

IMPLEMENTING
THE NEW
URBAN AGENDA

Implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the Middle East and North Africa

A review in preparation for the second Quadrennial report
(2022)

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This report documents the progress made in the implementation New Urban Agenda in the Middle East and North Africa between 2018 and 2021. The Report is based on desk review and analysis of a wide range of data sources including the Voluntary Local Reviews for cities in the region and national reports on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

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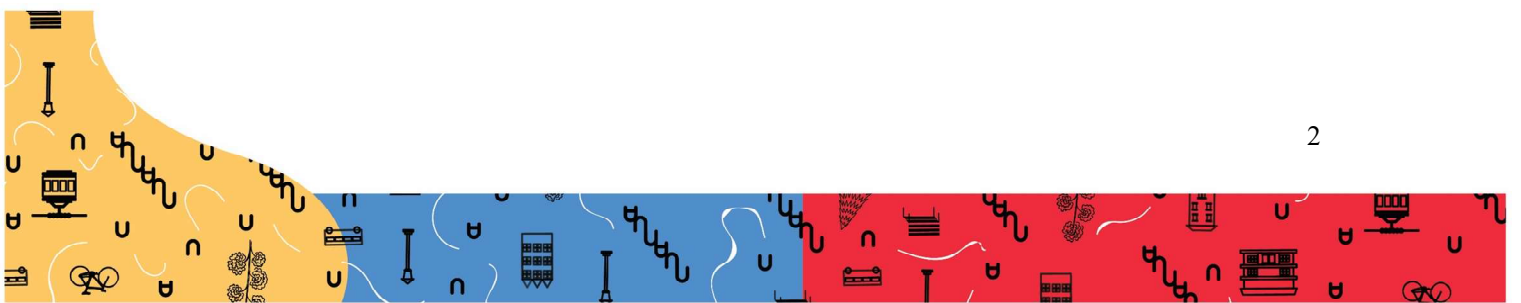


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List of acronyms

BDB	Bahrain Development Bank
BRIC	Bahrain Center for the Development of Emerging Industries
COVID-19	coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMH	Family House for Microfinance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoE	Government of Egypt
HLP	Housing, Land and Property rights
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LGUs	Local Government Units
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NMPSES	National Master Plan for New Sewerage Services
ONSS	Oman National Spatial Strategy
PCD	Plans Communaux de Développement
STDM	Social Tenure Domain Model
UELDP	Upper-Egypt Local Development Program
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Executive Summary

Key findings and messages of the report

1. The five Arab countries that presented reports to monitor the progress towards implementing the New Urban Agenda (NUA) included in alphabetic order, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, the Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia. These countries differ in terms of size, population, income, GDP, urbanization, main economic activities, level of human development, competitiveness, etc. However, these five countries were all committed to integrate the different pillars of NUA in the mainstream of policymaking, planning, budgeting, and governance.
2. The importance of NUA was emphasized during the COVID-19 pandemic, where increasing cities resilience, protecting the poor, the vulnerable groups, and the informal labor, moving to more flexible work arrangements, and benefiting from the technological development, and different smart solutions for education, work, and connectivity.
3. More resources should be mobilized to implement the NUA obligations, and the efficiency of all available resources must be optimized.
4. The five countries adopted gender-sensitive policies, and programs. Women empowerment was at the top of their priority lists. New legislations were adopted and existing one were modified to empower women politically, economically, and socially. Some countries developed strategies and others established supreme councils or observatory for women empowerment.
5. The five countries also gave attention to climate change, to natural disasters and to both the prevention and the protection measures that must be adopted.
6. The reporting countries also emphasized the need to diversify the resources to finance the implementation of NUA. Although countries took different measures to increase fiscal resources allocated to the different NUA pillars, however, the economic slow-down that was witnessed at the end of 2019 and accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, increased the challenge on financing NUA implementation. Most countries adopted fiscal stimulus packages to overcome the negative impact of the pandemic, but more reforms are needed to secure sustained fiscal resources.
7. Both institutional and human capacity building were emphasized by the 5 Arab countries, to speed-up and to institutionalize the NUA implementation.
8. Despite a long history of centralization in the 5 Arab reporting countries, they took several measures to empower the local administration, especially in the implementation process of NUA. However, more bold measures are needed to move towards decentralization, and delegating more functions to local authorities, based on the subsidiarity principle. Of course, this delegation should be coupled with raising the capacity of local authorities and increasing fiscal resources at the local level.
9. Monitoring the NUA implementation requires large data sets, and updated information. Raising the capacity of different countries to produce and use big databases to guide the policy making process is very important.
10. Establishing partnerships between different stakeholders, including UN-Habitat, and other international development organizations to provide technical advice, and lessons learned from best practices, is a pre-requisite for successful implementation of NUA.



I. Introduction

In preparation of the Quadrennial Report for the year 2022, that will be prepared by the UN-Habitat, to monitor the developments towards achieving the New Urban Agenda (NUA) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, five countries developed comprehensive reports and published them. These countries included, in alphabetic order, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, the Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia. In general, the five MENA countries made progress towards achieving the different pillars of NUA and integrating them in the mainstream of the policy making, the legislative and administrative reforms, the planning, the budgeting, the monitoring, and evaluation processes at the national, sectoral, and local levels.¹ Of course, the performance of these countries in the different pillars of NUA differ, depending on national priorities, the political, economic, and social circumstances, and based on available natural, human, and fiscal resources. The five countries also adopted diverse methodologies or approaches in implementing NUA. These MENA countries also faced different challenges in the NUA implementation. The preparation of the monitoring report adopted a participatory approach, with active participation from the government officials, the private sector, the civil society, the experts, and the academia. The NUA monitoring reports at the countries level were based on all previous national and international reports, research, and studies. Updated data and most recent information were used to compute the relevant indicators.

It should be noted that the implementation of the NUA in the five MENA countries received a high level of political commitment, which had a large positive impact on achieving the expected outcomes. In addition, most of the reporting countries in the MENA region formulated high level technical committees to coordinate the development of the NUA monitoring reports. Several meetings were organized to coordinate the preparation of the report, with active participation of different stakeholders. The NUA monitoring reports at the country level achieved several targets, in addition to highlighting the progress made in urban development. The reports helped countries to identify the challenges that they are facing, and how to address them, and to select the areas where technical or financial support is required. The reports emphasized the importance of implementing pilot projects to draw lessons learned, and scale them up. Information and data gaps were identified in the NUA reports as a challenge that needs to be addressed. Data classified according to gender, age group and to other aspects is very important. In addition, data at the local level supports the efforts to produce NUA local monitoring reports.

The NUA reports revealed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health, education, economic activities, resources allocation, on poverty and on vulnerable groups. Countries' efforts and the stimulus packages that were implemented to reduce the impact of the pandemic were also discussed. More importantly, the NUA monitoring reports emphasized the importance of making cities more resilient and raising their capacities to face the challenges of different disasters, including health failures.

The report includes five main parts including the introduction. Part two discusses the progress on transformative commitments during the period (2018-2022), and part three summarizes the main features of the effective implementation of the NUA. The different means of

¹ Other MENA countries also adopted similar approaches in implementing the NUA, even though these countries do not prepare and publish similar progress reports. For instance, Sultanate of Oman, developed “Oman National Spatial Strategy” (ONSS), to integrate the NUA and SDG 11 in the planning and budgeting process at the national and sectoral levels. In addition, Oman developed 11 Regional Spatial Plans to reflect the NUA at the regional and local levels.

implementation are examined in part four, and part five presents the concluding remarks and the main policy lessons.

II. Progress on transformative commitments (2018-2022)


II.1. Progress on social inclusion and ending poverty

II.1.1. Eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, achieving social inclusion of vulnerable groups (women, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities and migrants)

Poverty rates declined at the national level in Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and West Bank. In most of the MENA countries, the Gini Coefficient does not reveal income inequality in different regions and cities, except in Palestine. However, regional disparities are still persistent, poverty rates are higher in rural areas and borders cities. Moreover, poverty rates are expected to increase in the next few years, as a result of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments are undertaking the necessary measures to reduce income poverty, and to support the different vulnerable groups, through increasing conditional and unconditional cash transfers, extending social safety nets to include street vendors, small farmers, informal workers, old and disabled people, and females, and creating job and income opportunities for the vulnerable groups.

Tunisia recorded a relative decline in the extreme poverty rate at the national level, as the rate decreased from 6 percent in 2010 to 2.9 percent in 2015. However, this decrease is uneven between regions, as the country's northwest and center-west record the highest rates, as the extreme poverty rate is 26 percent in the rural center compared to 10.1 percent in the urban center. The poverty rate at the national level also decreased significantly from 25.4 percent in 2010 to 15.2 percent in 2015. However, the northwestern and midwestern regions still record the highest poverty rate, reaching, respectively, 28.4 percent and 30.8 percent (the first three dependencies in terms of the largest number of poor people is concentrated in the Midwest). Although the impact of poverty in the coastal regions (Greater Tunisia, the North-East and the Center-East) is considered low, it still records high rates in some regions of these regions. In general, there are statistically significant differences in poverty rates between rural areas (26 percent), small cities (15.2 percent) and major cities (6.3 percent). More importantly, the COVID-19 pandemic has a negative impact on vulnerable groups, as the poor are likely to get worse in the coming years.

In 2021, **Tunisia** created the “Fund for Supporting Decentralization, Amendment and Solidarity between Local Communities” to empower localities, allocate more fiscal resources to them to meet the increase in their responsibilities, and to finance local development projects through earmarked or unearmarked funds. These funds are allocated to different local units based on a funding formula that takes into consideration the unemployment rate, the level of local development, the size of population, and the ability of the local units to achieve equality. Moreover, Tunisia launched the National Observatory to Combat Violence Against Women. In their efforts to integrate the poor, around DT 8 million, were allocated to establish 100 micro projects. **Tunisia** launched a “Family Support Strategy” to develop education, health, safety, prevention, protection, entertainment, preservation of identity, the development of a culture of dialogue, solidarity, and civic behavior. This strategy comes within the framework of the five-year development plan aiming at establishing justice and equality between regions and



groups, in addition to the development goals to combat violence and harassment in the workplace.


The last decade in **Tunisia** witnessed the adoption of several reforms that contributed to improving the living conditions of individuals from different social strata and in all regions, based on the principles of solidarity, equal opportunities and inclusion, and the rejection of exclusion and marginalization. Accordingly, a new Social Security Law was issued in 2019, creating the social safety program, within the framework of a new vision that considers multidimensional poverty and lays new foundations for achieving social justice among all social groups. Practical clauses related to the institutional aspect, mechanisms, procedures and amounts of the stipulated remittances, which are considered an indispensable condition for the transition to implementing the provisions of this law, have also been issued. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in the optimal implementation of the relevant law, by changing priorities. Several interventions were introduced. During the year 2020, around 262 thousand monthly grants were awarded for poor families, with a value of about 635 million dinars. In addition, a credit of 46,882 million dinars was disbursed for 262 thousand families, on religious holidays. A back to school and university grant were delivered to 247,747 school students and 21,532 university students with a total amount of 15.17 million dinars. A monthly grant for 50,000 children aged 0-5 years from poor and low-income families with a monthly financial grant of 30 dinars, was also distributed. During 2020, a free land transportation was granted for children of poor families benefiting from the monthly grants, costing approximately 5.5 million dinars. About 100 projects were funded, with a value of about 2 million dinars, and an additional 6 million dinars were allocated in connection with the identification of projects to be financed. The government has also increased the minimum wage to a protect low-income workers.

Egypt also adopted the “Women Strategy 2030” to coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders to achieve social, economic, and political empowerment of women. Egypt is preparing a “Family Development Strategy” aiming at a more comprehensive planning for the Egyptian family, that considers all aspects of life, in a way that contributes to providing a better and healthy life and improving its standard of living.

Despite these challenges, the **Palestinian Authority** has identified poverty eradication as a policy priority within the National Policy Agenda 2017-2021 and the National Development Plan 2023-2021 as it has a direct relationship to the living conditions of citizens and their social cohesion. Resources have been allocated by the Palestinian Authority and partners in order to address the high levels of multidimensional poverty, as the government focuses on building the efficiency and resilience of poor families. The Palestinian Authority developed and implemented a social safety net targeting 110,000 vulnerable families with an annual budget of \$130 million. In addition to the implementation of an economic empowerment program by supporting income-generating projects, where 27,827 families benefited from this program, of whom, 15,000 were able to secure independent income, in addition to 50,000 became able to secure new jobs.

The **Palestinian Authority** launched the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM), which is a pro-poor, gender responsive, participatory, and affordable land information system. The main objective of STDM is to collect and analyze data on the social tenure relationship of people and land, as well as the social services/amenities that the inhabitants of a certain location can access. The STDM also recognizes all formal and informal land rights. The methodology of the STDM is based on recording and analyzing the social tenure relationships of people and land as well as social services/facilities that are accessible to the residents of a given location.

The national legislation in the **Palestinian Authority** prohibits discrimination in housing and access to public facilities and social services on the basis of race, color, sex, language,




religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, or property place of birth, or any other event. National legislation prohibits discrimination in housing, access to public facilities and social services based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political and other opinions, national or social origin, property, place of birth or any other status. else. The main challenge to freedom of travel and access to housing is the policies and laws imposed by Israel that prevent Palestinians from traveling from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip and back, including the inability of Palestinians to change their residency from one area to another. Palestinians residing in East Jerusalem also face a strict planning regime that does not provide them with adequate spaces that can be exploited for housing.

In 2020, **Algeria** launched a national program to reduce the development gaps and inequalities between regions, especially distant areas, through improving the connection to road networks, gas, electricity and drinking water supply, and integrate local communities in the development process. This program aims to reduce territorial disparities, and to intervene quickly, and appropriately in the most fragile areas, and to formulate social, cultural, and economic integrated projects, in consultation with the different stakeholders. The Algerian government updated the current legal system to be more compliant with the special needs of the disabled, according to international conventions, and to facilitate the conditions for professional and social integration of disabled. According to the law, 3 percent of jobs are assigned to the disabled. Disabled are also granted special discounts and other benefits. Children and adolescents with specific needs are integrated into the mainstream school environment, through the opening of special classes and training of supervisors. Programs for promoting public services and special benefits for elder people, and for youth are also put in place, in different regions.

Although the concept of poverty does not apply to **Bahrain**, measures were undertaken to improve income distribution and equality, enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of social safety nets, and empower the NGOs to provide support to the less fortunate groups. The rate of female participation in the labor market increased, and the number of females in leadership positions both in the public and the private sectors, as well as the number of females entrepreneurs. The Kingdom of Bahrain issued the necessary legislations and prepared a strategy to protect women from domestic violence. The number of Youth Centers increased, and the number of youths who benefited from their services reached 132 thousand Bahrainis, in 2017. In May 2020, the Bahraini Government issued the “Disabled Card” that grants the handicapped special discounts and other benefits. The “Higher Committee for the Disabled Affairs” was reformulated to develop the “National Strategy and Plan for Disabled Rights” for 5 years, including a monitoring and evaluation system.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of **Bahrain** stipulates that all citizens are equal in political, economic, and social rights and duties. It also affirms equal opportunities for all citizens. All legislations, laws and regulations have worked to enhance and increase opportunities and enrich benefits, and even share them among all citizens without the slightest discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, social or sexuality. These legislations, laws and regulations ensure that everyone enjoys basic public services, such as water, sanitation, and electricity. Education and health care, without exception, including expatriates. Despite the varying financial and economic capabilities and the different educational backgrounds of individuals, these differences do not affect their participation in public goods and decision-making, as municipal councils embody the element of democratic popular participation, and the participation of citizens in decision-making at the local level, especially with regard to local urban planning. In addition, development partners from the private sector and civil society institutions have limited participation in decisions at the local level

At the national level, there are many governmental initiatives and action plans to rehabilitate people with disabilities and employ them in the public and private sectors according to clear




plans and programs according to the needs of the labor market, in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities. On the level of women's economic empowerment, women's contribution to the workforce has increased to 42.8 percent for the year 2020, and they have occupied many jobs, including judicial jobs, diplomatic corps jobs, executive and specialized jobs in the public and private sectors, and leadership ministerial positions, in addition to their work in the field of entrepreneurship. As the percentage of owners of active commercial records amounted to about 43 percent of the total owners in the first half of the year 2020.

The constitution guarantees complete equality and non-discrimination among the members of Bahraini society. On the part of women, it guarantees the right to participate in public affairs and enjoy all political rights. It also approved legislation and laws promoting equality and social inclusion for women, most notably Law No. 19 of 2017, which preserves women's rights when Litigation in legal matters. At the same time, the National Plan for the Development of Bahraini Women 2013-2022 ensured family stability and enhanced women's competitiveness and contribution to national development. Bahrain issued the Law no. 17 for the year 2015 to protect against domestic violence, and in the same year the Supreme Council for Women launched its national strategy to protect women from domestic violence. The Supreme Council for Women launched a national model for the governance of equal opportunities applications and achieving gender balance in economic participation opportunities and providing them with sources of knowledge, consultations, quality training, and development incubators. The National Gender Balance Report and the National Observatory for Gender Balance Indicators represent the national mechanism for M&E.

Equal opportunity committees and departments in various bodies and institutions were established, and budgets that respond to the needs of women and men were developed to ensure justice and equal opportunities. It is worth noting that women in the Kingdom of Bahrain have the right to conclude all contracts of credit, real estate, and other property and to conduct business in their personal name without the need for the husband's prior consent, and the right to manage their money without any interference from men or the need for their consent. Since November 2015, the Central Bank of Bahrain has obligated all financial institutions provide the same job benefits to women working in the sector as men. The Minister of Housing issued the resolution No. (909) of 2015 regarding the housing system, which allows different groups of women to benefit independently from housing services. The Council of Ministers issued a decree to separate the husband's salary from the wife when calculating the basic income of the head of the family to apply for housing service. In turn, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development is intensifying its efforts to work to increase the rates of integration of Bahraini women into the national labor market, by providing appropriate job opportunities and improving the work environment and conditions to suit women's privacy. The Ministry continues to update labor legislation to promote the principles of gender balance and non-discrimination between workers. In 2021, the Labor Law was amended to include an article that prohibits any wage discrimination between male and female workers in work of equal value." Indicators also showed that the percentage of women's participation in NGOs as an active member is 16 percent of the total members, and that their participation in decision-making centers as a member of the board of directors is 17 percent of the total members of the boards of directors. In 2017, the United Nations Women (UN Women) in partnership and cooperation with the Supreme Council for Women, launched the Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa Global Award for Women Empowerment, with the aim of demonstrating the impact of the efforts and contributions Governments, companies, civil society organizations, and individuals with expertise and achievements in empowering women and girls around the world.

Bahrain also developed a national strategy for youth in 2005, focusing on their needs and providing them with the best types of health, social and educational care. The Ministry of




Youth and Sports has also built many sports facilities and youth centers, which numbered to 43 centers in various governorates of the Kingdom, and the number of beneficiaries reached about 132,000 young men and women in 2017. The government program (2019-2022) included several important initiatives aimed at encouraging and supporting young people through training, educational and support programs. The government also supported the establishment of business incubators to support, motivate, and encourage Bahraini youth by helping them develop their own economic projects. The “Youth City” program 2030”, which was launched in August 2013 in cooperation between the General Organization for Youth and Sports and the Labor Fund “Tamkeen”, and in 2017, the King Hamad Award was launched to promote the role of the youth in production and contributing to the well-being of their communities and local environments.

The Law No. 58 of 2009 regarding the rights of the elderly in **Bahrain** is the main reference to guarantee their rights. The National Committee for the Elderly developed the national strategy for the elderly including extensive plans to implement programs and activities to remove the difficulties facing the elderly and impede their integration into society. Since 1985, several residential care institutions have been established throughout the day or specialized day centers to provide social, psychological and health care for the elderly women and men. Civil society organizations were also assigned to manage and operate day institutions for parental care to provide services for the care of the elderly for the day period to maintain their retention within their natural community surroundings in their residential neighborhoods. In addition, the “Mobile Units” system was established to provide health and nursing care services, personal care services and family counseling for the elderly in their homes. In 2013, the Office of Elderly Services was established to employ the expertise and capabilities of the elderly, and to encourage them to contribute to production, giving and issuing an elderly service card, which offers discount packages and service facilities in various activities, in the public and private sectors. To improve the services of the elderly, the “Quality of Life for the Elderly” project was launched, to help them to live their lives completely independently without the need to help others.

Citizens with disabilities of both sexes benefit from the financial allocations provided by the state, in addition to providing special support for their dependents, establishing comprehensive disability complexes and centers to care for people with disabilities, autism and cerebral palsy, marketing their products, training and developing their skills in order to integrate them into the labor market, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities, which Bahrain ratified in 2011. The Ministry of Education is promoting equality and is supporting the integration of students with disabilities of both sexes in schools and training them to deal with others and interact with them in the community. Schools have been prepared to receive them through special education classes, prepare and implement awareness programs for administrative and educational school bodies and students, and equip schools with all tools that meet the needs of this group. It is worth noting that there are about 175 schools that have implemented the special education program in the various stages of education in the Kingdom of Bahrain, based on the principle of equal opportunities in learning and participation in social life.

As an example of the progress made in integrating students with disabilities of both sexes, the number of students enrolled in autism classes in government schools increased to 146 students (91 males, 15 females), who were distributed among the 24 public schools that host the program (18 schools for boys, 3 schools for girls), including 72 male and female students who have been transferred completely from special classes to regular classes, due to the remarkable development in their abilities. And recently, in May 2020, the ID card integrated with the disability ID was issued.




Persons with disabilities receive many advantages, most notably benefiting from discounts from several institutions and shops ranging from 5 percent to 50 percent, in addition to obtaining a parking sticker for people with disabilities from the General Traffic Department, as well as giving them a special path from the King Fahd Causeway Corporation, and a half-deduction on bridge crossing fees. The Cabinet decree no. 80 of 2018 was issued to grant two hours of rest to an employee or worker with a disability or who takes care of a person with a disability, and the Cabinet decree no. 5 of 2020, re-forming the Higher Committee for the Care of Persons with Disabilities Headed by the Minister of Labor and Social Development, to include representatives from the governmental, civil, and private sectors. The committee aims to update the strategy and the national plan for the rights of persons with disabilities for the next five years, including a plan for M&E.

In 2021, the Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Financial Balance exempted people with disabilities from the tariff for using mass transit buses, in an initiative by the government to facilitate the free transportation process for them in the Kingdom. The Ministry of Labor and Social Development provides its annual support to the 12 civil rehabilitation centers (affiliated to non-profit NGOs) working in the field of disability, amounting to 1.2 million Bahraini dinars annually, which has not been affected by the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. About 500 students with different disabilities benefit from this support. At the same time, the Ministry continued to provide its annual support for the management and operation of mobile units (two units) for the care and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, which benefit about 140 cases annually.

With the launch of the flexible work permit project in 2017, the environment for dealing with expatriate workers has improved, ensuring their rights along with the rights of the rest of the work parties. At the same time, the Kingdom of Bahrain is keen to constantly review and develop its legislative and legal system in line with international requirements, especially in the field of safeguarding the rights and dignity of expatriate workers from being subjected to attempts of extortion, exploitation, or human trafficking. The Center for Support and Protection of Expatriate Workers was established in 2015, which includes a shelter, in addition to the launch of the national referral system to combat human trafficking in 2017.

II.1.2. Ensuring access to adequate and affordable housing including slum upgrading and access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and solid waste disposal


The housing policy in **Tunisia** aims to provide adequate housing for the various social groups through the development and implementation of appropriate programs. During the period 2016-2020, nearly 38 thousand housing units were built, of which 79.4 percent were made by families, and 19.6 percent by real estate developers. During the period 2016-2020, a social housing program was launched in all parts of the country. Within this program, housing projects and social partitions were implemented for the benefit of families with limited income. It includes two main elements: Removing primitive houses and replacing them with new housing, restoration, or expansion, and completing and providing social housing or creating and providing primitive social partitions and replacing them with new homes, renovating or expanding them. Interventions for the benefit of 9,531 beneficiaries of the program of removing primitive homes and replacing them with new homes, restoration or expansion, where the construction of 5,369 homes was completed at a cost of 210 million dinars and the construction of 4,162 continued. Concerning the construction of social housing and the creation of social partitions, about 8,400 housing and social partitions have been completed, about 540 million dinars, of which 726 have been delivered, 3,140 housing and partitions are ready pending delivery, and 5,223 housing and social partitions are in the process of completion and programmed.



Tunisia also launched the “First Home” program in 2017 to enable middle-income families (their income does not exceed 12 times the guaranteed professional wage) and individuals (their income does not exceed 10 times the guaranteed professional wage) and who do not own a home from financing the acquisition of completed homes by real estate developers or from private individuals who are not real estate developers, with soft loans (interest rate not within 2 percent) to cover the amounts of self-financing (within 20 percent of the price of the house) to be repaid within the same period of repayment of the bank loan minus a grace period of five years. The Housing Loans Guarantee Fund for Social Groups of Non-Continuous Income was created in 2018 to enable groups with non-fixed income who are currently excluded from bank loans, due to the irregularity of their monthly income, from bank loans to finance their homes with a guarantee from the Fund. This fund also aims to introduce as many buildings as possible into the organized framework and reduce chaotic construction and thus reduce the spread of slums. The fund’s interventions include guaranteeing housing loans entrusted by banks under the title of acquiring a ready-made house.

Over the past three decades, land in **Bahrain** has turned into a commodity that is a store of wealth in the face of inflation in the prices of goods and services. The population increase has also led to a rise in the demand for construction land, which has resulted in an unprecedented rise in land prices throughout the country. This position requires the country's readiness to meet the doubling demand for housing and infrastructure. Bahrain has faced the problem of a lack of land for urban development by reclamation of the sea. However, the marine areas available for reclamation are decreasing, as each new project deducts from the balance of the country's territorial waters, whose area is now estimated at about 7,484. 2 km. Despite the government's great efforts over more than 50 years in providing social housing, there is a continuous increase in the number of requests for housing services in light of the shortage of land suitable for residential use and its high costs. The list of housing services includes about 4,000 new requests annually, which constitutes a new challenge for the government to respond to these requests in light of limited resources. The National Strategic Structure Plan 2030, in its second version (2016), dealt with the issue of integrating housing into urban development plans strictly, when it precisely specified the areas allocated for urban purposes and their future expansions in all parts of the four governorates of the Kingdom, which necessarily entailed the allocation of financial resources for housing projects. , where the four, which necessarily entailed the allocation of financial resources to housing projects, as the percentage of government spending allocated to housing projects and utilities amounted to 32 percent of the total projects budget for the year 2020. Housing projects vary between building and construction in major housing projects, and maintenance, restoration, and renovation in old areas within the framework of urban renewal procedures.

Bahrain is characterized by the scarcity of rain, with an annual average of no more than 74 milliliters. Bahrain has historically relied for its water resources on a major source, which is groundwater that comes out of wells, springs, and natural springs, land, and sea, to meet the needs of the population for various uses. However, the large population growth that accompanied economic development processes that led to the diversification of economic activity and a significant rise in the living standards of the population all led to a significant increase in the rates of consumption of this water to the point of overexploitation, which led to a sharp decline in its quantities and a rise in the salinity of its water. Considering the climatic conditions and the successive decline in the groundwater reserves and the high cost of desalinated water production, the issue of water provision will remain one of the most important challenges facing the Kingdom. Since Bahrain is located below the absolute water poverty line (500 m³/person per year), under which water becomes a major obstacle to development, due to its impact on the standard of living, health, and the environment, and as a result of the rapid high population growth, water resources suffer from great pressures, as




the rate of consumption has decreased. Water per capita increased from 117.6 m³ per year in 2006 to 113 m³ in the same year, then returned to rise to 118.4 m³ in the year 2018.

The government in Bahrain subsidizes the costs of operating, water treatment and distribution systems, to reach the consumer at reasonable prices. The entire population enjoys clean water supplies through the water transmission and distribution networks spread throughout the Kingdom, which transport desalinated water from several seawater desalination plants and ground water desalination plants of various capacities and technologies, with a current production capacity of about 703,000 m³ per day. The government also owns a stockpile. Strategically, the groundwater is estimated at about 114 thousand m³ per day, which is used only in emergency situations.

The Electricity and Water Authority is making unremitting efforts to reduce water consumption by monitoring the volumes of water connections at its sites, whereby the sites' water requirements are surveyed and analyzed according to the standards adopted for various categories, in addition to studying and evaluating new applications according to the water plumbing system, and the authority distributes water rationalization devices as guides. Flow and irrigation devices to control the daily consumption of water. At the same time, the country is interested in conducting research and studies on how to make the most of the little rain that falls on Bahrain, to contribute to bridging the water. In the same context, the introduction of modern irrigation systems such as sprinkler and drip in order to save water consumption in the agricultural sector, despite its smallness, to preserve the agricultural soil from salinization, and the increased demand for clean, pure water considering the high cost of water desalination is an additional burden on the public budget. The state is constantly borne, as the government subsidizes domestic water consumption by about 65 percent of the cost of production

As for sanitation, disposal of wastewater is one of the basic needs of humans to ensure a clean healthy environment, and its services suffer from pressures like those experienced by clean, safe and clean water supplies, given the rapid growth of the population and urban developments. The Kingdom of Bahrain began constructing and developing the infrastructure of the sewage network and its attachments since 1971, which made Bahrain enjoy a sewage network consisting of: a network of drainage lines consisting of about 173 km of large main lines, about 1,589 km of main lines, and about 2,394 km Of the branch lines, 170 km of pumping lines, about 48,924 thousand main inspection rooms, about 183,386 thousand subsidiary inspection rooms, 63,379 thousand small subsidiary inspection rooms, and 585 pumping and lifting stations for sewage. In addition, the government operates and manages 4 main sewage treatment plants with a total capacity of 357,000 m³ per day, and 12 other sub-stations with a total capacity of 13,000 m³ per day. The private sector also operates several other stations, especially after the issuance of the law by Decree to privatize government activities in sewage in 2002.

The process of privatizing wastewater services relied on the development of the National Master Plan for New Sewerage Services (NMPSES), in which the private sector plays a major role in managing the new stations that will be built in response to the increasing population and urban growth in the Kingdom. On the level of rainwater, there is a network for its drainage of more than 1,445 km of main and subsidiary lines to collect water from about 19,000 manholes, 7,5 thousand traps, and 50 thousand grooves, all of which flow into 100 pumping and lifting stations. The main challenge in this field is the high cost of establishing a sewage network due to the high cost of lifting and treatment stations and pipeline networks. Therefore, there is an urgent need to allocate additional budgets to link new housing projects to the public utilities network, while developing a sewage strategy to suit various challenges until 2030. One of the best practices in the wastewater sector is the reuse of treated



wastewater in Bahrain since the late eighties of the last century, mainly to irrigate gardens, parks, and landscaping on main streets.

This has helped preserve the groundwater reserves, and studies are currently being conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, and the National Oil and Gas Authority to use treated water for purposes other than irrigation, to stimulate the industrial sector to use treated water as an alternative to indirect production processes such as sand washing and cooling, within Efforts to conserve water resources. The Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning provides Bahraini families with biodegradable waste bags, through self-electronic devices designated for this in some municipalities, or directly through the offices specialized in distributing bags in the municipalities of the four governorates. The Ministry also provides more than 20,000 containers distributed over residential neighborhoods, which are washed and disinfected on a regular basis.

At the same time, sorting containers are available from the source for recycling in 77 locations in residential neighborhoods to take advantage of different recyclable materials such as plastic, paper, metal, and glass. Solid waste is disposed of in Bahrain, both domestic and commercial, using the best safe methods. At the beginning of the year 2019, the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, in partnership with the private sector, established a facility to recycle all demolition and construction waste, the amount of which is estimated at about 40 percent of the total waste received for the landfill.

All MENA countries adopted programs to improve citizens' access to the housing services, with special emphasis on providing many social housing units. Large progress was made to increase the coverage rate of the utility services, including water and sanitation. Upgrading informal and unplanned areas were at the center of the governments' programs. These programs aimed at integrating vulnerable groups, the women, the youth, the elderly people, the disabled, and the poor. Reforming the legislative system, improving urban planning, adopting a good governance system, and developing innovative financing tools, were the main enabling tools and accelerators that these programs used to achieve progress. The coverage of these programs was extended to different regions and cities. Following are the main features of the programs that were adopted by the different MENA countries:

Egypt adopted a housing strategy that aimed at upgrading existing residential areas, especially in informal areas, improving the types and the characteristics of the housing units, preserving the housing stock and its optimal use, exploiting the vacant units, and developing the necessary laws to improve the housing market and the regulation of tenure. The Government of Egypt (GoE) adopted policies for low-income housing, especially for those who cannot afford housing costs, develop the necessary institutional and administrative sustainability measures, and strengthen the access to knowledge and information to achieve the maximum return for all policies. The number of housing units developed reach 1.38 million in 5 years, including 725 thousand social housing units. The conditions to get access to the social housing units improved to include female headed households, and to allocate 5 percent of these units to the disabled people. In 2020, the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) launched a LE 20 billion initiative to finance housing units at low interest rate of 7 percent annually, for families with a monthly income of less than LE 1,000. The cost of the slum upgrading program "Alasmart 1, 2 and 3" amounted to LE 3 billion, which were used to provide 18,418 housing units, and the difference public services including schools, nurseries, health care units, markets, sport courts, and green spaces. The rate of coverage of safe potable water reached 98.7 percent in urban areas, and 95.4 percent in rural areas. However, rural areas in border governorates are lagging regarding safe potable water services.



II.1.3. Access to public spaces including streets, sidewalks, and cycling lanes

In March 2018, **Bahrain** issued the guidelines for green spaces in the city (Green Guidelines). The road sector at the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, as well as some other bodies such as the Ministry of Housing and private sector institutions, are responsible for building and constructing main and secondary road networks. Within the framework of Bahrain's Vision 2030, the Kingdom adopts a strategic plan for the construction of main road networks and linking them to secondary roads in accordance with international standards and specifications used in the development of urban infrastructure. The Kingdom adopts a strategic plan to establish main road networks and link them to secondary roads in accordance with international standards and specifications used in the development of urban infrastructure. This plan includes the provision of safe paths for bicycles and sidewalks for pedestrians within all modern road projects, increasing the area of afforestation and beautification, and providing all traffic safety requirements for road users such as signs, regulatory or warning ground lines, and rainwater drainage networks, and the provision of lighting poles, in addition to the installation, programming and maintenance of traffic lights. In the cities of Manama and Muharraq, as an example, 64 of these projects were established, with a total cost of about 106 million Bahraini dinars.


In addition, the Ministry of Housing has established within its housing projects dedicated bicycle paths of 103.5 km in the new housing cities. At the same time, several projects have been worked on to establish a network of bicycle paths that take into account all traffic safety requirements, some of which have been completed and work is underway on others. The Ministry of Transport and Communications has been keen to support this mode of mobility by regulating the operation of bicycles and electric bikes by the private sector.

Public spaces in urban and rural centers are considered low in **Palestine**. This is mainly due to a variety of factors, such as rapid urbanization, limited availability of land due to constraints on the expansion of urban centers out of Zone A and complexities of ownership. In addition, most urban plots are in private ownership, which makes it difficult to set aside land for public use. Planning laws in Palestine have not been successful in facilitating the provision of public spaces in Palestinian cities, because the focus is on the design of buildings, elevations and setbacks, parking lots, etc., with a slight focus on designing and integrating public urban spaces. In addition, no planning policies are currently circulated within the Palestinian spatial planning systems that plan, design, manage, implement, and maintain public spaces in Palestinian cities and towns. The Ministry of Local Government, in partnership with the Habitat Program, is working to identify and address weaknesses in the current methods used in planning and designing public spaces in Palestine, in addition to weaknesses in current legislation and laws, and the absence of policies and directives to provide safe and comprehensive public spaces, especially at the level of the local authority. To adequately identify, respond to and reduce violence against women in public spaces in Palestine, a recent assessment of public spaces conducted in five urban areas across the West Bank and Gaza. The latter is widespread in the West Bank that the percentage of women owning more than 30 percent.

II.2. Progress on inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all

II.1.4. Productive employment for all including youth employment

MENA countries are suffering from relatively high unemployment rate, and low participation of women in the labor market. In addition, job opportunities in the government and the public




sectors are still more attractive for the youth and are mainly connected to the “flexicurity” concept only provided by these sectors. To stimulate the economy, and increase its capacity to create decent jobs, MENA counties focus their development strategies on both the demand and supply sides of the labor market. On the demand side, measures are undertaken to increase economic growth, improve the business environment to attract private sector investment, and improve productivity, and wages. On the supply side, programs to enhance the access to education and the quality of education outcomes, provide training programs, and encourage SMEs and entrepreneurship. Active labor market policies were also adopted to close the gap between the supply and demand for labor. In addition, the 4th industrial revolution, and the COVID-19 pandemic affected the future of work, and the necessary reforms were also adopted to mitigate the negative impact and maximize the benefits on job creation.

Bahrain's economy is primarily an urban economy, in which the manufacturing sectors, financial projects and services play the greatest role, while the agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing sector constitute less than 0.5 percent of the GDP, and the mining and quarrying sector is about 19.50 percent of the country's real GDP in 2020. By adopting a different economic approach, the Bahraini economy has witnessed radical structural transformations since the seventies of the twentieth century, as a result of which the country's economic base expanded, its sources of income diversified, and its economic map changed radically, as the contribution of the non-oil sector amounted to 10 billion Bahraini dinars in 2020 (more than 81.38 percent of GDP at constant prices), after it was 7.7 billion Bahraini dinars in 2011 (about 78.6 percent of GDP at constant prices). With this economic expansion, the country's workforce base expanded to reach 876,000 in 2020, with Bahrainis making up about 30 percent (254,000). The contribution rates of Bahrainis to the labor force (15 years and over) in the country increased from about 48 percent in 2012 to about 51 percent in 2020.

The female contribution rate also increased significantly from 32.7 percent in 2012 to 42.8 percent in 2020, while the male rate witnessed a noticeable decline from 63.2 percent to 59.7 percent between the two mentioned years. The remarkable rise in female participation may be due to the high educational levels of women, which contributed to their economic empowerment and increased participation in economic activity, as their share in the Bahraini labor force increased from less than 20 percent in 1991 to about 26 percent at the beginning of the millennium, and then to 42.8 percent in the year 2020. With the implementation of structural economic reforms at the beginning of the new millennium, the country's economy has become more open to international trade, and the Kingdom has encouraged the employment process in the private sector, and has actively sought to improve the wages of Bahrainis working in this sector, which has contributed to the Kingdom's success in maintaining the unemployment rate at a level 4.9 percent among the economically active Bahrainis (Census 2020), and the decrease in the general rate of unemployment relative to the total labor force to only 1.4 percent of the total economically active in the country (Census 2020). Demography The Bahraini population pyramid is characterized by its youthfulness, as the number of residents up to the age of 24 of both sexes constitutes about 48 percent of the total Bahraini population, and youth (15-24 years) of both sexes constitute less than one-fifth of the total Bahraini population (17.5 percent in 2020 census). These are facts. Demographics predict the increase in labor market entrants within a few years.

The number of Bahraini residents up to the age of 24 of both sexes constitutes about 48 percent of the total Bahraini population, and youth (15-24 years) of both sexes constitute less than one-fifth of the total Bahraini population (17.5 percent in 2020 census). An increase in the number of entrants to the labor market was witnessed within a few years. Accordingly, this category is of great importance for its critical role in sustainable development, as it represents the new entrants to the labor market, as well as the basis for future population growth. All of these facts resonated with the Kingdom's government, in addition to the




National Youth Strategy that Bahrain developed in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2005, and to complement it, the government's program (2019-2022) included an explicit emphasis on supporting young people in programs and initiatives by focusing on his needs, believing in his latent abilities, his right to participate in public life, and his role in building the society of tomorrow, through a number of important initiatives aimed at encouraging and supporting young people through training, educational and rehabilitation programs. Work is underway in the field of planning innovative projects and employment plans for youth and strengthening programs to support microenterprises over the next two decades, which guarantee self-employment.

For youth and benefit from its great potential in promoting and advancing the national economy. Microfinance initiatives and projects to support productive families have contributed to persuading job seekers and graduates of educational channels that there are alternatives to employment in the government and the public sector. Thus, the government worked to expand the scope of employment and training initiatives and programs aimed at rehabilitating the unemployed in the workforce, which kept the unemployment rate at its low, safe limits. There is also another challenge, which is the orientation of the scarce competencies and experiences to work in the private sector, due to the privileges it provides, so the civil service has launched initiatives to bridge the gap between the public and private sectors to complement the efforts of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development by including in the labor law in the private sector many of the Attractive benefits that are not less than or even exceed those offered to workers in the public sector.

In addition, there are many important initiatives that aim to expand the base of national competencies with outstanding performance, such as the initiative of the strategic planning system for the workforce to ensure the availability of employees required for government agencies according to the actual work need and restructuring government agencies by creating many jobs while limiting expansion and inflation. Unnecessary administrative work in government facilities, through the use of a clear mechanism for building the organizational structures of government agencies, transparency in the civil service announcements for vacant jobs, and constantly striving to empower women and activate their role in working life, and integrate them into national development plans, to occupy leadership positions and executive and decision-making positions, by establishing permanent committees for equal opportunities in various ministries, government agencies, and some private sector institutions. Within the framework of best practices, the establishment of a national observatory for the needs of the labor market, and the organization of the vocational training sector in an advanced and comprehensive manner commensurate with the developments and developments of the market, which will contribute to encouraging the private sector to invest in training, and then rehabilitating young jobseekers.

II.1.5. Strengthening the informal economy

The role Vocational training is one of the components of the human resource development system in integration with the sectors of education, higher education, and employment. Tunisia has established a national system of initial training in about 200 training institutions spread across the country and has accommodation units (for girls nationally and boys with a capacity of 20,000 beds). In addition, the national vocational training system has undergone successive reforms. However, the national vocational training system is still characterized by many gaps and weaknesses that prevent it from fully performing as a pillar for skills development and the national economy. The most important problems of vocational training in Tunisia are summarized in: (1) the lack of a comprehensive and common vision for the human resource development system; (2) Lack of integration and lack of synergy between the various components of the national human resources system. (3) Weak response of the



vocational training system to changes in economic and social needs at the national and regional levels. Therefore, Tunisia has taken a series of measures aimed at developing and adapting new curricula in the general, technical and university education cycle, in its belief in the importance of technical and technological education in acquiring new skills necessary for the twenty-first century. For the media, 96.4 percent, with an Internet coverage of 68.6 percent. The number of specialized halls (media laboratories, technical laboratories, physical and technological laboratories, etc.) during the 2019/2020 school year reached more than 12 thousand laboratories, and the percentage of students directing to scientific divisions at the end of the first year of secondary education reached 52.5 percent during the school year. 2019/2020 In addition, during the past five years, the following:

- A Law was approved regarding special measures to establish compulsory enrollment in the basic vocational training for young people under the age of eighteen who have not integrated into professional life and are not engaged in studies.
- Starting to focus the preparatory stages of training for the benefit of the early dropouts on an experimental basis in three states before generalizing it to the rest of the states.
- Supporting the private sector for vocational training and enhancing the quality of its services by reviewing the mechanism of the vocational training instrument.


The project "Supporting Employment in Rural Areas", which is being implemented in many states of the Republic, aims to develop employment in rural areas by providing a series of specific solutions that try to meet the expectations of young people in the Tunisian countryside in terms of employment and increasing employability. Its framework is the creation of 40 micro-enterprises in the field of social and solidarity economy, with an operating capacity equal to 160 jobs. On the other hand, there have been numerous programs for the benefit of rural women, such as:

- The National Program for Enhancing Entrepreneurship with the aim of accompanying women of ideas in preparing and studying projects, forming, and financing women's entrepreneurs in rural areas projects, and following up and supporting missionaries until the project's stability stage.
- The National Strategy for Economic and Social Empowerment for Women Girls in Rural Areas 2017-2020 aims at the economic and social empowerment of rural women, qualifying rural women to participate in public life and improving the quality of life.
- The project to re-develop, equip and revitalize multi-purpose spaces for women and girls in rural areas (2016-2020) with the aim of bringing information services, awareness-raising, education, legal guidance and guidance in the social and economic fields, in addition to functional literacy, combating violence against women and spreading the culture of citizenship, as well as services.

II.1.6. Support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) are the main engine of growth in most of Arab states, while they face many challenges, some of which are structural and others popped-up because of the COVID-19 pandemic. MENA countries represented in this report adopted programs to support the development of SMEs, to improve their competitiveness both in local and international markets, and to increase their contribution to GDP, employment, and trade. These programs were modified in 2020, to include bold measures to support SMEs, and increase their resilience to face the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To enhance the role of small and medium enterprises in the local economy, the Kingdom of Bahrain has adopted a number of initiatives aimed at supporting small, medium and micro enterprises, through the Bahrain Development Bank (BDB), the Labor Fund Authority "Tamkeen" and the Bahrain Center for Emerging Industries Development (BBIC), Family House




for Microfinance (FMH), and Bahrain Innovation Bank for Microfinance (Ebdaa Bank). The last two banks provide financing and training to clients, provide savings tools, develop and provide them with technical assistance, and carry out feasibility studies for micro-enterprises. All these institutions aim to provide financing, training, advice and entrepreneurship support to contribute to enhancing economic opportunities and local development. The Bahrain Development Bank (BDB) offers soft financing loans at low interest rates for small and medium enterprises, with a value of about 48.1 million Bahraini dinars in 2020, an increase of 106 percent from the previous year, despite the pandemic conditions. In addition, 155 projects benefited from the services of business incubators affiliated with this bank group, which include the Bahrain Center for the Development of Emerging Industries (BBIC), the Center for the Development of Women's Capabilities (Riyadat) and the Farmers Market.

At the same time, the Bahrain Emerging Industries Development Center (BBIC) provides its support to these projects by providing places with suitable spaces to operate the projects, while providing new companies with advisory, training, and other public services to ensure the success of these projects and increase their ability to produce and compete in the local and global markets. For its part, since its establishment in 2006, the Labor Fund “Tamkeen” has launched multiple initiatives to facilitate the financing of economic initiatives for small, medium, and micro productive enterprises, the most important of these programs and initiatives:

- Support SMEs to pay the interest rate charged by commercial banks and partially guarantee borrowers to increase their creditworthiness.
- “Tamkeen” cooperated with the Family House for Microfinance (FMH) and Ebdaa Bank for Microfinance to provide microfinance to micro-enterprises and productive families. This project has achieved great benefits for the micro-enterprise sector compared to costs and led to the creation of new jobs for Bahrainis.
- Supporting business incubators and accelerators in Bahrain with the aim of upgrading the businesses of emerging institutions and increasing their profitability. More than 400 institutions have benefited from this support with a total budget of more than \$13 million during the period (2011-2021).
- Supporting SMEs to establish and develop their infrastructure by purchasing operational devices and equipment, developing a communication and information system while stimulating automation and digital transformation, supporting the marketing needs of institutions by providing commercial identity and participating in exhibitions inside and outside Bahrain. Support was provided to more than 13,000 institutions with an amount exceeding 500 million US dollars during the period (2007-2021).
- Supporting employment and training projects in institutions operating in Bahrain, which aim to increase and develop productivity through the employment and development of national labor in these institutions. Tamkeen has supported nearly 113 thousand employment and training opportunities in the Kingdom, with a budget of more than 450 million US dollars.

The Bahrain Ebdaa Bank for Microfinance, established in 2009, to help low-income people engage in various new and innovative projects and expand the middle class that ensures sustainable national development. The bank has provided 16,490 loans since its establishment until June 2021, with a total value of 19.66 million Bahraini dinars. The “Step




Home Projects” program provides all the needs and facilities necessary for families and individuals to start home projects that provide job opportunities for the family from home and contribute to raising their income.

More than 1,170 home projects, and providing more than 1,880 services through the various and integrated departments represented in the home productive license registration office, and the supporting centers for the project such as the Design and Innovation Center for Product Development and the Excellence Center for Micro Enterprise Development that provide administrative and technical support services through specialists in this field , in addition to halls for the implementation of training workshops, to form an integrated system aimed at creating the appropriate conditions for every project owner at home in need of training, empowerment, entry into the labor market and marketing of his products, while ensuring a retirement future for the individual by opening the way for optional insurance in the General Authority for Social Insurance. To complete its mission of supporting productive families, the center provided marketing outlets for the products of these families in the Capital Complex for Bahraini Hand Products, Sitra Center for Productive Families, Al Saya Center for Home Projects, and the Permanent Exhibition for Productive Families at Bahrain International Airport, in addition to opportunities to participate in internal and external exhibitions. The Department of Family Development at the Ministry of Labor and Social Development also provides courses and training programs in the social centers of the Ministry in several areas that correspond to the needs of the labor market, working to achieve a development goal, in addition to creating skilled workers.

At the same time, the Family House for Microfinance (FMH), as the first specialized Islamic bank to provide various services, is working to provide micro-loans to low-income groups without bank guarantees, with the aim of helping them to establish income-generating projects, in addition to specific financing services, and the project has achieved successes in serving a large segment of needy families by lending them small amounts to start implementing their projects. This project contributes to the implementation of the requirements of the National Economic Vision 2030 and its executive program, which aims to develop initiatives to facilitate leadership in the establishment of small and medium enterprises, to complement the system of financing services provided by the bodies supporting small and medium enterprises in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Indicators: The share of small and medium-sized enterprises in the GDP will reach 30 percent in the year 2020, and this share has recorded a remarkable increase for all micro, small and medium-sized enterprises from 32. percent in 2015 to 35.5 percent in 2020.

II.1.7. Promote an enabling environment for business and innovation


The general objectives of the **Bahraini** government program (2019-2022) emphasized investing in the citizen, promoting comprehensive development, and promoting an enabling environment that supports sustainable development. In implementation of the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Prime Minister and Chairman of the Economic Development Board, the “Small and Medium Enterprises Development Council” was established in 2017, to coordinate the efforts of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, the Economic Development Board, the Labor Fund “Tamkeen” and the Bank The Bahrain Development and Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to strengthen the processes of establishing emerging, small and medium enterprises and their capabilities to improve the competitive side in the local, regional and global markets, in addition to increasing the contribution of small and medium enterprises to the gross domestic product, export and levels of employment of local labor (from employment in the private sector)



Within this framework, an integrated plan for the council's tasks has been developed over the next five years, which is to follow up on initiatives and programs through five strategic axes: facilitating financing, facilitating market entry, simplifying business establishment procedures, developing skills, and promoting innovations. In this regard, the Labor Fund "Tamkeen" is interested in a number of initiatives in the field of stimulating creativity and innovators in the commercial community and the system that supports entrepreneurship in the Kingdom of Bahrain, by providing appropriate solutions to challenges through innovation centers and building innovative business models. The Fund has provided a number of qualitative programs in this field, such as the Innovative Business Support Program, which supported institutions that provide prototypes for their products, and it has also built a number of partnerships with local and international institutions such as Amazon Cloud Computing (AWS) to build cloud innovation centers. Centers CICs) in local universities, and the Global Conference on Entrepreneurship that was held in April 2019 - a huge global event - hosted a large number of decision-makers and influencers in the global entrepreneurship system in line with Bahrain's aspirations in this regard

It also continued to encourage innovators through the Bahrain Award for Entrepreneurship, which was launched in 2015. The award includes 8 main categories such as sustainable institutions, international institutions and distinguished entrepreneurs, in addition to the category of micro, small and medium enterprises, and other initiatives. The Kingdom of Bahrain has sought to create an environment conducive to creativity and innovation in the field of entrepreneurship, taking into account the principle of equal opportunities in the resources and services available to entrepreneurs. The participation of Bahraini women in various aspects of work and activities is one of the most important aspects of modern life, which has proven its presence in the labor market by entering into many fields of work. And varied at the level of institutional work and entrepreneurship. Many stakeholders from the public and private sectors and civil society institutions are keen to support economic participation in the field of entrepreneurship within their programs and plans and with an approach that ensures equal opportunities for men and women, including Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, and the United Nations Development Organization Industrial (UNIDO)

Here, it is worth noting one of the important and supportive initiatives to participate in the field of entrepreneurship in line with technological developments and the advanced status of the economy of the Kingdom of Bahrain, which is the "Sijili" virtual commercial registry initiative launched by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and targeting business owners who practice business from multiple locations and do not have an address or a shop. Under this type of licence, the registry grants business owners the legal capacity to conduct their business without the need for a physical address, and only the virtual address such as the website address or home address, in addition to allowing the activity of business incubators and accelerators that aim to provide support services to entrepreneurs, institutions and startups For a specific incubation period such as co-working spaces, guidance and counseling, marketing, commercial and financial planning, and public relations. In support of the projects of women entrepreneurs, the Supreme Council for Women urges it to have a complementary role to the authorities concerned with developing and completing the economic work system by providing and expanding various opportunities and options for Bahraini women to encourage them to engage in the field of entrepreneurship. In implementation of the objectives of the strategic plan to achieve the principle of sustainability for women's work and economic self-reliance, the Council launched a package of programs, projects, and awards to support Bahraini women in the labor market and enhance their



participation in economic activity, as it was keen to encourage relevant institutions to provide all services required by programs.

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Training in the economic field, whether in terms of providing loans and soft financing services, or in terms of providing integrated economic incubators that provide all the administrative, advisory, training and technical services that women need to enter the field of entrepreneurship. In addition to launching initiatives and prizes. It should be noted that statistics indicate that the percentage of active commercial records owned by women reached 43% in the first half of 2020.

II.3. Progress on environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development

II.1.8. Climate change mitigation and adaptation actions

Annual median levels of fine particulate matter (eg 2.5 PM and 10 PM) in cities (weights given to the population) With the rapidly growing urbanization of Palestinian cities, there is tremendous environmental pressure which manifests itself in the high percentage of air pollution, pollution and water scarcity, the visible effects of climate change, and the general reduction in urban livability and quality of life. Most of the Palestinian people are exposed to air pollution, which is defined as air pollution levels in which particulate matter exceeds 2.5, according to the guidelines of the World Health Organization. Air pollution in Palestine is considered very high due to the growing population and the lack of environmentally friendly alternatives for living, transportation, and industrial processes. In general, the Palestinian people are highly dependent on vehicles that use fuel, as there are more than 170,000 vehicles that use expired and inefficient clean fuel technologies, all of which produce exhaust emissions that further contribute to high rates of air pollution. In addition, improper management of solid waste increases pollution of all kinds, particularly through the inevitable production of leachate in landfills, which has potential negative environmental impacts, in terms of soil, groundwater and odor pollution. This problem is further exacerbated by the illegal burning of solid waste, which greatly increases air pollution. Neither governmental authorities nor local authorities track particulate matter levels as part of an integrated system, although authorities, including major municipalities, have recognized the importance of monitoring air pollution, including levels of particulate matter, especially in the vicinity of industrial and quarrying areas, in addition to various topographic locations to be able to provide specific and macro-level indicators on the impact of factories and cross-border activities.

II.1.9. Systems to reduce the impact of natural and human-made disasters, minimize urban sprawl and loss of biodiversity


In the Palestinian Authority, water scarcity, environmental degradation, drought, and desertification, along with landslides and depletion of lands and natural resources, accompanied by political conflict, are among the most important human disasters currently affecting the Palestinian people. In addition, natural disasters are considered a serious potential threat. Earthquakes in the region (since the Occupied Palestinian Territory is directly affected by the seismically active areas of the Jordan Rift Valley and the Mediterranean Sea) are considered a major hazard with low probability but significant negative impacts. Moreover, the future does not look very promising as a result of rapid population growth rates and the way cities are developing in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. More than fifty percent of the Palestinian people live in areas defined as “threatened,” including major urban centers. These areas are considered particularly fragile, due to their reliance on complex infrastructure. Finally, the lack of specialists with knowledge and technical capabilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is another reason for the current chaotic situation, about sound disaster management. According to the Vulnerability Survey assessment carried out by the WASH Coalition in 2021, more than 8,500 families in the Gaza Strip have been affected by flooding incidents during the last three years; As 1,300 families were severely damaged in their private and public facilities and assets, specifically in Gaza and North Gaza governorates. The Palestinian government launched a large-scale multi-risk assessment project with the support of the World Bank. The project aims to prepare profiles, risk monitoring and local resilience plans, including resilience planning for basic infrastructure.

II.1.10. Environmentally sound management of water resources and urban coastal areas

MENA countries has embarked on the path of renewable energy, to provide global and sustainable solutions to environmental challenges, and to replace energy resources of fossil origin, through the launch of ambitious programs for the development of renewable energies. Following are examples of these programs:

In **Algeria**, the renewable energy program aims to diversify the energy resources that are currently focused on fossil fuels by substituting clean and renewable energies to original fossil energies and build up an export capacity by exploiting Algeria's solar energy capacity. The renewable energy program updated plans to install a power of renewable origin in the order of 22 GW at the 2030 horizon for the national market, of which more of 4.5 GW was achieved during the period 2015-2020. Algeria plans to develop on a large scale photovoltaic and wind power. During the period 2020-2024, it is planned to launch 1000 MW in photovoltaic solar power plants, giving the priority to create a society for construction of electricity production plants from renewable sources; updating the land prospecting operation previously identified.

In 2016, **Egypt** launched “The National Biodiversity Strategy and Operational Plan 2015-2030”, which aims to reduce pressures on biodiversity, sustainable use of biological resources, and fair and equitable benefit-sharing through the participatory and effective implementation of policies. The (GoE) has completed the development of the integrated coastal zone management strategy and started implementing projects to maintain the ecological balance of lakes from wild habitats and natural vegetation cover, and to support the fishing industry for the local population. The (GoE) is also implementing a project to protect the beaches of coastal cities to reduce marine deforestation and secure them from losing parts of cities and



exposing their construction to the challenges of the rapid deterioration of the urban environment and threatening the social and economic lives of its residents. Moreover, 691 green projects started implementation, with an estimated cost of LE 447,3 billion, of which LE 36.7 bn included in the 2020/21 investment plan. Half of these projects are in the transportation sector, 30 percent and 9 percent in the housing and electricity sectors, respectively.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is characterized by a high-quality electricity network that covers its facilities all over the country, and household consumption accounts for the largest share among the various consumption sectors. Continuously rising to 12,750 kilowatt-hours per year. The generation of this energy depends mainly on thermal plants, and with the increase in demand for electrical energy and the continuation of government support for domestic consumption at about 85 percent of the cost of production, transmission and distribution, and with the low cost of producing electricity from renewable resources, specifically from solar energy. Since 2014, Bahrain developed plans and strategies to diversify energy sources to include renewable energy resources, which have become an important competitor for fossil energy, and benefit from techniques and programs to improve energy efficiency and rationalize its consumption. The Sustainable Energy Authority has begun preparing and implementing two national plans, to increase the proportion of renewable energy sources in the total mix of energy produced and consumed, and to raise the efficiency of use and total energy consumption, while encouraging investment in this sector. The National Renewable Energy Plan aims at increasing the contribution of renewable energy sources in the total mix of energy produced and consumed at the national level to 5 percent by 2025 (equivalent to 250 megawatts), then to 10 percent by 2035 (equivalent to 710 megawatts), which will lead to rationalizing the use of fossil energy sources such as natural gas, and thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Another plan was also developed to improve the energy efficiency by 6 percent by 2025. Since the adoption of the two plans and their goals in January 2017, Bahrain has managed in a short period of time to achieve 70 percent of the goals set for 2025.

Legislations were developed to improve the investment climate in the renewable energy sector to encourage the participation of the private sector, which has led to attracting investments estimated at more than 140 million Bahraini dinars, as well as enabling Bahrain to meet its national commitments such as the Economic Vision 2030, and the government program, and regional commitments such as the framework The work of the Arab League, and global ones such as the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

The Sustainable Energy Authority has developed several initiatives to develop the sustainable energy sector and achieve national goals, including:

Allow individuals to install renewable energy systems on the roofs of homes and facilities starting from January 2018, and to benefit from the electricity produced for their consumption, and to transfer the surplus to the government network for electricity and get a discount on their bills, through net metering policies.

The solar energy project on the roofs of government buildings and attracting private investors to develop renewable energy projects. The first phase of this project consisted of installing solar energy systems on the roofs of the facilities and buildings of 8 public schools in December 2020 as a first package to produce 3 megawatts of solar energy

Preparing feasibility studies and proposals for the Ministry of Housing to integrate solar energy solutions in cities and housing projects, and use them in lighting streets, coasts, and parks.

Preparing the first interactive wind atlas in 2018 to activate wind energy projects in the onshore, coastal and marine areas in deep waters.

Launching the waste-to-energy initiative and preparing a feasibility study of several technologies for treating various types of waste and benefiting from them to produce energy from alternative resources estimated by the authority at about 50 megawatts.

Expanding the construction of solar energy plants on a large scale by resorting to innovative creative solutions to overcome the limited space and land available for the implementation of central renewable energy projects.

Launching the process of building a central solar energy plant in the landfill/landfill area in the Askar region, with a production capacity of 100 megawatts of clean energy.

Increasing investment in this field and creating a commercial sub-activity category for renewable energy engineering for renewable energy consulting companies, and it has been activated on the electronic platform "Sijilat" In July 2020.

Adopting policies of the green building guide and integrated it into the electronic platform "Banayat".

Preparing green building classification policies for the Green Building Guide.

The Authority worked with banking institutions and banks to prepare sustainable financing packages intended to encourage investments in renewable energy projects.

Launching an initiative to finance energy in solar energy projects under the name "The Sun", to provide finances to install solar energy systems on buildings or facilities, through a lease-to-own system for solar energy systems.

III. Effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda

III.1. Building a governance structure and establishing a supportive framework


III.1.1. Decentralization to enable subnational and local governments undertake their assigned responsibilities

III.1.2. Linking urban policies to finance mechanisms and budgets

III.1.3. Capacity of local and subnational governments to implement local and metropolitan multilevel governance

MENA countries adopted different governance systems to support the effective implementation of the NUA. Algeria, Tunisia, and Palestine adopted a more decentralized governance system, while Egypt developed a coordination mechanism at the central level, focusing on closing the gap between the different regions.

In 2016, Egypt started the implementation of the 5-year "Upper-Egypt Local Development Program" (UELDP), aiming to promote urban local development, create decent jobs, and reduce poverty in two of the poorest governorates, Qena and Sohag. The total finance for UELDP amounted to US Dollar 957 million, of which the World Bank for Construction and Development is providing a US Dollar 500 million loan, while the state budget is financing the remaining balance. The project is promoting the competitiveness of the Egyptian economy, raise the capacity of the local administration to provide public services, and increase the



number of citizens benefiting from upgraded infrastructure, and public services. One of the main governance structures that was put in place, relates to the coordination between socio-economic planning and urban planning. A budgeting formula was also implemented to allocate central government transfers to the local level. UELDP is also adopting a participatory planning methodology, involving all stakeholders. The program is developing planning manuals and is implementing several training programs to raise the capacity of the local units to plan and implement for sustainable infrastructure and local economic development.

Egypt adopted good governance principle through UELDP, including transparency through publishing the budgets of both governorates on their websites, as well as all government procurement tenders. UELDP adopted a participatory approach in the preparation of the local units plans and including all stakeholders. The program also succeeded in reducing the time and effort to get access to public services, and to improve the process of filing citizens' complaints. A new administrative structure was developed to institutionalize the governance reforms that were piloted by UELDP.

Algeria is adopting a decentralization program to allow subnational and local governments to assume their responsibilities. The Algerian wilaya² has moral and financial autonomy. The wilaya has two organs: - The People's Assembly of the Wilaya, and the Wali, who represents the executive body and the government delegate at the local level. The elected assembly constitutes the basis of the decentralization and the place of participation of citizens in the management of public affairs. Each wilaya covers a specific number of Communes. The Daira is an extension administrative department of the wilaya. As a result, the powers devolved to communities, territorial areas are part of the perspective of decentralization. The missions that are devolved to these communities are part of a choice participatory and associative management policy of local public services in accordance with the Municipality Law. The wilaya, a decentralized territorial collectivity of the State, intervenes within the framework of the action extended from the State to the local level within the framework of deconcentration and carries out missions specific to it in accordance with the provisions of the Law.

The promulgation of the 2020 constitution, broadened more the prerogatives of local elected officials, municipalities as collectivities territorial base, will play a leading role in developing and implementing the local development plan due to of their real knowledge of the expectations and citizens' needs as well as the potential for resources available to them. At the same time, the creation of 10 wilayas in the great south in 2021 to redevelop the national territory and bring the administration closer to citizen, aims to better take charge of needs of residents, particularly in terms of housing and to correct the territorial imbalances. In addition, the revision of the nomenclature of the Plans Communaux de Développement (PCD) in 2012 within the framework of local development; added other chapters related to the environment (creation of waste treatment centers, management of green spaces.), and urban development (roads and public lighting). Likewise, the structure of the Programs Communaux de Développement (PCD) is dominated by urban development actions which represents 25 percent of the total financial resources allocated to this chapter during the last five years. In addition, Algeria adopted the city's policy aiming at developing the framework of the land use policy, planning and sustainable development. City policy is an instrument of organization and control of urban expansion.

² Up to the year 2020, the country included 1541 municipalities grouped into 48 departments (wilayas).



III.2. Planning and management of urban and territorial spatial development

II.1.11. Integrated and balanced territorial development


In 2018, **Egypt** also launched an urban development project with a total cost of US Dollar 11.8 million, financed through the Swiss cooperation (US Dollar 8.2 million), and the State budget (US Dollar 3.6 million). The project aims at improving urban planning and land allocation, developing public finance management for infrastructure projects at the local level, and increasing the capacity of the local administration to develop its own fiscal resources. Capacity building is an integrated part of the project.

As part of the promotion and implementation of a new proximity policy, the Algerian Ministry of the Interior and Local Authorities favored and developed at the local level a new participatory approach aiming at integrating the participatory approach in local development programs, launching a pilot project to integrate the participatory approach in the preparation of socio-economic audits at the level of 250 municipalities, training local administration using a participatory approach, organizing conferences and meetings to promote the territorial and participatory approaches. Capacity building programs are implemented at the local level with the support of the UNDP and the European Union, initiated under major institutional reforms carried out by Algeria in recent years.

The **Palestinian Authority** launched the National Development Plan (NDP) for the years (2021-2023) prioritizing decentralization in the provision of services at the local level by local government units (LGUs) applying the subsidiarity principle, as LGUs are more responsiveness of LGUs to people's needs. Palestinian LGUs finance public services provision through local fees and charges that they are collecting, in addition to capital investments. However, municipalities and villages have not been assigned sufficient revenue sources. On average, charges, and service fees account for 50-70 percent of total revenues, mainly from public utility services, such as electricity and water. The property tax could provide a large potential revenue source for municipalities, but its collection is not effective, especially that it is still governed and administrated by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) at least to the largest municipalities. Fiscal decentralization has not yet been materialized due to many factors, including geo-political complexities, weak political will, and the economic crisis.

In 2019, the UN-Habitat supported the provision of several awareness raising sessions on Housing, Land and Property rights (HLP). This program targeted the different vulnerable groups, especially women, in nine marginalized localities across Gaza Strip. The sessions aimed at providing the community members with greater knowledge on HLP related matters focusing on land and tenure issues. Moreover, the program provided individual legal counseling services to provide legal counseling and support to citizens and help them to get their rights.

In the West Bank, capacity building programs aimed at developing the capacity of the local units to develop and apply good land governance measures, to accelerate, mainstream, and support policies to enhance land-focused indicators under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, a city-region plans initiatives that aim at improving rural-urban linkages, where a new system for social services provision was implemented, to benefit more than 1.8 million Palestinians in Jerusalem, Ramallah & Al-Bireh, Hebron Tubas, Qalqilia and Bethlehem Governorates.




II.1.12. Planned urban extensions and infills, urban renewal and regeneration of urban areas

The territorial planning in Tunisia embodies the national and local options for sustainable development, as it allows for the tightness of the structure of the national territory thanks to the good distribution of residential communities, infrastructure, large equipment, and better control of the available natural resources. In this regard, during the years 2016-2020, several measures were taken to ensure sustainable and harmonious urban planning with the principles of the new constitution of the country and to establish the path of decentralization. Examples of urban development that are updated periodically and upon request to regularize the situation of some slums or to include necessary urban expansion areas. In the context of keeping pace with technical and informational developments in the field of production and exploitation of information, continuing the preparation of atlases: Geographical and to increase the efficiency of creating the territorial and urban space. During the last five years, digitalization of the states was carried out, which are tools that help the regional and local authorities on the reality of regional development and the development of new projects and the publication of studies, the development of the monitoring system This is done on the website of the Ministry of Equipment, Housing and Urban Infrastructure by developing a national digital topographic database based on topographic maps with a scale of 1/25000 in order to provide a unified digital cartographic reference to increase the efficiency of planning and space management. In addition, a study to create an observatory of the dynamics of the territorial area, was developed, as well as a strategy to control and dispose of the real estate balance of the territory, in a manner that responds to the stakes raised and the issues of effective and sustainable regional development through the completion of a study on territorial planning and the real estate balance. Tunisia also adopted a digitization project consists in digitizing examples of urban development available in paper form in the archive of the Construction Department, with the aim of creating a digital database that will be included within the geographic information system to follow up on urban growth. The third phase of the study is currently being completed, represented in digitizing 87 urban development examples. The urban monitoring project focuses on developing a geographic information system on examples of urban development to follow up urban growth that can be exploited by the public. With 100 examples in digital format, the system has been provided until mid-May 2021 with 145 scanned setup examples.

II.1.13. Role of small and intermediate cities and towns

In 2020, Tunisia launched a strategy to support the creation and development of small and medium cities, within a global context characterized by an economic crisis and an Arab context characterized by a deep political transformation that included all aspects of society, economy, soil and others, and a national context that emerged, especially after the 2011 revolution, characterized by decentralization and local governance as an option. The strategy aimed at meeting the aspirations of citizens for development, strengthening urban services, and improving the quality of life. In this context, small and medium-sized cities have found the core of this transformation, as they have become an effective decision center in structuring the territory, mobilizing resources, attracting investment, creating jobs, and modifying the excessive polarization in the cities of Sfax and Sousse for metropolitans and megacities. As for the Madinatuna project, which is inspired by the city's strategy initiatives and other international experiences, it aims to achieve a forward-looking vision for the sustainable development of cities, which was prepared and approved by the local stakeholders. By adopting short, medium and long-term strategic planning tools, the project supports the creation of a dynamic of dialogue between public, private and civil society actors in order to achieve a coordinated vision on the sustainable development of the city as well as defining




strategic axes and an action plan. City strategy is used by elected municipal officials to implement their own local development plans. It also contributes to defining and achieving sustainable development goals, in accordance with Tunisia's commitments in the 2030 Agenda. After the success of previous experiences in strategic planning, the initiative was expanded to include 9 pilot cities (Medenine, Beja, Gabes, Jendouba, Kairouan, Masaken, Sidi Bouzid, Soukra and Tataouine). Other cities can participate in the project as additional funding is mobilized.

II.1.14. Multimodal public transport systems including non-motorized options

Tunisia developed a national policy for urban mobility to establish an integrated system that responds to the requirements of urban, demographic, social and economic development. In a manner that responds to the requirements of urban, demographic, social and economic development and the aspirations and expectations of citizens. This project comes to address the difficulties of mobility within urban spaces, the continuous traffic congestion, the low levels of safety and security, and their impact on the daily life of the citizen, and on the economic fabric in general. Approving the establishment of a fund to finance urban mobility. Initiating the creation of regional organizational structures for urban mobility. In addition, there are major projects under construction or in advanced stages of studies, such as the Sfax and Sousse metro, the high-speed railway network in Tunisia.

The population increase and successive housing projects in **Bahrain** contributed to the growth and expansion of the road network. However, the steady increase in the number of vehicles (by about 26,000 vehicles annually) as a result of the rise in living standards and the limited role of mass transit has caused an increase in traffic congestion, congestion and traffic jams, which in turn leads to an increase in the air pollution rate, a high number of violations and traffic accidents, and a decline in the production rates, and then the current transportation and communications sector is not keeping pace with these developments. Congestion rates on the roads in Bahrain have witnessed a continuous increase, as the density of vehicles on the roads exceeds 200 vehicles/km, and the density of vehicles exceeds about 500 vehicles per 1,000 people (two people per vehicle), and if the number of private cars continues to increase, it is expected by 2030, that the number of vehicles will equal the country's population.

To reduce traffic congestion, avoid its negative effects and ensure the smooth flow of traffic, the government in **Bahrain** expanded and improved the road network, and developed a rapid mass public transport. Since 2007, the government has adopted a strategic plan and expansion programs for the road network and flyovers at the main intersections to accommodate the increased traffic. As a result, Bahrain has taken an advanced position among the countries of the world in the field of paved roads, exceeding the proportion of these roads by about 85 percent of the total lengths of the Bahraini road network. The total lengths of the road network increased from a total of 1,977 km in 1995 to 4,940 km in 2020, which led to a significant decrease in the area served by one kilometer of roads, from 0.30 km in 1995 to 0.16 km in 2020. The Government developed the mass transit bus service in 2015 by increasing the bus fleet by more than 300 percent to cover a large percentage of the most populated areas, where the current fleet is 141 buses, and the number of users of this service since its development has reached more than 65 million passengers. The government introduced the cashless payment system on buses through travel card (GO CARD) and electronic wallets, so that cashless transactions on buses have increased from 50 percent to 90 percent recently, which has contributed to reducing boarding times. In addition, services that support and encourage the use of buses have been provided, such as wireless internet (WiFi) and a distinguished monitoring system to provide safe services on the buses, and to prepare buses for use by people with disabilities.



Bahrain has also worked on developing supportive infrastructure for mass transit as new bus stops and stations have been established in the right-of-way, in addition to providing 26 air-conditioned stations and developing 265 bus stops. It also provided screens for the actual timing of bus arrivals in a number of vital locations and provided all stations with a QR Code to obtain this information, in order to keep pace with modern technology and development in the field of transportation. At the same time, the government is currently working on completing studies for the construction of the first phase of the Bahrain Metro project, which will link the most vital areas in the Kingdom with a length of 29 km using 20 stops. It is also working with the King Fahd Causeway General Corporation to complete the final studies for the construction of a new bridge linking the Kingdom to the GCC railway network across Saudi Arabia, to be implemented in partnership with the private sector


II.1.15. Culture as a priority component of urban planning

In **Tunisia**, Article 42 of the 2014 constitution stipulates that “The state protects cultural heritage...” Accordingly, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs has developed the national program “Tunisia, Cities of Civilizations,” which aims to value the national heritage in its tangible and intangible dimensions. The Ministry in charge of housing, in coordination with the Ministry of Local Affairs and the Environment in 2019, initiated the implementation of the old urban centers’ revitalization program, which aims to advance the urban heritage of our country and value its historical and architectural value. Towards develops its cultural and tourist attraction. On the other hand, the establishment of the Museum of Written Heritage at the National Library has been launched.

Bahrain's built and unbuilt heritage constitutes the identity of the landscape and lifestyle on the island and is of great importance as a cultural component of economic development, especially in the field of the tourism industry, as heritage and culture have a comprehensive and integrated role in spatial, social, and economic development. The Kingdom of Bahrain is rich in many archaeological, historical and heritage areas, which are cultural civilizational legacies. There is an archaeological wealth of royal tombs, which is the largest historical cemetery in the world in the A’ali region, which is full of Dilmun heritage, and the many castles in Manama, Muharraq and Riffa, which tell bright chapters of the country’s history. In addition to the Pearling Road and the specialized markets in Muharraq, such as the gold, copper, al-Qaysari, al-Taweesh, al-Kharo, and other markets. There is also the real estate wealth of houses and heritage buildings that are distributed in the old neighborhoods of Manama, Muharraq and the Northern Governorate.

These historical areas are not subject to any local regulations and legislation directing their development, but the Antiquities Protection Law determines the archaeological and historical character of objects, sites and buildings, judging the importance of each antiquity, and estimating the antiquities that must be registered as antiquities in accordance with its provisions. This law does not make the government administration a partner with the owners of the heritage buildings to develop them, so there is a conflict of interests between the owners of the heritage houses and the Culture and Antiquities Authority’s endeavor to preserve these buildings, as large financial resources are required to expropriate these buildings. Ownership of lands in archaeological, historical and heritage areas is distributed between the state in the sites of ancient castles, and private ownership of heritage houses. The Culture and Antiquities Authority works to develop all historical areas and encourages it with self-efforts and donations to prepare these areas for recognition by UNESCO as a human heritage. The Ministries of Housing, Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, undertakes decisions on development priorities in the areas of the historic castles.

Civil society institutions and civil cultural centers play an important role in the development and preservation of heritage areas, such as the Sheikh Ibrahim Center, which derives its

The header features a decorative border with a wavy white shape. The background is divided into three vertical sections: red on the left, yellow in the middle, and teal on the right. Each section contains various black icons representing urban infrastructure, such as buildings, roads, and public facilities.

resources from grants, aid and donations from local banks, and some external contributions to implement its important projects such as the “Harf Home” project in the city of Muharraq, and its contribution to the Pearling Road project. This latest project embodies a formula of positive cooperation between government and private institutions and some owners of historical buildings included in the project. As a result of the Kingdom's interest in heritage, Manama was chosen to establish the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage ARCWH in its Arab countries. As a public utility with high potential, and as a potential economic resource, heritage sites have been fully integrated into land and urban development strategies, considering local areas and their practices at these sites (issues of scale and classification)

The planning strategy in Bahrain classified the planning of archaeological and heritage sites into protected areas include forts, castles, sites, and historical buildings, and special planning areas that require specific requirements, namely buffer zones for heritage sites and historic sites.

IV. Means of implementation

IV.1. Financing the implementation of the NUA

Most of MENA countries adopted fiscal consolidation programs aiming at increasing diversifying sources of revenues, reducing expenditures, controlling fiscal deficit, and improving the efficiency of public resources in general. The main purpose of the fiscal consolidation programs is to increase the fiscal space that countries can use to finance development needs, improve access to public services to all citizens, and promote economic activities. Financing NUA was on the top priorities list of the national and subnational in MENA countries.

II.1.16. Financing frameworks for implementing the NUA at all levels of government

In Algeria, reforms aimed at fiscal consolidation were initiated by the Government as part of the structural transformation program. Since 2015, the Government also took the necessary measures to compensate for the decline in oil prices and revenues. At the same time the Government tried to maintain the level of public services provision, and to stimulate economic activities. To optimize fiscal resources, the State aimed at diversifying its economic activities, and at increasing national and foreign savings, to be able to finance long-term investment projects. Several measures were also adopted to increase fiscal revenues such as improving tax yield and controlling public spending and improving the selection criteria for investment projects.

Reform measures were extended to the national tax system through the simplification of tax procedures, the unification of tax rates, and the establishment of an information system to automate the tax declaration and tax payment systems. In addition, tax administration was also developed and 39 local tax centers out of 65 planned, were established to reduce the burden on taxpayers.


Customs administration reform consists of a long process of adapting customs administration for transfers national and international economic enable it to carry out its missions of protection of the national economy those of the fight against money laundering, counterfeiting, smuggling and against trafficking drugs. As such, the reorganization of the administration customs was initiated with the strengthening of its supervision and the improvement of quality of its human resource. In terms of achievement, the reform undertaken has enabled to harmonize all the texts governing customs activity and the digitization of the activity customs through the design of the new information system which is in the process of development with the Koreans. In this framework, the customs administration acquired its data center and finalized the re-engineering of all processes of customs activity. Along with this mobilization policy budget revenue, the Government is working to carry out a set of reforms aimed at greater control of expenses public, namely improving the efficiency of public investment, and issuing a new organic budget law to improve the budgeting process and to move to a budget focused on results and to establish a monitoring and evaluation system based on SMART key performance indicators (KPIs). These reform measures have led to an increase in non-oil revenues, and additional financial resources can be mobilized and allocated to sustainable development through foreign direct investment (FDI) and remittances from emigrants. Financing local development in Algeria represents a priority, and the Government has launched reforms aiming mainly at improving local public services, governance, and local finance. Improving municipal finances will result from an increase in tax revenue allocated directly or indirectly to the municipalities and, on the

other hand, by controlling communes' expenditures. In addition, an inter-ministerial committee composed of representatives of the Ministry of Finance and of the Ministry of the Interior, Local Authorities, and the Development of Territory, was established to improve municipal finances. Several local taxes were also applied to increase local revenues and strengthen the fiscal capacity of local authorities to finance public services provision.

II.1.17. Mobilization of internal sources of finance and expand the revenue base of subnational and local governments

The Egyptian state is interested in implementing the new urban agenda by allocating large investments through the state's general budget and by creating a climate for the private sector to contribute to the financing and implementation of important infrastructure projects in the relevant areas of the new urban agenda, which include construction, real estate activities, water and sanitation, transportation, and storage. The average targeted investments during the period (2016/2017/2016) for construction and real estate activities amounted to 21.6 billion Egyptian pounds and 134.9 billion Egyptian pounds, respectively, representing 2.4 percent and 15.7 percent of the total investments allocated to the most important sectors The New Urban Agenda running. The transport and storage sector accounted for 73.9 billion EGP of the total investments allocated to the most important sectors of the new urban agenda, representing 8.5 percent on average during the period (2016/2016-2017-2020). The average targeted investments in water and sanitation projects during the period (2016/2016-2017/2020) were estimated at EGP 7.3 billion and EGP 11.7 billion, respectively. Local taxes and fees contribute only about 5.8 percent of the average local public revenues, compared to 94.2 percent of other revenues on average during the period (2017/20-2021/2018).

Improving the water quality of the Nile River and its branches by doubling the monitoring stations from 7 in 2016/2017 to 15 in 2021/22, increasing the sites for periodic monitoring of the water quality of Egyptian lakes from 97 to 156 sites, and increasing the real-time monitoring operation rooms for industrial drainage from 9 Rooms to 31 rooms at a cost of 302 million Egyptian pounds. 2.2 billion pounds were allocated to increase the percentage of safe solid waste disposal from 4 percent in 2016/2017 to 40 percent in 2022/2021, and to raise the efficiency of municipal solid waste collection from 60 percent to 80 percent during the same period, with an increase in the percentage of waste The solid municipality that is recycled in an environmentally sound manner increased from 10 percent to 25 percent during the same period as well. 321 million Egyptian pounds were also allocated to cover about 30 km of canals and drains within residential blocks, to conserve water and ensure that it reaches agricultural land on time, protect the environment from pollution, and preserve the public health of citizens. The first phase of the "Decent Life" initiative was launched to target 175 centers in 20 governorates for a period of 3 years, serving 55 million people. The first phase started in 1,371 villages in 51 centers as of January 2021. The development of slums: the complete completion of all unsafe areas, so that 80,000 housing units will be built, in addition to the development of 1,100 random markets at the level of the Republic, and 3 unplanned slum areas in the capital of each governorate with a total of 81 areas with a total area of approximately 62 thousand acres. It is also expected to complete the development of the Maspero and Sur Magra El-Ayoun areas, at a total cost of about EGP 132 billion. Development and development of Egyptian villages: the development and development of all Egyptian villages, numbering 4,741 villages and their dependencies, amounting to 30,888 manors, Kafr and Naga, through the implementation of projects for drinking water, sewage, electricity, bridges, internal roads, health units, schools and youth centers. - Implementation of home sewage connections for families with the most care, at an investment cost of 500 million Egyptian pounds as a revolving fund. Improving environmental conditions in the poorest villages at a cost of about 248 million Egyptian pounds. - Developing slaughterhouses in the



governorates at a cost of EGP 1.4 billion. Allocating LE 111 billion to housing projects, of which 56 percent are to finance social housing projects, 22.5 percent to premium social housing, and 18 percent to medium housing. Increasing the volume of real estate financing from EGP 7.9 billion in 2016/2017 to EGP 19.7 billion by the end of 2022/2021, so that the number of beneficiaries increases from 43,000 to more than 63,000, and the non-bank financial sector contributes to the implementation of the program Which provides real estate financing services. Improving drinking water services to reach 100 percent coverage by implementing 265 projects, benefiting about 15.5 million people. Reaching the coverage rate of sanitation services in cities to 100 percent and to 60 percent in villages, at an expected cost of about 33 billion Egyptian pounds. - Developing the current metro network at a cost of about 386 billion pounds and expanding it by adding more than 97 km to the current network, bringing the network's length to about 175 km by the end of 2021/2022, bringing the number of beneficiaries to one billion passengers.

At the local level, it is clear the state's tendency to target an appropriate proportion of investments to finance development projects that contribute to achieving the goals of the new urban agenda at the local level, especially in the governorates of Upper Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula. The Local Development Program in Upper Egypt, which is financed through a loan from the World Bank worth \$500,000, and a local component of the state's general budget estimated at the equivalent of \$457,000, is considered one of the most important programs implemented by the Egyptian government. The program, which is implemented during the period 2016-2021, aims to develop the business environment to become more attractive to the private sector, and raise the efficiency of the local administration in implementing infrastructure projects and providing public services, in the governorates of Qena and Sohag. The program also includes a community participatory component to encourage the participation of citizens and business owners in implementing the program. The distribution of investment allocations that are implemented in the governorates of Sohag and Qena until the fiscal year 2020/2021, where it is clear that industrial development projects, drinking water and sanitation projects, roads and transportation account for more than 70 percent of the total investments allocated to the program.

It should be noted that the Egyptian government presented to the House of Representatives in the first legislative term (2015-2020) the draft "Law of Local Administration System", which introduced a number of articles that grant local units independence in managing their financial resources. The draft law also included an increase in the sources of financial resources that It is collected and managed by local units. Among the most important sources created by the law is the creation of a joint account in the Ministry of Local Development within the unified treasury account, the resources of which consist of a percentage of the income tax at the level of local units, which the local unit is informed in advance of preparing the medium-term plan, and the financing ceilings are determined at the level of local units according to a financing equation It aims to fill the development gaps with local units, while motivating local units to increase their own resources. Local units are free to transfer between projects listed in the investment plan after consulting the Ministry concerned with planning.

The issuance of the "Public Administration System Law" and the "State General Planning Law" is expected to develop the local units' management system for their financial resources, raise the efficiency of public spending, close development gaps, and increase the ability of local units to provide public services and implement infrastructure projects, which contributes to Implementation of the goals of the New Urban Agenda. Preparing the "Contracting and Procurement Manual" and training the concerned staff in the two governorates to use it is considered one of the most important outputs of the program that contributes to enhancing the ability of local units to raise the efficiency of using public money, within a framework of financial decentralization.



II.1.18. Sound systems of financial transfers from national to subnational and local governments based on needs, priorities and functions

II.1.19. Financial intermediaries (multilateral institutions, regional development banks, subnational and local development funds; pooled financing mechanisms etc.)

IV.2. Building capacities to report on the effective implementation of the sustainable urban agendas.

II.1.20. Opportunities for city-to-city cooperation and exchange of urban solutions and mutual learning

II.1.21. Capacity development as an effective approach to formulate, implement, manage, monitor, and evaluate urban development policies


II.1.22. Local government associations as promoters and providers of capacity development

IV.3. Use of technology to support sustainable urban development

II.1.23. User-friendly and citizen-centric digital platforms and governance tools

The number of Internet users in **Tunisia** reached about 8 million users at the end of 2020, and the number of social media users reached about 8.2 million users, which proves that the most effective way to provide services for the benefit of the citizen, whether administrative, social, financial, or other, is by using technology and digital means and providing them. This is encouraged by Tunisia's acquisition of pioneering capabilities in the digital field in Africa and the Arab region, and its belief that the digital economy is based on the intelligence industry and the development of high technologies, and represents an important opportunity to develop the national economy and restore its pace of growth. The establishment of appropriate legal frameworks to encourage innovation and innovation has contributed to achieving great successes and restoring confidence in the country's capabilities and in the opportunities available to it, so that Tunisia has become one of the poles of emerging institutions in Africa and the Arab world, which is enshrined in international classifications in the field, where Tunisia ranked first in the Maghreb and third in Africa.

According to the innovation index, published by the World Intellectual Property Organization for the year 2020, it also ranked first in the African region and the Arab world, according to the attractiveness index recently announced by the "Emerging Enterprises Without Borders" network, and also received the Emerging Enterprises Program and the Best Program Award. In the category of favorable environment for investment during the "World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2020" at the initiative of the International Telecommunication Union. Tunisian startups at the national and international levels have known many successes, giving hope to many young people to continue working within the framework of the partnership between the public sector and the private sector and with the support of the government and civil society efforts to put the country on the right path. The digital skills that were used in Tunisia to confront the COVID-19 pandemic and the ability to innovate also gained international recognition during the crisis. Local startups and civil society have made significant achievements, notably creating robots, designing telemedicine solutions, and




using advanced technologies such as 3D printing and laser cutting machines, which have helped the country overcome several obstacles during the pandemic. The crisis also made it possible to demonstrate the ability of Tunisian institutions to engage in the remote work system.

As for obstacles during the epidemic. The crisis also made it possible to demonstrate the ability of Tunisian institutions to engage in the remote work system. The results showed that Tunisia achieved a high level of e-government, with a score of 0.65 of EGD in 2020. It should also be noted that Tunisia ranks 73rd in the world according to the Online Participation Index which shows the maturity of citizens in terms of their participation in online public governance. The Ministry in charge of housing, in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment, has also initiated a digitization project for building permits, which aims to develop an online system for the disposal of permits in a way that enables the approximation of construction services, and the granting of temporary permits to use the public road within the framework of the "Tadeem" program funded by the citizen. As for open public data, efforts still need to be made to expand the dissemination of this data, as the current rate is still very low in 2020 (22 percent) compared to the most advanced countries in this field. Bahrain has taken a leading position in the Telecommunication Infrastructure Index and ranked first in the Arab world and 31st globally in the Information and Communication Technology Development Index (IDI).

II.1.24. Frontier technologies and innovations to enhance shared prosperity of cities and regions

II.1.25. Capacity of all levels of government and the civil society in the collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data

In **Egypt**, the National Committee for the new urban agenda (NUA) was formulated by the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, to prepare the reports for monitoring the progress in the implementation of the new urban agenda by collecting and analyzing indicators, best practices, and good public policies. The GoE aimed to ensure diverse representation not only of the various sectors and institutions of the state, but also of a large spectrum of development partners and civil society, to enhance success in following up on the implementation of the urban agenda and the continuous future follow-up to the process of preparing indicators and preparing and issuing periodic and national reports. The National Committee works - through a technical secretariat headed by the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the General Authority for Urban Planning - to communicate and coordinate all concerned parties, collect and analyze indicators, best practices, policies and national action plans. It also works on preparing for meetings and following up on the implementation of the decisions of the National Committee. The technical secretariat will - in addition to the process of issuing the current report - in continuous coordination between all concerned parties - governmental and non-governmental - to collect the various data and indicators required to follow up on the commitment to implement the sustainable urban development plan in Egypt and collect the necessary data to estimate the indicators of its effective implementation. The achievements and development in urban development are translated through nearly 77 indicators, some of which are assessed and evaluated by various government agencies (particularly those related to the sustainable development goals and the goals of Egypt's Vision 2030), while others are being defined as the mechanisms for collecting data required for assessment and evaluation. Through both the National Committee and its Technical



Secretariat, the Egyptian government will be able to follow up on the long-term, effective implementation of the new urban plan until 2036 (that is, for a period of 20 years starting from 2016), through a governmental framework that works with the participation of all development partners from civil society organizations and representatives The private sector as well as relevant international stakeholders and the UN system – including of course UN-Habitat and UNDP. The follow-up framework will also contribute to ensuring the achievement of Egypt's international commitments, whether in the areas of development in general or in the areas of environment and urbanization in particular.



V. Concluding Remarks and Lessons for Policy

This report compiled the 5 reports that were prepared by Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia, to monitor the implementation of NUA. The reports reflected the importance of NUA implementation and revealed the commitment at the national level to its different pillars. Institutional arrangements were undertaken to develop these reports, using a participatory and result-based methodology. The report integrated the experiences of the 5 countries in implementing the different pillars of NUA, without establishing any comparison, since each experience reflect the characteristics of urbanization, the main challenges, and the different approach in implementation.

Three main lessons for policy could be drawn from the report:

1. It is very important to develop a comprehensive communication strategy to raise the public awareness of the importance of NUA implementation, and to promote the best practices and the successful pilot projects carried out by different countries.
2. Increase the use of digital solutions and approaches to implement NUA and to monitor the implementation too.
3. Arab countries could develop a NUA forum under the auspices of the League of Arab States to exchange experiences and best practices, and more importantly to raise the necessary funds to boost the implementation of different NUA pillars.



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