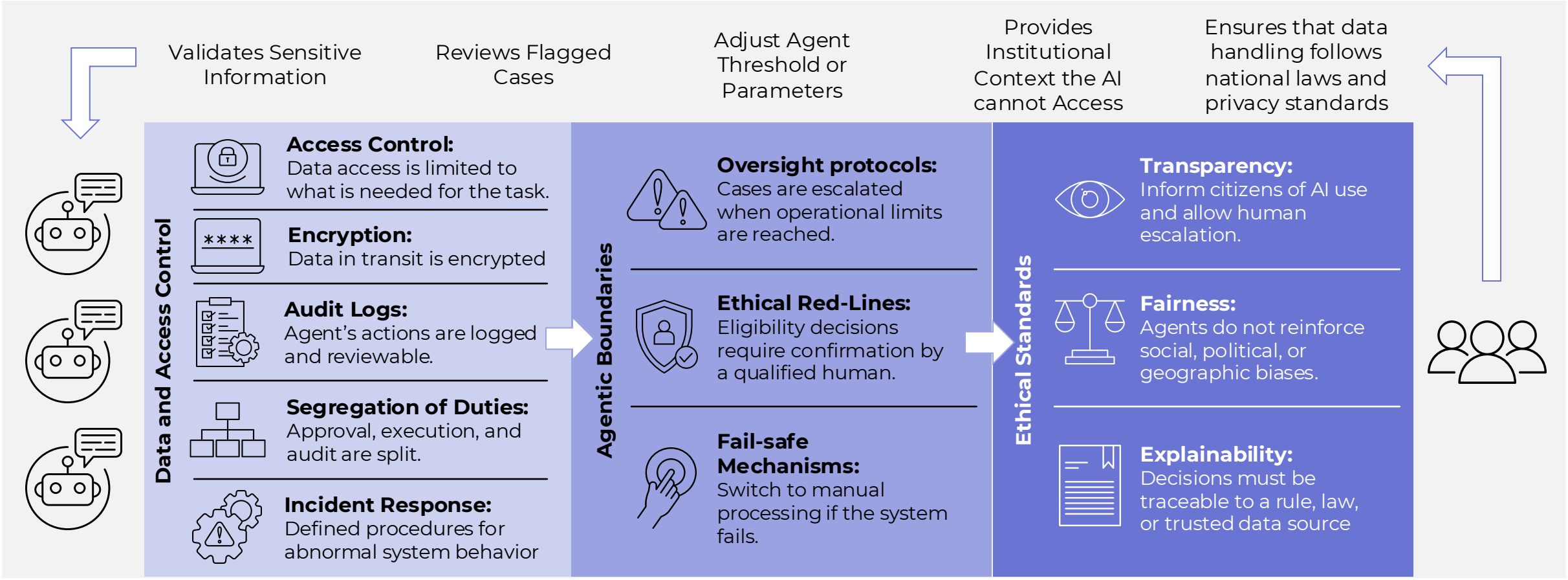
Team of Agents
A group of agents with different specializations work together to complete a full process, coordinating through shared logic and task flows.

Individual Agents
Performs precise functions (e.g., validate IDs, send notifications, log complaint).



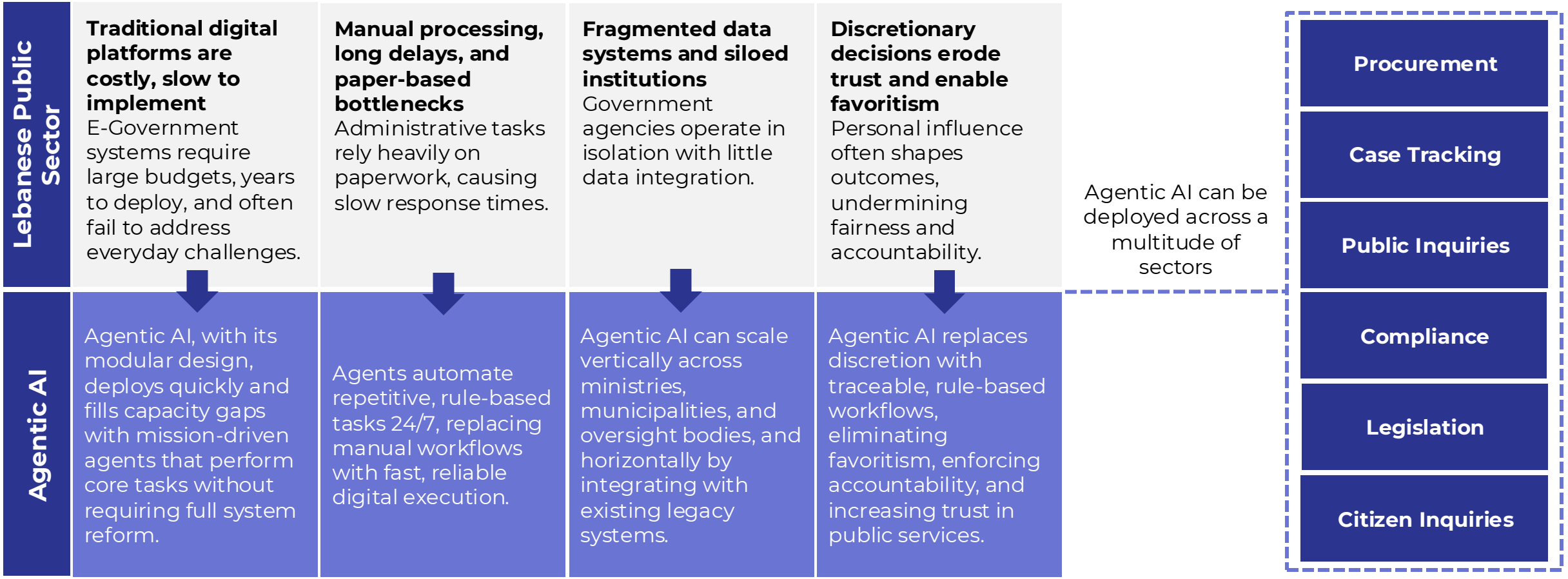
Governance First: Security, Ethics, and Human Oversight

Agentic AI is autonomous, but not without guardrails. It is built with governance at its core, combining strict access controls, ethical safeguards, and human oversight to ensure compliance with national standards.



Agentic AI: A Strategic Shift for Lebanon's Public Sector

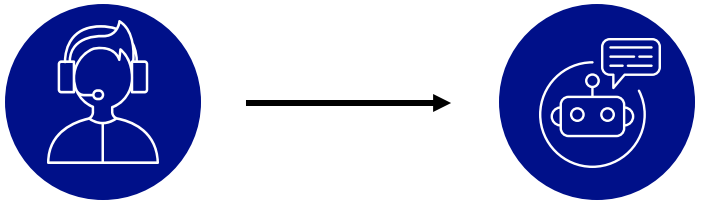
With Lebanon's public sector paralyzed by legacy systems, under-resourced institutions, and outdated workflows, leaving citizens waiting weeks for basic services. Agentic AI, with its modular and portable design, presents a real opportunity for reform.



Tackling Operational Bottlenecks at the Ministry of Interior with Agentic AI

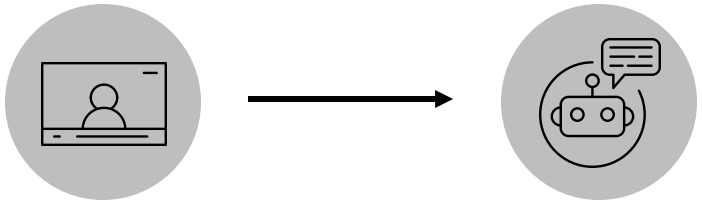
The Ministry of Interior's heavy operational workload consumes time and resources, making Agentic AI a transformative opportunity to streamline key processes and drive efficiency.

Call Center:
MoIM's call center manages thousands of inbound complaints and outbound calls to coordinate polling staff and electoral box readiness, consuming hours of staff time.



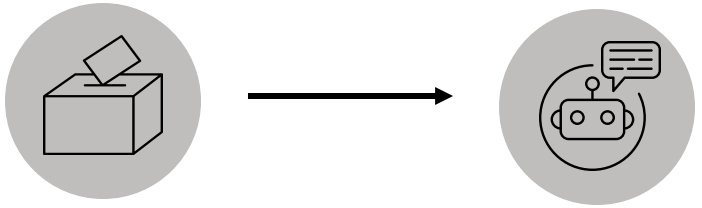
Call Center Agent:
Automates both inbound complaint intake and outbound coordination with polling staff, freeing up human operators for priority tasks.

TV Monitoring:
OSINT operations rely heavily on live TV coverage, but manual monitoring limits responsiveness and slows down alerts to the OPS Room.



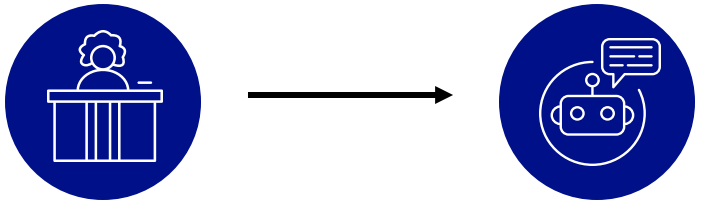
TV Monitoring Agent:
Continuously scans live TV channels for election-related mentions, instantly flagging relevant content to the OPS Room based on defined objectives.

Turnout Reporting:
Turnout data collection requires polling station heads to manually report updates, creating friction, delays, and repetitive data entry work.



Turnout Tracker Agent
Engages directly with polling station heads via chat to collect turnout data and generates live updates by region, governorate

Administrative Secretarial Tasks:
Administrative staff - especially secretaries - are overwhelmed by appointment requests and scheduling back-and-forth, draining internal capacity.



Secretary Agent
Handles appointment requests for the Minister through interactive chat, gathers details, and submits approval requests

TV Monitoring Agent

The TV Monitoring Agent addresses the challenge of limited, delayed media tracking by helping the Ministry efficiently monitor live news, capture key developments, and flag security incidents in real time.

Pain Point	During the election period, a single human agent is responsible for monitoring over 10 TV channels to track any incidents or mentions related to the minister, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, or the electoral process. Currently, the responsible personnel records the channels and transfers flagged content to a USB drive, which is then sent to the head of media department at the ministry. This method is imprecise, as it is difficult for one agent to remain fully focused and manage simultaneous monitoring of 10+ channels, creating the risk of missing key content or failing to track important developments in real-time.
Vision	Deploy Agentic AI system capable of real-time, multi-channel analysis to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of media monitoring during the election period.
Actions	The stream connection continuously connects to live TV news, records 10-second audio chunks for live updates, and generates audio files for real-time transcription.
	The system transcribes audio to Arabic text using OpenAI Whisper, then summarizes every 30 transcriptions with GPT-4o, extracting key ideas, political figures, and security incidents.
	LLMs highlight security alerts for violence, bribes, and corruption, with summarization output including these urgent markers for immediate response.
	The Google Sheets API pushes final summaries and alerts, providing real-time updates to MOIM decision-makers, including sentiment and flagged security alerts.

Results	Improved Efficiency in Reporting	Enhanced Accuracy in Incident Detection	Faster Decision-Making

Call Center Agent

The Call Center Agent helps the Ministry manage high call volumes by automating routine inbound and outbound communication, reducing workload and enabling faster, more consistent responses.

Pain Point	During elections, the Ministry of Interior's call center plays a central role in both inbound and outbound communication. Inbound calls include complaints and information requests from citizens, candidates, and polling staff. Outbound calls focus on confirming staff availability, issuing assignments, and verifying box contents ahead of election day. This dual function places a significant operational burden on the call center. Yet much of the work - especially outbound - is repetitive and standardized, making it well-suited for AI agents to help reduce workload and improve efficiency.
Vision	Deploy an Agentic AI system capable of receiving and placing calls, extracting structured information, and handling routine electoral inquiries and updates
Actions	The agent captures citizen questions through a microphone in English, French, and even Lebanese dialect Arabic, enabling natural voice interaction.
	An offline speech-to-text model transcribes the audio into Arabic text, preparing it for processing.
	The system processes the query using DeepChat, applying tailored instructions to generate brief, factual responses in the dialect chosen by the caller.
	The agent, using OpenAI formulates the final reply, and logs all queries in Google Sheets for traceability and future review.

Results	Reduces Operational Load	Frees Up Staff for High-Priority Issues	Enhances Traceability

Turnout Tracker Agent

The Turnout Tracker Agent automates voter turnout updates, reduces manual workload, and delivers faster, more accurate information to both the Ministry and citizens.

Pain Point	On election days, providing real-time, accurate turnout data was a key objective for the Ministry. This required each head of polling center to manually collect turnout updates from all polling stations under their supervision and send them to a central operator managing turnout data. The operator would then aggregate the figures and calculate updated turnout rates by governorate, caza, and region. While effective, this process was time-consuming and placed a heavy burden on polling center heads, already responsible for ensuring the safety of the polling center. The repetitive, structured nature of this task created a clear opportunity for automation through an AI agent.
Vision	Deploy an AI agent that serves as the direct interface for heads of polling stations, allowing them to report new voter turnout updates efficiently. The agent then aggregates data across all stations and updates overall turnout figures automatically.
Actions	The agent receives and understands numeric updates sent by heads of polling stations, whether to add, modify, or delete voter counts. The agent then gathers these voter number updates from all head of polling stations. The system then updates turnout rates in a Google Sheet by inserting, modifying, or deleting entries, and performing the necessary calculations automatically. The agent confirms the action back to the user, ensuring transparency and providing clear feedback to heads of polling stations.
Results	Frees up electoral staff by decentralizing turnout updates. Improves accuracy by reducing manual handling and information layers. Brings turnout updates closer to real time for faster oversight.

Secretary Agent

The Secretary Agent simplifies appointment management by automating requests, coordinating schedules, and reducing administrative back-and-forth.

Pain Point	Secretarial work is one of the most resource-intensive functions at the Ministry, especially during elections and leadership transitions. With appointment requests surging under the new Minister, coordinating meetings became an operational bottleneck. This administrative load opened the door for an AI agent to act as a digital secretary, streamlining appointment management and reducing manual overhead.
Vision	Deploy an AI agent capable of handling appointment requests by conversing directly with requesters, extracting key information, and coordinating with the Minister to approve or decline meetings.
Actions	The agent responds promptly and professionally to appointment requests, setting a clear and structured tone from the outset. The agent then understands and classifies the user's intent - whether it's an appointment, complaint, or general inquiry - to focus only on appointments, while extracting key details like urgency, topic, and location. The system then manages the back-and-forth to check availability, coordinate with the Minister, and determine whether a meeting is possible. Finally, the agent notifies the requester of the decision; if approved, finalizes the meeting with a calendar invite and confirmation.
Results	Reduces Administrative Load Streamlines Scheduling Improves Responsiveness for appointment seekers

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Recommendations

Strategic Recommendations for Electoral Governance and Institutional Modernization

1. Legal and Policy Reform

- **Review and modernize decentralization and municipal election laws**: Revisit and update the legal frameworks governing decentralization and municipal elections to enhance local governance, clarify mandates, and eliminate contradictions or overlaps with national electoral legislation.
- **Pass a residency-based voting law:** Enact legislation that allows citizens to vote where they live, ensuring electoral fairness, increasing participation, and aligning voter eligibility with local realities.
- **Develop and institutionalize Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Create detailed, codified SOPs for operations room functions, including inter-agency coordination, escalation of complaints, crisis management, and electoral management. Institutionalize a process to constantly update these SOPs and archive them.

2. Strategic Operations and Coordination

- **Transform the operations room into a national coordination center:** Upgrade the operations room from a reactive crisis unit to a 24/7 strategic nerve center for planning, coordination, and real-time decision-making across elections and ministry functions and integrate this scope in its internal regulations and legal structure.
- **Establish functional units within the operations room:** Create dedicated teams for logistics, data analytics, communications, and crisis management, ensuring the room operates as a multi-disciplinary coordination hub.
- **Ensure dedicated budgets and advanced technologies:** Allocate funding for secure communication systems, real-time dashboards, monitoring platforms, and simulation tools to enhance preparedness and rapid decision-making.

Strategic Recommendations for Electoral Governance and Institutional Modernization

3. Digital Transformation and Smart Infrastructure

- **Centralize and modernize ministry data systems:** Develop a unified, digital, and regularly updated database housing electoral, administrative, and operational data. This will enable more informed staff appointments, resource planning, and decision-making.
- **Digitize all internal workflows:** Replace outdated paper-based procedures with secure, transparent digital systems, reducing time, cost, and risk of human error, while improving traceability and efficiency.
- **Deploy GPS and real-time tracking systems:** Monitor the movement of sensitive electoral materials (ballot boxes) through integrated GPS systems, enhancing transparency and reducing reliance on manual verification.
- **Introduce Agentic AI into core operations:**
  - Use AI agents to automate complaint triaging during elections (replacing repetitive work in the call center).
  - Apply AI to monitor media and flag risks (eliminating the need for manual 24/7 monitoring).
  - Use AI to coordinate logistics and operations such as polling station staffing, reserve assignment, and equipment verification, thereby freeing ministry staff to focus on high-level strategy.

4. Innovation and Automation Culture

- **Institutionalize a digital innovation mindset:** Embed innovation into the Ministry's culture. Encourage departments to pilot and adopt new technologies that improve efficiency and service delivery.
- **Scale automation of repetitive tasks:** Automate core processes including data entry, reporting, electoral logistics tracking, and communications, shifting human resources to strategic and oversight roles.

Strategic Recommendations for Electoral Governance and Institutional Modernization

5. Proactive Planning and Risk Management

- **Shift to a preventive governance model:** Anticipate and plan for electoral risks by developing contingency plans, conducting simulations, and engaging early with stakeholders at all levels.
- **Implement an early warning and issue-tracking system:** Use real-time data to detect and escalate emerging issues such as personnel shortages, technical failures, or logistics gaps, enabling rapid responses.
- **Launch a national study on voter turnout:** Understand the root causes of low participation and develop targeted voter engagement strategies to improve civic participation in future elections.

6. Capacity Building and Human Development

- **Deliver continuous training for Ministry staff:** Prioritize skill-building in data analysis, digital tools, and electoral technologies to strengthen institutional performance and readiness.
- **Provide targeted training to polling station staff:** Develop practical, logistics-focused training for heads of polling stations and field staff to minimize hotline calls, reduce election day errors, and ensure smoother operations. Leverage digital platforms to enhance training quality, track learning outcomes, and ensure accountability.
- **Preserve institutional memory through knowledge transfer:** Establish systems (manuals, and mentorship) to retain expertise and lessons learned between election cycles and staff changes.

Strategic Recommendations for Electoral Governance and Institutional Modernization

7. Communication, Transparency, and Public Trust

- **Implement a strategic communication plan across all election phases:**
  - **Pre-election:** Promote voter education, encourage candidacy, and explain procedures.
  - **Election day:** Provide live updates, resolve misinformation rapidly, and reinforce voter trust.
  - **Post-election:** Share outcomes, lessons learned, and demonstrate institutional accountability.
- **Position the Ministry as a credible and modern information source:** Enhance visibility and transparency through proactive public messaging, live dashboards, and factual content.
- **Use communications to boost voter engagement:** Tailor outreach to youth and marginalized groups. Highlight the role and responsibility of citizens in democratic processes.
- **Introduce a citizen portal for election-related services**: Provide a centralized online platform where voters can check eligibility, know where to vote, submit questions, and track complaints. This reduces call center pressure and improves accessibility.

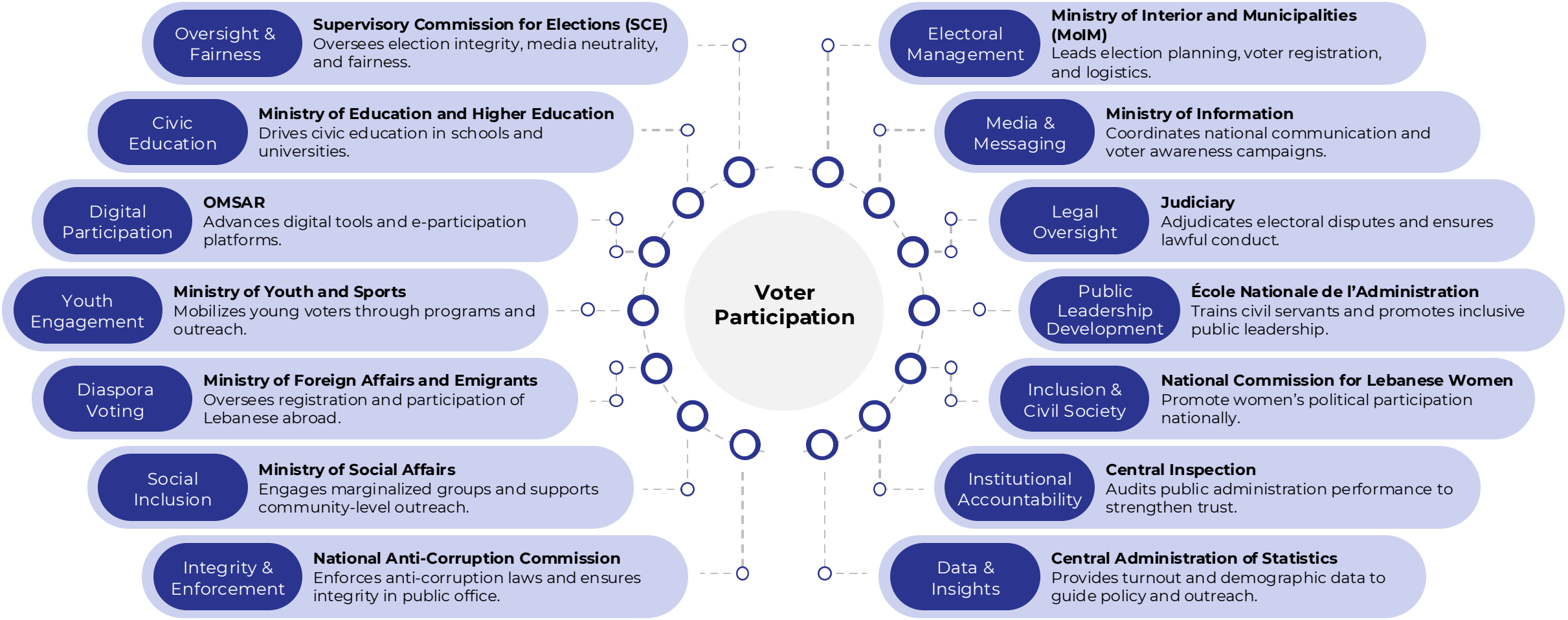
Strategic Recommendations for Electoral Governance and Institutional Modernization

8. Expanding Institutional Ownership of the Electoral Process

- **Involve local governments in electoral service delivery:** Empower municipalities to support voter registration outreach, polling logistics, and local electoral coordination, especially in preparation for decentralization reforms.
- **Institutionalize electoral roles across public institutions:** Mandate inter-agency coordination among ministries and oversight bodies through formal task forces that guide planning, risk management, and post-election evaluation.
- **Expand civic and electoral education beyond schools:** Include vocational centers, community-based programs, and public media in civic education efforts to engage a broader population across age and education levels.
- **Mainstream gender and inclusion mandates in the electoral cycle:** Assign standing roles to the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Commission for Lebanese Women to design inclusive outreach, monitor access, and support diverse candidate participation.
- **Mobilize public media and cultural institutions:** Engage state-run media and cultural actors in building national narratives around voting as a civic duty, especially targeting first-time and disengaged voters.
- **Strengthen diaspora voting infrastructure and access:** Scale up coordination between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies to institutionalize diaspora voter registration and pilot secure hybrid or digital voting solutions.
- **Create a public sector electoral innovation lab:** Establish a unit within OMSAR or in partnership with universities to test and recommend digital tools, procedural reforms, and tech-enabled voter engagement strategies.
- **Use electoral data for reform and foresight:** Task the Central Administration of Statistics with regular analysis of turnout, demographics, and voter behavior to guide reforms and inform outreach strategies.

Rebuilding Statecraft

Elections are not just a technical event, they are a national and societal process that requires the sustained engagement of institutions across all levels of the state.



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Disclaimer:
This report was prepared by participants in the Youth4Governance (Y4G) program as part of their academic and professional development experience. The findings, analyses, and recommendations presented reflect the work and perspectives of the students and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, USJ, or Siren.

Thank you!