



THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**Answers to the Guiding Questions Raised by ECOSOC
For Member States' input to the Integration Segment:
“Implementing the 2030 Agenda Through Policy Innovation and Integration”
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Answer to Question 1:

Towards achieving Sustainable Development, The Government of Jordan launched in 2015 the Jordan's Vision 2025 as a long-term strategic plan to be implemented through a 3-Year executive development programs, in addition to the regional development plans at governorate level. These documents are prepared in a participatory approach, where representatives from different public and private sectors, civil society organizations, local governments, academia, non-profit research and study centers and individual experts participated in the formulation of these documents. However, these documents, which are highly reflecting the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, built on the knowledge accumulation among decision-makers about sustainable development issues, which resulted mainly from several factors, including the following:

1. High political commitment in Sustainable Development, represented by the participation of Jordan at the highest political levels at the United Nations conferences on Sustainable Development. In 1992 His Majesty the late King Hussein Bin Talal headed the Jordanian delegation to the first Earth Summit, which reflected the importance of the sustainable development themes for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Jordanian participations continued in the following two United Nations conferences on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002, and Rio de Janeiro in 2012. This continuous commitment lead to deepening the national understanding of Sustainable Development issues.
2. Participation of the government of Jordan in the United Nations Committee on Sustainable Development meetings since its established in 1992. These participations accompanied with prior coordination process with the concerned ministries, in accordance to the agenda of work of each meeting. This continues process improved the national understanding of the sustainable development and its three dimensions, from sectorial perspective.

3. Establishing the Higher National Committee on Sustainable Development(HNCSD), in 2002, as a national platform for dialogue on sustainable development issues, challenges and opportunities towards achieving sustainable development goals in Jordan.
4. Participation of the HNCSD in the formulation and development of the first long-term national strategic development framework to achieve the three dimensions of sustainable development in Jordan. This blueprint called “ The National Agenda” which was launched in 2006.
5. Establishing the Sustainable Development Division at Ministry of planning and International Cooperation in 2004, and nominated it as an Executive Secretariat for the HNCSD, which aimed to follow-up of HNCSD meetings, prepare for the participation of national delegations in international meetings on sustainable development, technical coordination with the national and international institutions, and keep Sustainable Development File updated.
6. The government of Jordan gave more attention to other two dimensions of sustainable development; the social and environmental dimensions. This interest represented by adopting number of policy documents (such as poverty reduction strategy 2002, employment strategy 2013, poverty report 2012, quality of life index 2012) to measure and monitor the development of social issues. As for environment dimension of SD, Ministry of Environment established in 2003, in order to address all environmental challenges facing Jordan, and reflecting the increasing concern of the environment issues in Jordan. Several policy documents related to the environmental sector have been approved such as the executive plan of climate change submitted to Climate Summit in Paris 2015, the climate change policy which was published in 2014, launching the strategy of sustainable production and consumption in 2015, conducting a scoping study on the green economy in 2011, and preparing the green growth strategy and implementation plan which will be launched in May 2016.

Answer to Question 2:

Establishing the Higher National Committee for Sustainable Development (HNCSD) in 2002 to coordinate national efforts for the participation in Johannesburg Summit for sustainable development, chaired by Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, and representatives from 16 institutions. However, the committee reformed in 2005, to include Ministry of Environment and nominating Minister of Environment as vice-chair, and increasing membership to 22 concerned institutions instead of 16. However, three sub-committees was formed in accordance to the dimensions of SD.

The committee main responsibilities are:

1. Participating in national priorities design, to ensure coherent and consistency among programs and national plans.
2. Incorporating environmental issues national plans and sectoral strategies.
3. Endorsement of action and financing plans proposed by sub-committees.

4. Endorsement of local development and decentralization frameworks proposed by sub-committees.
5. Approval of policy statements to be used in forums about sustainable development concept, to enhance participation principles and good governance rules.
6. Review and amend legislations to be inconsistent with sustainable development requirements.
7. Review and endorse national reports about progress in sustainable development achievements.

Answer to Question 3:

In order to combat poverty and improving quality of life towards achieving sustainable development, the government of Jordan adopted number of policies and procedure, of which:

1. Establishing the National Aid Fund in 1986, to provide cash and in-kind Assistance to poor.
2. Launch the Poverty Alleviation National Strategy, 2002 (Toward a Better Jordan), aiming at combating poverty in a more comprehensive manner, taking into account educational and health aspects as key in building poor capacities and enabling them for work, creating more jobs in rural areas, increasing cash assistance, and expansion micro finance.
3. Launching Social Productive Program 2003, which consist of two programs; the Social Safety Net program, and the Enhancement of Economic and Social Productivity program. The objectives of this program are: enhancing local development and providing bundle of integrated services for individuals with pioneering project ideas (Arada), improving infrastructure, executing income generating projects, and building capacities of local institutions (Qudurat).
4. The Social and Economic Transformation Program, and Social and Economic Development Plan (2004-2006), which aimed at greater role to private sector to lead the development process, and prioritizing government interventions and development projects that serve poor areas and those with high unemployment.
5. The National Agenda, 2006, which included Social Welfare as a key pillar, and the long term frame of poverty alleviation and improving standards of living.
6. The Government program for Employment and Poverty Alleviation, 2006-2007, which aimed at establishing an umbrella to provide social protection for un-employable poor, and enhancing and increasing Jordanians economic participation rate, by enhancing equitable distribution of development gains, encouragement of handcrafts as a tool for income generating and poverty alleviation.
7. Social Protection Enhancement Program, 2008, which aimed at improving quality of social services, and developing targeting mechanism for the poor. This could be done by enhancing the National Aid Fund mechanism to target all the poor, not only those cases within its eligibility criterion.

8. Executive Development Programs, 2007-2009, 2009-2011, 2011-2013, Government Action Plan 2013-2016, and 2016-2018 executive development plan, which aimed at re-prioritize development projects in each sector, including social welfare sector.
9. Poverty Reduction Strategy 2013 – 2020, which aims at contain and reduce poverty, reducing inequality and vulnerability of the social and economic aspects. The main pillars of the Strategy are: social protection and Gender, employment and entrepreneurship in pro-poor businesses, comprehensive services of education and health, pro-poor agriculture and environment, pro-poor housing and transportation.

Answer to Question 4:

As any other economies, the Jordanian economy encountered some of trade-offs in its development policies, where Jordan has seen considerable economic achievements. These achievements were accompanied by some challenges that are still unresolved, mainly the development gap between governorates, high poverty and unemployment rates, especially among young people, low female economic participation and the relative decline in certain competitiveness indicators, as well some environmental indicators worsened.

Furthermore, the cost of environmental solutions encountered with limited financial resources for both public and private sector, mainly micro, small and medium enterprises that have already suffered from narrowness of the local market and their modest competitiveness in the global markets, which makes any additional environmental costs incurred by such companies will hinder its sustainability.

However, these trade-offs were exacerbated by the influx of Syrian refugees, mainly in the northern region, which absorbed the majority of these refugees.

To decrease these trade-offs, the government adopted number of procedures, of which:

1. subsidy reform to direct support to those who deserve it and to remove the distortions caused by commodity subsidies,
2. As for the environmental dimension, the government prepared the strategy and action plan for green growth, and forming the national committee for green economy chaired by the Minister of Environment. This committee aims at encouraging the environment friendly investments in six sectors; energy, water, tourism, agriculture, transport and waste. In addition to that, the Environment Protection Fund and Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund were established. These two funds provide partial support to many environment friendly investment projects that are in line with the national priorities.
3. Adopting pricing policy for rationalizing water and electricity consumption, in order to encourage the use of environment friendly technologies. Further, the government has launched campaigns to control illegal consumption of water and electricity.

4. As for bridging the development gap between regions, the government established development zones at different regions to attract investments, create more local jobs and combating poverty. This was supported by establishing vocational training centers, and improving basic and infrastructure services.
5. It is worth mentioning that reception of a million and two hundred and fifty thousand Syrian refugees by the Kingdom has formed huge and increasing pressure on the services provided by the government in all host communities, especially education, health and drinking water services. Further, the treasury has borne additional burden due to the increased consumption of the foodstuffs.

Answer to Question 5:

To improve the quality and standard of living for all Jordanians by better addressing their basic social needs such as better health care, education, water supply, and rural development. Simultaneously, accelerating and improving government decision making process to be more accurate, transparent and effective, the government adopted the participatory approach in developing its development policy such as the National Agenda in 2006, and the Jordan Vision 2025 in 2015.

The effort of developing the Vision was led by a Steering Committee chaired by the Prime Minister and participation of number of ministers and representatives from all segments of the society, and ideological fronts and private sector participated in its preparation. However, about 300 experts representing the government, business sectors, and civil society participated in the 17 technical sectoral committees formed to support the Steering Committee. The technical committees convened and managed by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC). These technical sectoral committees identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats faced by the Jordanian economy and society today. They also reviewed more than 1600 recommendations already made in over 80 previous plans and strategies developed over the past decade.

In addition to that, a broader process of engagement was also launched to ensure that every citizen, civil society organization, political party and business association was provided with the opportunity to contribute their views and ideas into the process of developing Jordan Vision 2025. The government issued a Public Call for Submissions in national newspapers in September 2014 and through the MOPIC website. This process followed international best practice for public participation and consultation and was the first time in Jordan that this form of open public participation has been used. In addition to newspaper advertisements, 45 business associations, civil society organizations, political parties and other groups were directly contacted by MOPIC and encouraged to take part in the process through this open submissions process. Moreover, out of 789 individuals and institutions invited, 450 participated in a one-day National Conference held at the Dead Sea on 20 September 2014. Participants exchanged views and ideas about how Jordan can and should move forward through seven working groups each focused on a specific strategic area important for the kingdom's future.

Answer to Question 6:

In addition to the above mentioned participatory approach in the preparation of development policy, the government endorsed the Public-Private Partnership Law (2014), in order to enhance the participation of the private sector in the implementation phase. Accordingly, a Public-Private Partnership Council (PPPC) was established and headed by the Prime Minister, and number of Ministries established its own PPPCs.

On the other hand, the government works on enhancing the participation of the non-government organizations in the HNCSD, and its technical sub-committees. Furthermore, a full consultation with the National Committee for Women Affairs to ensure that Executive Development Program 2016-2018, is sensitive to the gender issues.

Lately, the government has announced a road map that identify mechanisms to be followed to integrate sustainable development agenda 2030 and sustainable development goals into the national strategies and action plans. This road map included the role of non-government institutions in this process.

Answer to Question 7:

In order to help Jordan in adapting their policy framework to advance in implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, ECOSOC system can help in:

1. Building national capacity in incorporation techniques to enhance the integration of the 2030 agenda and its objectives into national and sectorial policies.
2. Strengthening national capacities in areas of monitoring and evaluation, and reporting on progress at the national level.
3. Building national capacities in preparation of national voluntary review reports to the high level political forum of the sustainable development.
4. Strengthening national capacity in the areas of measuring the multiplier effect of any progress in one goal or target on the other goals and targets, and its direction.
5. Strengthening national capacities in the areas of building different scenarios, and measuring their impacts on achieving sustainable development, of which refugee influx scenario.
6. Secure funding of participation of the middle income developing countries in the meetings of the high level political forum of the sustainable development in order to help these countries benefit from the international experiences and exchange of experiences and views on the best methods to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, especially those countries that suffer from special conditions like Jordan, due to reception of large number of refugees and the continued and increasing financial burden incurred by it.