



Message of the State of Kuwait on the Submission of Kuwait's 2019 SDGs Voluntary National Review

Prior to adoption of Sustainable Development Goals, the State of Kuwait achieved Millennium Development Goals, realising concrete successes in ending poverty & hunger, providing universal education and closing gender gap in education and in other walks of life. It had attained universal healthcare, achieved admirable health indicators of infant, child, & maternal mortality, and ensured extensive water and sanitation services. Kuwait had also made important strides in economic, and social development while paying significant attention to the environment and maintaining unwavering commitment to global partnership and international solidarity.

The State of Kuwait officially adopted SDGs in September 2015, and took a decision reflecting all Goals: strategically and substantively in first national development plan of Kuwait Vision 2035; including SDGs within the national institutional development framework, and its plans, budget and national governance structure; engaging government entities, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders at the policy, and institutional levels, allocating resources for advocacy and consensus building.

Establishing National Sustainable Development Committee (NSDC) and National Observatory on Sustainable Development (NOSD) were critical parts of integrated institutional efforts to roll out the SDGs Agenda as a national participatory undertaking. The General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD) together with Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) organised over thirteen national workshops, targeting over sixty-six entities from government, non-government and private sector partners. The workshops offered an opportunity to discuss & define SDGs priorities in the national context, interact with stakeholders on their respective roles in achieving SDGs, and mainstreaming goals and targets within the quinquennial Kuwait National Development Plan (2015-2020).

The Government of Kuwait has significantly invested in national awareness raising on transformative scope of Agenda 2030 and its ultimate purpose of "leaving no one behind". While setting strategic paths to overcome challenges, including strengthening the role of private sector, reducing dominance of oil sector on the economy, balancing public budget, creating conditions

for reinvigorated direct foreign investments and improving infrastructure, the State of Kuwait has implemented strategic development projects for achieving relevant SDGs and their targets.

Several achievements have been recorded on several SDGs including six priority goals of 2019 Review. Of relevance to this year's VNR theme, namely "empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality", Kuwait introduced over years several integrated social policy provisions and implemented all-inclusive social protection programmes, which resulted in raising standards of living, and ensuring universal access to basic services such as clean water, electricity, health care, education, transportation and other amenities for all residents. It devised capacity development programmes ensuring vulnerable groups are being empowered and given the means to be autonomous and economically productive.

One of Kuwait's main messages is the commitment to all-inclusive, rights-based, equal-opportunity and dignifying development of human capital and to economic, social and environmental sustainability. The state is also committed to regional and world peace and human dignity, and to global partnership and international solidarity. The Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), founded in 1961, is Kuwait's main institution providing development assistance (ODA). It has summed up over \$19 billion US dollars ever since, in donations and grants that benefited over 106 countries around the globe. Kuwait's ODA increased between 2012 and 2017 maintaining a funding level above 2% of GDP at a time when revenues were rather dwindling, due to oil price drop.

Leading up to the production of Voluntary National Report (VNR) 2019, the Government of Kuwait convened early on and throughout the drafting process, a series of national gatherings and workshops with a range of stakeholders including government, civil society organizations, the academia, the private sector and UN partners. The gatherings provided open fora for participants to actively participate in the successive preparations, discuss and provide required information and data, being engaged in reviews and revisions leading to final VNR report.

Kuwait's 2019 VNR carries significant evidence to this message and attests to the determination of country's Leadership, and to the policy, strategic, institutional framework and participatory endeavours of the Government in the short, medium and long-run, to bring about the highest dividend of sustainable human development for All, and to achieve SDGs Agenda 2030 and Kuwait Vision 2035.