

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION

Summary and Main Messages
of
Jordan's Voluntary National Review
To be presented at the
High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
July 2017 - New York

Introduction:

Jordan has made considerable economic, social and human development achievements over the past decades, investing significantly in infrastructure, human resources, and improving upon living standards. Highly urbanized and with limited natural resources, the country relies heavily upon its services sector, which fosters an economy particularly vulnerable to exogenous influences.

The country lies at the centre of one of the most volatile regions in the world and has been historically accustomed to sudden influxes of population from neighbouring countries seeking safety and security. Jordan has opened its borders to Palestinians, Iraqis and others in need many times in the recent past. Since 2011, the kingdom has been called upon again to accept the stream of Syrian refugees fleeing the violence in their homeland and there are now 1.3 million Syrians in Jordan. Overall, the number of registered refugees with UNRWA and UNHCR has reached 2.8 million, making Jordan the largest refugee-hosting country worldwide, when compared to the size of its population.

Jordan was one of the first countries globally, and in the Arab Region, to take action towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Overall, considerable achievements were made during the first ten years, especially in the area of poverty eradication, maternal and child health, communicable diseases, universal primary education, and environmental sustainability. Abject poverty was reduced to less than 0.5 percent and absolute poverty rates were further reduced while infant, under-five and maternal mortality rates were significantly lowered, and universal primary education was achieved.

However, during the past decade, the country has faced a number of substantial challenges, most notably: the 2008 global financial crisis and rise in oil prices, generalized instability throughout the region and the spill over effects on investment, trade and tourism, and, finally, the tremendous impact of the Syria crisis, including the refugee crisis and resulting population growth which have impacted upon overall development gains in Jordan. According to the 2015 census, Jordan's population now stands at 9.5 million. Around thirty percent of the population are non-Jordanians and more than 1.3 million are Syrians, with over 80 percent of Syrian refugees living in host communities. Such circumstances put increased pressure on Jordan's limited resources, especially sustainable management of water resources, and impose severe stress on its public services, economic growth, trade, exports, tourism and investment, in turn leading to an increase in the budget deficit and public debt. The annual direct cost of hosting Syrians in the kingdom amounts to approximately 2.348 billion US dollar while the annual indirect cost is about US\$ 3.1 billion.

Jordan has been coping with the repercussions of the Syria crisis with support from the international community, with recognition of the global public good that the country has been providing. Yet, the protracted crisis in Syria has now entered its seventh year and represents a serious threat to national resilience.

The country has embarked on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), despite the numerous challenges Jordan is currently facing. Jordan remains determined to safeguard recent development achievements while ensuring a resilient, prosperous and inclusive economy.

Methodology and Process of Preparing the Review:

Jordan is committed to the 2030 Agenda and to leaving no one behind. The Government of Jordan has opted to prepare its first Voluntary National Review and present it at the High Level Political Forum in the July 2017 session. Central to this decision was the desire to benefit from the national deliberations, and not solely from the report produced. In addition, through its participation, Jordan aspires to further strengthen national ownership of the 2030 Agenda and accelerate its implementation.

The process has been led by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIIC), as the focal point for SDG implementation, with support from the United Nations Country Team in Jordan, including non-resident agencies. The National Higher Committee on Sustainable Development has also provided overall strategic guidance and supervision.

Extensive consultations on the way forward were made with line ministries, Major Groups and Other stakeholders (MGOs) using different approaches. These included: a number of meetings and workshops with civil society organizations, including organizations focused on human rights, women's rights, and community development; organizations working with youth and volunteers; the private sector; workers' unions; local councils and committees; academia; and science and technology communities. Special attention was dedicated to ensuring the inclusion of women, youth, children, and people with disabilities. Representatives of Syrian and other refugees were also involved in the workshops and discussions.

The Policy and Enabling Environment - Progress Since Adopting the SDGs

Creating Ownership of the SDGs

Between 2012 and 2014, Jordan was heavily engaged at all levels in the global consultations for the development of the post-2015 agenda. Furthermore, Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah was one of the 27 eminent world leaders who provided advice to the UN Secretary General on the shape of the 2030 Agenda's framework.

This engagement led to a natural sense of ownership of the new 2030 Agenda and in March, 2016, the implementation was initiated during a national workshop including approximately 100 representatives from government and MGOs in Jordan. During the consultation, the government presented its roadmap to fostering ownership, implementing the Agenda and achieving the SDGs.

The roadmap includes the following priority elements:

- Raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals, targets, indicators and means of implementation;
- Prioritization and mapping of goals, targets and indicators with national planning frameworks;
- Mainstreaming within national plans;
- Mainstreaming within sub-national plans/at governorate and municipality levels;
- Strengthening national statistical systems and availability of data;
- Gender mainstreaming;
- Further strengthening of institutional mechanisms;
- SDG costing;
- Financing;
- Enhancing monitoring and evaluation systems; and
- Developing capacity.

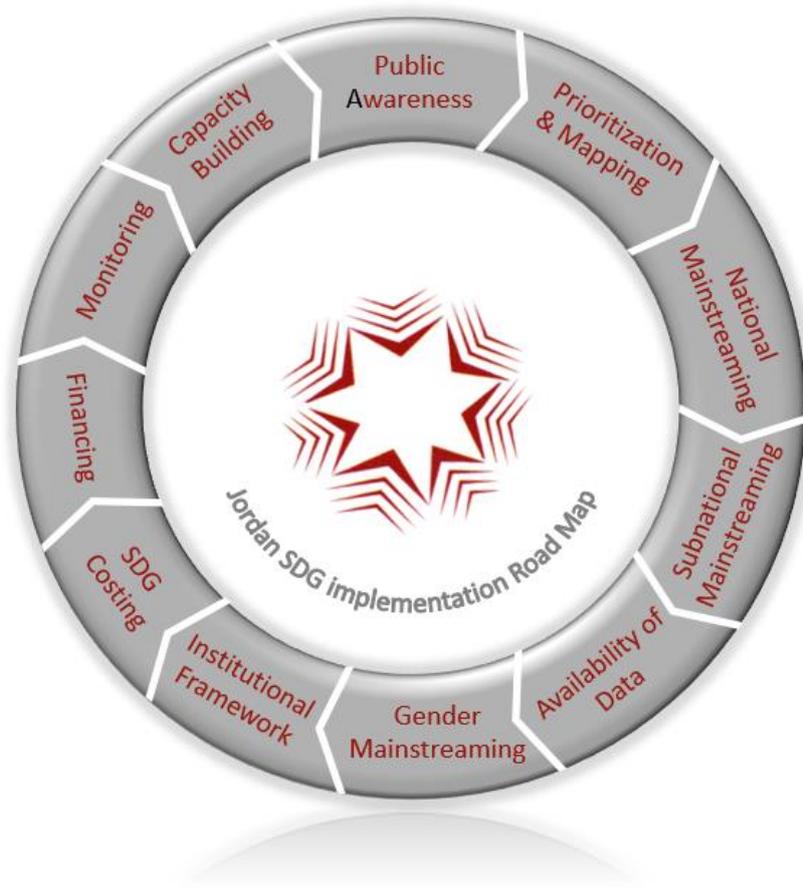


Figure 1: Jordan's roadmap towards ownership and achievement of the 2030 Agenda's SDGs.

The roadmap is considered an important building block for the implementation of the Agenda and will be regularly reviewed and refined as part of the overall monitoring of national development plans and mechanisms.

Mainstreaming the SDGs in National Frameworks

Jordan has focused on ensuring its policy, environment and institutional frameworks are conducive to the commencement of the 2030 Agenda's strong implementation, building on achievements and successful mechanisms put in place during MDG action. The following key visionary and planning documents and frameworks work to support effective SDG implementation:

Jordan 2025: A National Vision and Strategy was launched in 2015 and represents a thorough, 10- year socio-economic blueprint for the country that takes into consideration the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, with the objective of achieving a prosperous, resilient and inclusive economy while strengthening reform and inclusion.

Executive Development Programmes translate "Jordan 2025" into actionable and measurable development programmes through three or four-year cycles. The EDP for 2016-2019 is currently under implementation. Both "Jordan 2025" and the EDP are in harmony with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, and both have adopted a set of strategic objectives related to the empowerment of women in health, education, poverty, social protection, employment and participation in the labour force.

Governorate Development Programmes have been developed for each of the 12 governorates across Jordan, translating national priorities at the sub-national level and taking into consideration their own priorities and challenges, in line with comparative advantages found within each governorate.

The Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis (JRP) (2017-2019) is a pioneering plan that brings together humanitarian and resilience efforts under a single, national framework for the benefit of both refugees and host communities.

In addition to the above, a number of important national strategies, plans and enabling laws have been developed, putting in place a strong policy environment for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including: the Comprehensive National Plan for Human Rights (2016-2025); the National Strategy for Women; the National Strategy for People with Disabilities; the National Strategy for Human Resource Development (2016-2025); the National Strategy for Reproductive Health/Family Planning (2013-2018); the Jordanian National Action Plan to Implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325; the National Strategy for Youth (under development); the National Climate Change Policy (2013-2020); the National Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production (2016-2025); the National Policy and Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (2013-2017); and the National Plan for Green Growth, among others.

Institutional Mechanisms

In order to ensure improved alignment, and emphasize commitment to all SDGs attached to national priorities, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda builds on existing frameworks and mechanisms, which are further refined to allow for better

harmonization. The following chart clarifies the institutional mechanisms used to anchor the 2030 Agenda's implementation and the interrelations between a variety of committee and institutional mechanisms.

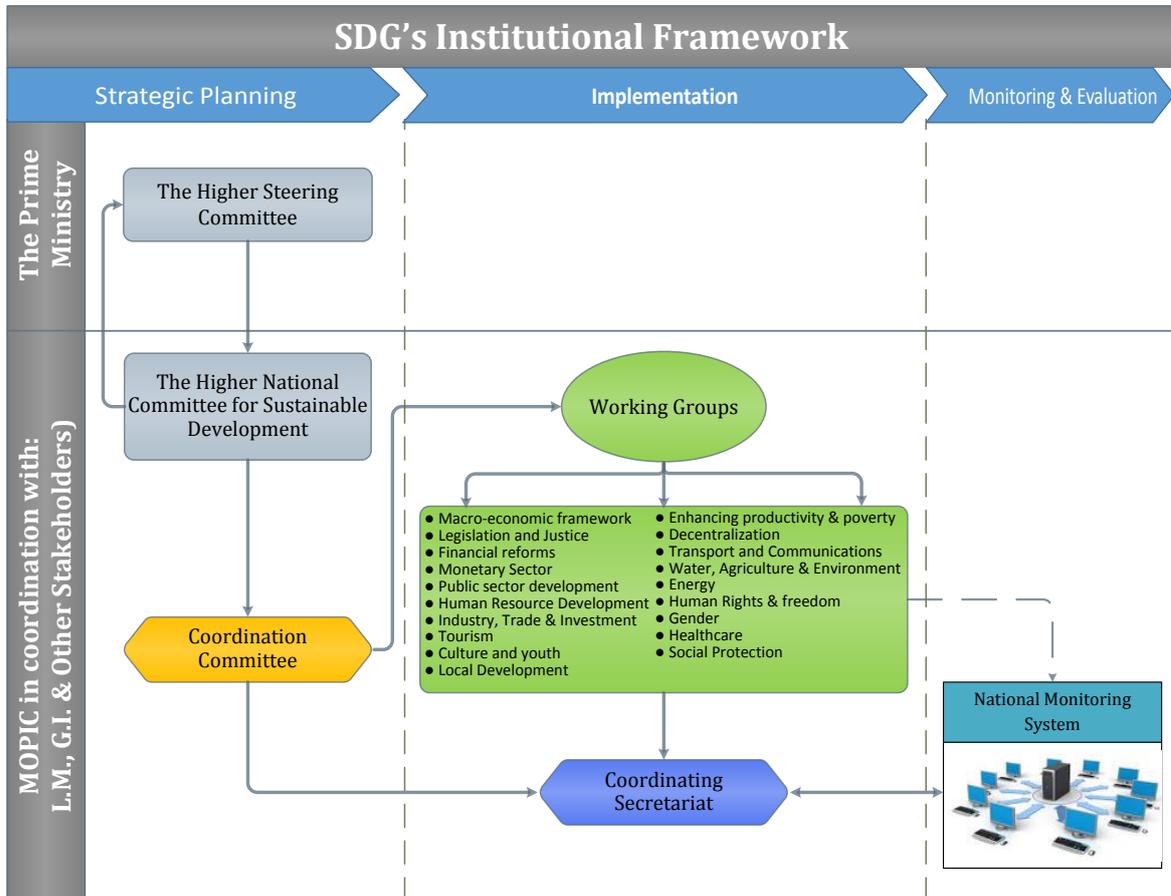


Figure 2: Institutional framework for SDG implementation.

The **National Higher Committee for Sustainable Development** was expanded in March, 2017 to include the type of broader government and civil society participation required for strategic alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

The **Coordination Committee** provides direct supervision and management during the preparation of the EDPs and ensures mainstreaming of the SDGs within the national plans, and connectedness between working groups.

The **Working Groups** define long and short-term objectives and actions based on the EDP and in alignment with the SDG goals, targets and indicators. To ensure better alignment between the national priorities and the SDGs, the formulation of the groups was amended and two new working groups on "Gender Mainstreaming" and "Human Rights and Freedom of Expression" were established. Members of the above mentioned new groups will also be embedded within the other groups to ensure connectedness and complementarity.

Goals and Targets

An initial mapping of goals, targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda and national priorities demonstrates that all goals and targets are important for Jordan, albeit to varying degrees. The outcome of this preliminary mapping indicates that there are strong linkages among the two, with room for further mainstreaming within the EDPs in upcoming years. The status of available indicators was also reviewed, and initially categorized into the three tiers of indicators. (I, II, III) On average, 40% of the indicators are considered as tier I, varying from 0% to 14% for Goals 14 and 15 respectively and 67% for Goal 7. It is important to note however, the preliminary nature of this endeavour which will be substantiated and disaggregated by a more thorough process in years to come.



Figure 3: Percentage of indicators per goal, for which baselines are available (Tier 1 indicators).

The Department of Statistics has the responsibility of quality assurance and clearance of all indicators and a special SDG team within the Department was created for this purpose. The responsibilities related to quality assurance for the SDG indicators will be reflected in the National Statistical Strategy, currently under development, which will also focus on the importance of strengthening the quality of administrative records in covering important data gaps in the future.

Thematic Focus - Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing World; Jordan's Perspective

The theme for this year's HLPF on Sustainable Development will focus on "Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing World". This is at the heart of the Jordan 2025 blueprint which is built upon four pillars: citizens, society, businesses and government, towards a resilient and prosperous Jordan. Pivotal to this is maintaining security and stability, safeguarding development gains; addressing the increased pressures on resources and services across the country; and systematically working to reduce all forms of disparities, including geographic and gender disparities.

Jordan's full report to the HLPF addresses poverty eradication from Jordan's perspective, in line with its national priorities. Goals 1,2,3,5,9 and 14 will be part of the review, however, the review will also include an overview of priorities of key importance to Jordan.

The report will briefly touch upon key areas including:

- Sustainable economic growth and decent work
- Social protection, poverty and food security
- Health care
- Water
- Energy
- Environment and climate change
- Empowerment of women
- Justice, participation and enhancement of the judicial environment

Means of Implementation

Jordan remains committed to increasing and strengthening internal financing and has linked capital expenditures to the EDP thereby ensuring priority funding dedicated to the Agenda's implementation which is mainstreamed in the EDP.

However, an increased and steadier flow of further medium and long-term commitments and support from the international community is crucial to achieving the SDGs. To remain resilient in the face of the ongoing regional challenges, and to meet the sizeable investment needs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Jordan will continue to pursue internal and external innovative funding approaches, with a special focus on public-private partnerships and other financing tools, building on experience with complimentary humanitarian and development financing.

Support from the international community to address the repercussions of the Syria crisis will continue to be an important element in the means of implementation of the SDGs. Increased support in the form of grants and concessional finance was committed in 2016 to Jordan as part of the Jordan Compact, with contracted funding fulfilling approximately 61% of the requested funding needs for that year. This represents a vast improvement compared to commitments fulfilling just 30% of the required in previous

years. In this regard, the Jordan Compact provides a unique model that can be further replicated based on lessons learned.

The launch of the Concessional Financing Facility represents another breakthrough developed in response to Jordan's call for the consideration of innovative financing schemes to upper middle income countries. Jordan will be among the first beneficiaries of the Concessional Financing Facility.

In order to improve the efficiency of public investment management (PIM), the government has also developed a "PIM Action Plan" (2016-2018) for the formulation, preparation and evaluation of projects to ensure an efficient investment process, maximize the expected return on investment projects and ensure their strong contribution to sustainable development in the country.

The Government of Jordan and the UN are on track to become the first formal 'Delivering as One' country in the Arab region, shifting to this strategic programming in the upcoming 2018-2022 programme cycle. This will ensure better agility and coordination among actors, and within the UN system in supporting SDG implementation. In the same vein, Jordan will also pursue longer term cooperation and funding mechanisms with other bilateral and multilateral donors.

In addition to financial resources, strong capacity development support is required to ensure efficient and effective implementation to meet all goals. This includes: enhancing the capacities of the national statistical system; augmenting national capabilities surrounding results based management, strengthening monitoring and evaluation; mainstreaming the SDGs into national development plans; localizing the SDGs and ensuring SDG costing; developing coordination mechanisms at all levels in addition to technical capacities to heighten SDG action.

Science, technology and innovation provide important implementation tools. Based on the lessons learned in the implementation of the current National Policy and Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), a detailed plan will be developed focused on the role of academia and the STI sector in achieving the SDGs.

Next Steps and the Way Forward

The early implementation of the 2030 Agenda has benefitted from favourable political will and support at the highest level, a facilitating policy environment and institutional mechanisms, building upon the successful experience gained in the MDG implementation.

However, there have been challenges. As the country faces the real threat of losing development gains due to continuing regional instabilities, the pressure exerted on the country's infrastructure and services due to the Syria crisis is compounded by insufficient funding.

In the coming years, the government will focus on strengthening coordination at all levels, on mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into its current and future EDPs and JRPs,

and also work to improve the availability of data to better enable monitoring and evaluation.

Moving forward, the roadmap will be further refined to coordinate the work of different national and international entities working towards the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.

Raising awareness of the Sustainable Development Agenda and its goals, targets, indicators and means of implementation: The draft SDG Communication Strategy, currently under development, will work to strategically address a variety of audiences including: civil society organizations, private sector, youth, women, students, academia, parliamentarians and municipal councils, using different tools including written and visual material, workshops, panel discussions, social media and simulation models.

Prioritization and mapping of goals, targets and indicators with national planning frameworks: Conducting regular technical meetings and reviews facilitating agreement on baselines and targets for all indicators while conducting a gap analysis to identify areas of concern.

Mainstreaming within national plans: Continuing to mainstream the SDGs in the current and future EDPs and sectoral plans, taking into consideration the economic, social and environmental elements of sustainable development and their interconnectedness.

Mainstreaming into sub-national plans: Starting in one to two governorates selected according to clear criteria, and expanding mainstreaming systematically to all governorates.

Strengthening national statistical systems and availability of data: Providing technical support to the Department of Statistics (DOS) to ensure the availability of missing data from DOS or other data providers and robust quality control mechanisms.

Gender mainstreaming: Continuing to mainstream gender throughout all national development plans in line with the SDGs, mapping of gender indicator gaps and the establishment of a gender database.

Further strengthening of institutional mechanisms: Continuing to adopt an efficient framework that ensures everyone's involvement in planning, implementing, and monitoring of development.

SDG Costing: Developing a mathematical model based on the existing situation and future projections to calculate the cost of achieving the SDGs in line with national priorities. This would require technical support for the establishment of such models.

Financing: In order to ensure adequate domestic and external funding and maximize the achievement of the SDGs, the government will focus on the following priorities:

- Continue directing capital funding towards achieving comprehensive and sustainable development through the funding of national plans and priorities;
- Further strengthen Public Private Partnerships (PPP), given their important role in implementing economically and socially viable strategic projects within a conducive legislative and business environment;
- Develop a business and investment environment that encourages local and foreign investment, especially ensuring that Jordan enjoys a competitive advantage in this field, in addition to legislation, privileges and incentives;
- Strengthen the competitiveness of Jordanian products in international markets and increase the growth of national exports by opening new markets and strengthening the rules of origin in international agreements, providing Jordan with a competitive edge;
- Promote regional cooperation in the areas of trade, transport, water and energy, leading to economic and social development without harming the environment;
- Promote North-South and South-South cooperation among countries, especially since Jordan enjoys a strategic position between Asia, Africa and Europe;
- Cooperate with developed economies in the fields of knowledge transfer and technology for the achievement of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Secure funding for the national plan to reduce emissions submitted at the Paris Climate Change Conference, which strives for a global contribution to climate change mitigation;
- Strengthen the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with the private sector, ensuring engagement in sustainable development and community service.

Enhancing monitoring and evaluation systems through the establishment of a national monitoring system and dashboard on SDG indicators and achievement available for all on the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation's website. Preparation of annual progress reports and national progress reports every four years.

Developing capacity in planning, mainstreaming and localizing the SDGs, including the inclusion of gender mainstreaming, in addition to strengthening the national statistical system, monitoring and evaluation systems and report drafting.

Conclusion

The world can continue to count on Jordan to remain an indispensable global partner in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within this turbulent region, Jordan remains a safe haven, representing a sincere partner in the pursuit of lasting peace.

We must be mindful that Jordan cannot do this alone as the magnitude of the pressure exerted on the country's infrastructure and basic services due to the current crisis in Syria creates challenges along the path of SDG implementation. Sustained and expanded medium and long-term financial and technical support to Jordan is more critical than ever in safeguarding hard-earned development gains and ensuring resilience in the face of an unpredictable future and the quest for sustainable development.