



**ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

HLPF 2017 V40

Guiding Questions for a Template for CSO engagement for Voluntary National Review at the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF)

This template aims to identify what mechanisms are in place for government engagement with the SDGs, civil society, local governments, and current initiatives from all actors in realizing the SDGs at a national and international level.

- Country : JORDAN
- Organization:
- Name:

A. State of national government's preparation for the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development / SDGs – domestic and international

1. Which ministry (or other institution e.g. in the Prime Minister's office) is now leading or in charge of the planning for the domestic implementation of the SDGs in your country?
2. Does your government have a policy framework on SDG implementation? How does this relate to existing or other policy frameworks as national development plans?
3. Is there parliamentary/congressional scrutiny of the framework? If so please list the relevant committee and its activity
4. Are local governments in your countries actively engaged in the 2030 Agenda / SDGs? If so, how

In 2015, "Jordan 2025: A National Vision and Strategy" was adopted and the government of Jordan has stated that it would integrate all 17 SDGs, along with the respective 169 goals and 231 performance indicators, into its national vision. However, as the national assessment report prepared by Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies concludes; no programs have yet entered the implementation phase, and all efforts undertaken thus far have been fundamentally theoretical and preparatory, rooted in policy-drawing and strategy development, and are yet to materialize into concrete measures. As of the implementation; the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation is responsible, who chairs as well the Higher National Committee for Sustainable Development. The Ministry leads the process for the Voluntary Review as well, with support from the United Nations Country Team in Jordan, including non-



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resident agencies and the strategic guidance and supervision provided by the National Higher Committee on Sustainable Development (as noted <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/jordan>).

Whereas the recent parliamentary elections represents an opportunity for SDGs implementation, it is important to note that the focus of the parliament is mainly on decentralization. In addressing the Lower House of Parliament on November 16 2016, Prime Minister Hani Mulki expressed his government's wishes to boost popular participation in development efforts and to undertake a process of decentralization¹, with an emphasis on municipal and governorate autonomy.

B. CSO engagement with the government in the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development / SDGs

5. Is the full text of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs available in your local languages? Which language(s)? Who translated it?
6. Was there any invitation to public consultation on the voluntary national review at HLPF? If so, who was invited?
7. Have there been any other ways in which civil society has been able to contribute to the implementation, monitoring or review, including national reporting at HLPF?
8. Has your government invited CSO representatives to be a member of its delegation to participate in the HLPF 2017 and/or make a presentation at the VNR?
9. In case you say "YES", has your government provided financial support for this participation?

Agenda 2030 is available in Arabic, made available by UN, thus for the use of local community and to enable national civil society engagement in monitoring and implementation more effectively. At national level, the civil society engagement in the SDGs implementation is foreseen within the government approach and prioritized through several steps including:

- To develop an SGD-oriented 'roadmap' for the integration of the 2030 Developmental Agenda and its indicators into the several sectoral strategies, namely through consultations with civil society (priority 1);
- to increase the awareness of civil society in regards to SDGs (priority 2);
- to increase the capacity of CSOs, along with governmental bodies and staff, to implement and assess SDG-related programs and strategies (priority 3);
- To develop a national monitoring system dedicated to overseeing the pursuit of SDG targets, based on the 2030 Agenda's 231 indicators, in addition to the 580 country-

¹ "Government presents policy statement to Lower House", Jordan Times, 17 November 2016



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specific indicators which have been developed in Jordan over the past years (priority 4).

Furthermore, Phenix Center study demonstrates additional ideas discussed by officials that can enhance civil society engagement once implemented effectively. Among these there is the creation of a national team, composed of government, private sector, and CSO representatives, to follow up on SDG-related activities; and the creation of small working groups dedicated to broad groups of SDGs.

A national delegation from Jordan will be present for the VNR during HLPF 2017 and the Civil society Coordinating Coalition –HIMAM was asked to be part of the delegation as civil society representatives, where the expenses will be covered as well.

C. CSO national coalition-building for the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development / SDGs

10. Is there any CSO national platform or network focusing on the SDGs?
11. Are there national platforms that work on specific goals or targets?
12. Have you had a regular policy dialogue with relevant government ministries during the preparation and since the adaption of the 2030 Agenda?

Despite challenges on enabling environment in Jordan, commitment of civil society to the goals and principles of the 2030 Developmental Agenda have been made clear through a number of initiatives. The creation of a CSO coalition named Jordan Forum for SDGs 2030 is one clear example. Coalition members – approximately 200 CSOs from different sectors and areas of focus – are currently developing an organizational framework and implementing an internal capacity-building program. In the future, civil society partners hope that the Forum will serve as a platform through which CSOs may contribute to the achievement of SDGs in Jordan. On the other hand capacity building activities on SDGs also continue, for instance the Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies, an Amman-based NGO, has launched a broad training program reaching over 40 local CSOs, with course subjects ranging from institutional development, human rights, advocacy, and SDGs. Through this initiative, the Center has sought to empower civil society to become a stronger partner in sustainable development, though this will require government action towards creating an effectively enabling environment for CSOs to operate.

D. CSOs own implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development/SDGs

13. How far are CSOs developing their own plans on implementation of the agenda in your country?
14. Are there particular case studies of effective delivery by CSOs already underway?
15. Are there challenges to prevent CSO delivery of this agenda in your country?



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16. What is the engagement of other stakeholders like the private sector in the national implementation plan? Is there a broader partnership across sectors for implementation? Have any challenges or opportunities been identified in terms of broader partnerships?
17. Is there any clear national plan in terms of funding the delivery of the 2030 Agenda?

As put forward by Phenix Center analysis, several obstacles remain which hinder its ability to become an effective partner in development. One such obstacle is the national 2008 Associations Law, and its 2009 amendments, which ban the creation of any groups with “political goals”, or whose activities are perceived to threaten public order. In 2016, proposed amendments to the law sought to make it more restrictive still, by prohibiting the formation of any group that threatens “national security, public safety, public health, public order, public morals, or the rights and freedoms of others”. Furthermore, proposed amendments would increase the required number of founding members from 7 to 50, making it extremely difficult for small and community-based organizations to obtain official status.

Another obstacle has been the pervasive lack of capacity among civil society actors. Many Jordanian citizens lack an adequate understanding of the country’s political and social framework, the devices which are at their disposal to make their voices heard and seek assistance, and SDGs, and poor interpersonal and communication skills are common in all social sectors and strata. Though CSOs commonly strive towards goals which are in line with the 2030 Developmental Agenda, most do so unknowingly.

Civil society in Jordan is largely fragmentary and, accordingly, CSOs often act individually, and within relatively limited scopes. Similarly, the media reports on issues which concern SDGs, but hardly, if ever, mention the 2030 Goals explicitly. In spite of the awareness-raising efforts carried out by UN agencies and a small number of other institutions, civil society and the general public remain largely unaware of the Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, on the technical side, there is an overall want of a better understanding of socioeconomic and political rights and of the ways of advocate for their protection and advancement, as well as of more efficient organizational capabilities.

Finally with regard to private sector, as potential partners in development, Phenix Center analysis shows that there are little to no incentives in place to make the private sector a partner in development.