



Sultanate of Oman
Supreme Council for Planning



National committee for achieving
sustainable development Goals

First Voluntary National Review of **The Sultanate of Oman 2019**

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on Sustainable Development **July 2019**

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with Confidence**

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“Development is not a goal in itself. Rather, it exists for building man, who is its means and maker. Therefore, development must not stop at the achievement of material wealth and a diversified economy. It must go beyond that to contribute to the formation of the citizen who is capable of taking part in the process of progress and comprehensive development. Such goals can be achieved through the improvement of the citizen’s technical and professional ability, the stimulation of their creative and scientific capabilities, and the improvement of their diverse skills. All this must be directed towards serving the country and achieving the happiness of all citizens.”

From the Royal Speech of His Majesty

Sultan Qaboos Bin Said

On the occasion of the Conference on “Oman’s Economy-Vision 2020”, 2 June 1995

The present report was prepared under the supervision of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning – the National Committee for the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

with the participation of staff from the following entities:

- General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers
- General Secretariat of the State Council
- General Secretariat of the Shura Council
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Oil and Gas
- Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE)
- Ministry of Manpower
- Ministry of Health (MoH)
- Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources
- Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs
- Ministry of Social Development (MoSD)
- Public Authority for Radio and Television
- General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning (SCP)
- Research Council
- Sultan Qaboos University
- National Defense College
- National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI)
- Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Science
- National Youth Committee
- Children First Association
- Association of Early Intervention

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Foreword

Four years have passed since the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development was announced in September 2015. During these four years, the Sultanate of Oman has resolutely endeavored to honor its international commitment to achieving these goals by 2030 by integrating the latter into its long-term strategies and short and medium-term plans and programs, whilst relying on the United Nations 2030 Agenda as a central pillar. The Oman 2040 Vision and the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) both underscore the fact that the Sultanate takes the 2030 Agenda seriously and had devised the necessary policies, initiatives, and programs to ensure the achievement of desired goals by the internationally agreed deadline.

Oman's determination to achieve the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development constitutes a natural extension of the values and principles of sustainability, equality, justice, peace, engagement, and "leaving no one behind" that have been deeply rooted in Omani society since its inception. This reality is clearly reflected in the Basic Statute of the State and the addresses of his Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, which have always been a reference framework to all development plans and programs in the Sultanate. As a result, Oman has made remarkable achievements in key economic, social, environmental, cultural, and political areas of sustainable development over the past few years, as laid out in detail in the present report.

In this context and with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Supreme Council for Planning (SCP) established a national high-level committee called "the National Committee for the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals", comprised of members from ministries, government bodies, the State and Shura Councils; and representatives from the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), and academic institutions. The said committee was mandated with a number of functions, most important of which are the follow-up on the process of integrating the SDGs into Oman's five-year development plans and Oman 2040 Vision, the oversight of the elaboration of national reports including the voluntary national reviews (VNRs), and the follow-up on the development of a comprehensive dashboard-based system aimed at monitoring indicators of progress

made towards achieving the 2030 SDGs and their targets and ensuring their delivery in accordance with national objectives on a periodic basis.

In pursuit of the SDGs, the Sultanate has relied upon broad community participation at national and local levels. Panel discussions, workshops, and dialogue sessions have been held with various development partners representing the government, the private sector, civil society, youth, parliamentary and academic entities, and international organizations, with a view to ensuring community ownership of the development agenda. "All of Oman" is one of the most prominent initiatives adopted by the Sultanate that aims to heed the priorities and future aspirations of local communities during the elaboration of the Vision document and focuses on enabling an active participation of all segments of society in the sustainable development efforts in Oman.

Oman's first VNR reflects in an integrated manner the progress made by the country towards achieving the 17 SDGs. It highlights national strategies and plans that were specifically designed to implement these goals, identifies future challenges and plans for the achievement of the SDGs, and reviews current practices and initiatives contributing to the attainment of national sustainable development objectives and priorities.

We are fully aware that we still have challenges ahead and that honoring our commitment is contingent upon addressing the numerous and diverse challenges confronting us, which requires combined regional and international efforts. The Sultanate is tirelessly seeking to reach this end by leveraging its strong ties at Arab, regional, and international levels.

As Oman submits its first VNR to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), it hopes to highlight its efforts towards achieving the SDGs as well as the most important initiatives that are deemed potentially useful to the rest of the world. The Sultanate is confident that the exchange of expertise and experiences between nations at such a high-level forum constitutes a decisive factor in achieving the desired goals according to the agreed agenda.

Dr. Ali bin Masoud bin Ali Al-Sunaidy



Minister of Commerce and Industry
Deputy Chairman of the Supreme
Council for Planning



Executive Summary

Since the early 1970s, the sustainability mindset has been a key tenet of the successive visions and five-year plans adopted by the Sultanate of Oman. Oman has also been an active partner in all the United Nations and regional fora and deliberations that led to the announcement of the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015. It also took part as well in the United Nations discussions of document A/69/700 entitled “The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet.” On the basis of broad community consultations, Oman’s Supreme Council for Planning (SCP) endorsed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 (SDGs) in its third meeting in 2015 on 24 June 2015.

Since then, the Sultanate has been keen on integrating the sustainable development dimensions and goals in its development plans and strategies, at the top of which are the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) and Oman 2040 Vision, in a way that attests to the rigorous seriousness with which the Government is implementing the SDGs, allocating budgets thereto, and devising programs and policies that ensure the achievement thereof in the medium and long terms. In the elaboration of its long-term vision and medium-term plan, the Sultanate relied on extensive community participation at national and local levels. Tens of discussion panels, workshops, and dialogue sessions were held with various development partners ranging from representatives of government and private sector to civil society, youth, and international organizations, with the aim of ensuring community ownership of the development agenda.

A national committee for sustainable development was formed under the chairmanship of the Supreme Council for Planning Deputy Chairman, with the membership of representatives from all development partners, including government officials, academics, members of the State and Shura Councils, representatives of the private sector and civil society. The National Committee was tasked with the oversight and follow-up for the preparation of the first VNR. A technical team composed of national experts, director-generals, and selected specialists and consultants was also set up to draft the report, in addition to a working group assigned from the National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI) to monitor and measure the sustainable development indicators.

After reviewing the institutional framework, methodology, and method adopted in the VNR preparation, the outcomes and goals of

Oman 2040 were aligned with the SDGs and their targets according to their corresponding sectors in the 2030 Agenda. Such alignment ensures that the 2030 SDGs and their targets are embedded in the Oman 2040 components and are therefore granted the same level of attention as the goals of the national vision, thus guaranteeing that the necessary resources are allocated to their implementation in accordance with the agreed timetable and that the national and international indicators required to measure the progress made towards the SDGs are available.

The report also reflects on the challenges to sustainability Oman and the national policies put into effect to address them. These challenges can be summarized as follows: regional and international economic variables, particularly global oil price fluctuations and the global economic downturn, in addition to unstable regional geopolitical conditions that adversely affect Oman’s financial situation; employment creation to accommodate job seekers and newcomers to the labor market, whose numbers are expected to grow significantly and incrementally given the youthful structure of the Omani population pyramid; accelerating the economic diversification process so as to reduce the dependence of the national economy on oil imports and exports while laying down the necessary economic diversification policies, with a view to taking advantage of the achievements of previous development plans in infrastructure areas; and building a private sector that is efficient, competitive, and capable of making optimal use of Oman’s human and natural resources, as a major contributor to economic diversification.

The report sheds light on the efforts deployed by the Sultanate to continue monitoring sustainable development indicators. The NCSI oversees the monitoring of SDG indicators in order to compile all data and indicators available in Oman and carry out the necessary planning to ensure their availability on a periodic, regular basis. To that end, it has built a database and a website dedicated to the SDGs and the established working groups tasked with communicating with concerned ministries and entities, making the required data available according to the United Nations methodologies. These efforts resulted in the computation of 100 SDG indicators, representing approximately 41 percent of the total number of indicators to be measured. The NCSI also ensures a continuous follow-up of sustainable development indicators with international organizations, reviews Oman’s data posted on the United Nations website to verify its validity and accuracy, and coordinates with concerned organizations regarding the amendment and provision of national data for the SDG indicators.

Executive Summary

Before covering the progress made towards achieving each of the 17 SDGs separately, the report discusses four central issues to which the Sultanate pays an increased attention as they constitute key determinants of success in achieving the SDGs, namely the local character of development, funding efficiency, technological advancement, and data availability.

1 The Local Character of Development

Year Plan (2016-2020) and the previous plans attach paramount importance to governorate development in order to ensure that the development process achieved balanced outcomes for all citizens across the country and reaches comparable levels of development in all governorates in the areas of education, health, social services, job opportunities, infrastructure, and public utilities. The 9th Plan adopts a methodology that is based on data description and the identification of the needs and requirements of economic, social, environmental, and urban development in each governorate in a way that produces a complete picture of the situation and priorities in every governorate, which in turn allows for the elaboration of a development and investment program that is consistent with the said priorities. In this context, Oman 2040 Vision is the most significant and telling initiative in terms of affirming that decentralization and the promotion of the role of governorates and local communities are among Oman's key development priorities. Oman 2040 is one of the most important outreach initiatives devised under the communication and stakeholders' involvement strategy aiming to promote a participative approach in the process of preparing and drafting this future vision. It aims to consider the priorities and future aspirations of local communities in the drafting of the Vision document and to enable all segments of society in the governorates, particularly youth, women, the private sector, and civil society organizations (CSOs), to actively participate in the sustainable development efforts exerted by the Sultanate.

► This issue is closely linked to the principle of leaving no one behind. The sultanate of Oman strongly believes that achieving the SDGs is contingent upon promoting the role of governorates and local communities throughout the development process, starting with the formulation of strategies and plans through to the phases of implementation, follow-up, and evaluation. Hence, the 9th Five-

2 Funding Efficiency

estimates the funding gap that needs to be filled to achieve the SDGs in developing countries at US\$2.5 trillion per year. The report also stresses that the quality of budget allocation is just as important as the availability of funds. The Sultanate embarked recently on a shift towards the application of program and performance budgets and plans. 13 government bodies are now engaged in this shift towards the application of program and performance budgets that define direct linkages between national priorities and budgets to be allocated for their implementation and offer a seamless tool to track performance and ensure accountability. Moreover, the SCP has started to develop a specific method for plan formulation. This new method does not only entail a review of development projects with government bodies, but also covers all key initiatives that require budget allocation under the current expenditure. Under this method, initiatives are listed in a tracking system; a method that enhances the plan's ability to monitor financial allocations (either current or development-related) in order to achieve the SDGs.

► Funding efficiency is the second issue examined in the present report. The emphasis is laid on finances presenting one of the largest challenges faced by countries in their pursuit of development goals. In fact, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

3 Technological Advancement

- ▶ The report elaborates on a third issue pertaining to technological advancement, Oman's readiness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and how the latter can be leveraged to deliver the SDGs. According to the Readiness of the Future of Production Report 2018 issued by the World Economic Forum, which measures countries' readiness to capitalize on the Fourth Industrial

Revolution opportunities and avert its risks and assess their preparedness for future changes, the Sultanate is ranked 45th out of 100 countries in terms of drivers of production and 70th in terms of the structure of production components. The present report reviews national strategies put in place by the Sultanate since 2011 with a view to enhancing its readiness and preparedness to keep abreast of the accelerated advances in the Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies. These include the Digital Oman Strategy, the National Broadband Strategy, the National Innovation Strategy, the E-Commerce Strategy, and the National Information and Communications Technology Strategy. The report also presents national initiatives launched by the Sultanate that lay a solid foundation for its transformation and readiness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, in addition to several examples that demonstrate the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in supporting efforts to achieve the SDGs.

4 Data Availability

- ▶ The Sultanate is convinced that "what cannot be measured cannot be achieved;" it therefore follows that the first VNR of Oman sheds light on the issue of the availability of indicators. From the same perspective, the NCSI established a database encompassing the SDGs and their indicators in order to compile all data and indicators that are available in Oman and

undertake planning exercises to ensure their availability on a periodic, regular basis. A website dedicated to Oman's SDG indicators was also launched and will serve as a communication platform for all concerned parties at local and international levels.

- ▶ The VNR then goes on to examine the progress made by the Sultanate towards achieving the 17 SDGs during recent years in light of the most recent available data and reports. It also highlights major challenges facing the Sultanate on the road towards achieving the SDGs by 2030, as well as policies, procedures, and plans in place to tackle these challenges and ensure the delivery of the SDGs.

The VNR underscores that the Sultanate of Oman is committed to achieving the SDGs in economic, social, and environmental dimensions within the agreed deadline and that, despite considerable challenges, it is generally moving in the right direction towards that end, pursuing an approach based on broad community participation during the design, implementation, and evaluation of plans, policies, and programs aimed at tackling the aforementioned challenges and achieving the SDGs.



Introduction

The Sultanate of Oman is an Arab Muslim country located in the far southeastern part of the Arabian Peninsula. It stretches over 310,000 km² with a current population of 4.6 million, 44 percent of which are expatriates. According to the World Bank classification, Oman is a high average income country, and it falls under the category of countries with a considerably high human development as per the United Nations.

The sustainability mindset has been a fundamental tenet of the consecutive visions and five-year plans adopted by the Sultanate since the onset of the modern Omani renaissance in 1970 under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said who strived to build a state of contemporary institutions on the basis of citizenship, equality, and the rule of law, while keeping with the zeitgeist through development plans and programs and enhancing living standards by developing the education, health, and socio-economic sectors. When it comes to foreign policy and international relations, the Sultanate embraces an approach anchored in the values of peace; coexistence; tolerance; dialogue; acceptance of others; respect for neighboring countries; non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; close collaboration with all nations and peoples; and commitment to the principles of rights, justice, and equality, in accordance with the provisions and principles of the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law.

Oman has been an active partner in all regional and United Nations fora and deliberations that led to the announcement of the SDGs in September 2015. It also took part in the United Nations discussions of document A/69/700 entitled “The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet”. The Sultanate hosted the 2014 Global Education for All Meeting, which stressed the need for a new education vision for the 21st century,

marking a milestone in the drafting of the education goal in the Muscat Declaration which helped define the global education goal and targets, as well as the means to achieve them. On the basis of broad community consultations, the SCP endorsed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 in its third meeting in 2015 on 24 June 2015.

Since then, the Omani Government has been keen on incorporating the sustainable development dimensions and goals in its development plans and strategies, at the top of which are the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) and Oman 2040 Vision, in a way that attests to the great attention paid to the implementation of the SDGs, allocation of budgets, and elaboration of programs and policies that ensure the achievement of these goals in the medium and long terms.

In order to integrate the SDGs into development plans and strategies, the Sultanate opted for a method based on community participation and ownership through discussion panels, workshops, and dialogue sessions held with the officials concerned with sectoral strategies. These activities involved policymakers; academics; the Council of Oman; representatives of the private sector, CSOs, youth organizations; and various stakeholders. These methods epitomize Oman’s belief in the right of every individual to a decent life allowing them to harness their full potential and contribute to the fulfillment of socio-economic and environmental requirements to ensure that no one is left behind.

Aspiring to a bright future where the SDGs are achieved and based on the premise that these rights belong to all, the Sultanate of Oman firmly believes that achieving the SDGs cannot be realized by governments alone, but rather requires building strong partnerships with other parties, including individuals, the private sector, and CSOs.

Institutional Mechanisms to Achieve the SDGs

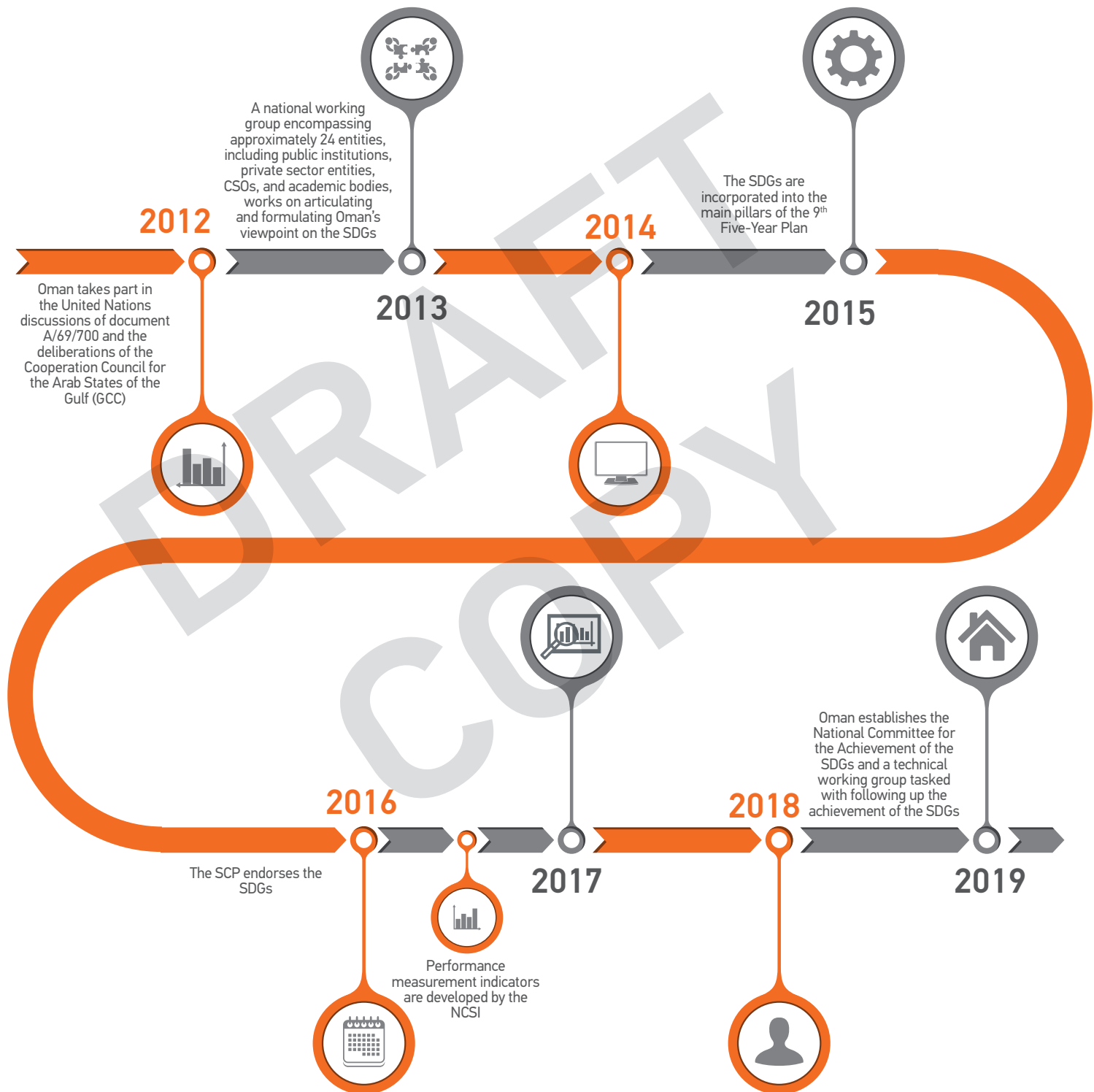
Royal Decree No. 30/2012 promulgated on 26 May 2012 granted the SCP the power to follow up on the achievement of the SDGs. Article 2 of the SCP Regulations states that the Council shall “set the strategies and policies required for the achievement of sustainable development in the Sultanate and find the mechanisms that will help implement these strategies and policies with a view to reaching economic diversity and the optimal use of available natural and human resources.”

Since the beginning of January 2016, the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda endorsed by world leaders in September 2015 during a historic United Nations summit, officially commenced. The 2030 Agenda includes 17 goals and 169 targets and builds on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that came to an end in 2015.

After endorsing the 2030 SDGs along with all the other countries in a United Nations General Assembly resolution adopted on 25 September 2015, Oman took a number of measures to uphold its commitment to achieving the SDGs, including the following:

- 1 To review “keeping up with the latest changes in international development instruments, foremost of which is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” one of five main pillars underpinning the themes that guided the drafting of the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020);
- 2 To incorporate the 2030 SDGs into the sectoral objectives of the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020)
- 3 To start monitoring the SDG indicators for the baseline year as of the middle of 2016; and
- 4 To take the SDGs into consideration when drafting the goals and strategies of Oman 2040 Vision.

Figure (1): Timeline of Oman's participation in the 2030 Agenda



Institutional Mechanisms to Achieve the SDGs

In this context, the SCP established the National Committee for the Achievement of the SDGs. A high-level committee, it is composed of members from all ministries, government bodies, and the Council of Oman, representatives from the private sector and CSOs. The National Committee was entrusted with a number of tasks, foremost of which are the follow-up of the integration of the SDGs into the objectives of Oman's five-year plans, Oman 2040 Vision and the oversight over the development of an integrated dashboard-based system aimed

at monitoring the indicators of progress towards the SDGs and their targets and ensuring their delivery in line with national targets on a regular basis. It was also mandated to supervise the preparation of national reports, including VNRs, in order to follow up on the achievement of the SDGs; formulate recommendations regarding delivery levels, challenges, and ways to address the latter; and to submit these recommendations to the SCP and then to the Council of Ministers.

Figure (2): The institutional and executive framework to achieve the SDGs



In preparation for Oman's first VNR, a national technical team was established comprising experts and director-generals from ministries and government bodies, representatives of the private sector, the Council of Oman, business partners, and CSOs. Along with the NCSI working group, the team monitors and measures SDG indicators. The SCP organized several workshops for the technical team, the NCSI working group, and stakeholders' representatives in order to discuss and introduce the mechanism for preparation of the VNR report, its sections, and the importance of national ownership of the report.

Working groups of multiple stakeholders participated in the VNR preparation and drafting, the presentation of implemented initiatives, and the review of challenges and plans related to the achievement of the SDGs.

figure 3 illustrates the executive framework for the preparation of the first VNR report of Oman.

Figure (3): Executive framework for the preparation of the first VNR report of Oman



Wide Community Participation as Oman's Approach towards Achieving the SDGs

The Sultanate of Oman firmly believes in the importance of broad community participation and ownership for the achievement of the SDGs. This belief has been demonstrated during the preparation of the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016–2020), the first five-year plan adopted after the endorsement of SDGs by the SCP. The Plan was enhanced by community participation through numerous panel discussions and workshops held with the participation of:

More than 40 panel discussions were organized with the aim of introducing participants to the views of the concerned ministries and bodies on the Plan's proposed objectives and pillars, its sectoral components, macroeconomic management plans and financial policies, the investment program, governorate development, the private sector and economic diversification, employment policies, Omanization and youth programs.

**Ministries and
government
bodies**

**International
experts
and UN
organizations**

Five workshops were held to appraise successful international examples and apply lessons learned that are appropriate for the Sultanate's conditions.



Authorities responsible for long-term sectoral strategies

Dialogue sessions covered Oman's promising sectors, namely manufacturing, transport and logistic services, tourism, fisheries, and mining, in addition to ICTs, education, health, agriculture, and environment, with the aim of finding a common ground between sectoral strategies and the Sustainable Development Agenda.

Omani Youth

Omani youth were involved to better understand their aspirations and priorities, as well as the initiatives that can expedite the achievement of the SDGs.



In order to emphasize Oman's commitment to the 2030 Agenda not only in the medium term but in the long term too, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said ordered the elaboration of Oman 2040 Vision, with an objective forward-looking perspective that serves as a key guide and reference for the Sultanate in any planning exercise during the next two decades. Oman 2040 attracted broad community participation including representatives from the government, the Council of Oman, the private sector, and CSOs, as well as citizens of knowledge, experience, and expertise. It has also built on the launching of a wider community dialogue in various sectors during various events that engaged diverse society segments under the "All of Oman" initiative, discussed at a later stage in this report.

The SDGs Are in Line with Future National Strategies and Plans

As the blessed renaissance shone its light on the Sultanate in 1970 under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, it ushered in the journey of planning for development, as the Government pursued a clear socio-economic path articulated in consecutive five-year development plans that revolved around fundamental long-term objectives, most prominent of which are the creation of new sources of national income that support oil revenues and replace them in the future, a focus on human resources to enable them to fully assume their role in advancing the national economy, the continuous building of the components of a free economy underpinned by private sector activities on the basis of free competition, and the attention to water resources as a vital element indispensable for thriving and uninterrupted economic activity and environment preservation.

During the period from 1970-1995, the Sultanate successfully laid down the foundations of a socio-economic shift and embarked on a journey towards future horizons, continuous self-sustaining growth, and interaction with the outside world. In 1995, the economic future vision Oman 2020 was developed, setting out a clear and well-defined path towards the 21st century under which the Omani economy can shift from an economy that depends on government initiative and spending, oil resources, and an expatriate workforce as the main drivers of economic activities, to an economy that relies on private initiatives, a national workforce, and renewable resources in order to achieve sustainable development. Oman 2020 consisted of four central themes, each coupled with relevant policies and mechanisms as follows: development of human resources, economic diversification, the private sector, and economic balance and continuous growth.

Shortly after the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, the Sultanate devised the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) which underscores Oman's determination to keep pace with evolving international development instruments, particularly the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The principal aim of the Plan is to deliver a shift away from an economy that depends on a sole main resource, i.e. oil, towards a diversified economy to which various promising sectors are contributing, with a view to minimizing the consequences of external shocks resulting from oil price fluctuations in the global markets. During the last four years of the 9th Plan, Oman made significant progress towards the SDGs.

Subsequently, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said ordered the preparation of Oman 2040 Vision, which was meant to discern the socio-economic reality and chart an objective forward-looking course that would serve as a fundamental guide and reference to the Sultanate in any planning exercise during the following two decades.

Oman 2040 seeks to elevate the Sultanate to the position of an advanced nations by focusing on three key themes:

1

The individual and Society

calls for a society whose members are creative and proud of their identity, innovative and globally competitive, enjoying a decent life and sustainable well-being. This theme covers four national priorities as follows:

- Education, learning, scientific research, and national capabilities, with the following **strategic direction**: inclusive education and scientific research that lead to a knowledgeable society and competitive national capabilities.
- Health, with the following **strategic direction**: a pioneering health system with international standards characterized by decentralization, quality, transparency, justice, and accountability.
- Citizenship, identity, heritage, and national culture, with the following **strategic direction**: a society proud of its identity and culture and committed to its citizenship, and an integrated and institutional community-based partnership scheme that reinforces national identity, citizenship, and social cohesion.
- Well-being and social protection, with the following **strategic direction**: a decent and sustainable life for all and a society based on a set of goals, at the forefront of which is a society enjoying insurance coverage through an efficient, sustainable, and just social safety network.

2

Economy and Development

It calls for a productive and diversified economy characterized by a competitive structure; founded on innovation, the integration of roles, and equal opportunities; driven by the private sector; and delivering inclusive and sustainable development. This theme includes six national priorities as follows:

- Economic leadership and management, with the following **strategic direction**: a dynamic economic leadership with renewed competencies operating within an integrated institutional framework towards a set of goals, particularly the creation of a reference entity for the economy that is empowered to achieve the goals of economic development and social justice.
- Economic diversification and fiscal sustainability, with the following **strategic direction**: a diversified and sustainable economy that embraces knowledge and innovation, operates within integrated and competitive frameworks, keeps abreast of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and achieves fiscal sustainability. This direction is realized through six goals, foremost of which is to identify leading sectors driving economic diversification and supporting sectors, to be reviewed every five years.
- Labor market and employment, with the following **strategic direction**: a dynamic labor market with sectorial targets that attracts talent and is responsive to demographic, economic, knowledge, and technological changes. This direction is realized through four goals, most notably a labor market with highly skilled and productive workforce and a positive work culture that attracts talents and skilled workers in line with clear and standardized recruitment policies.
- Private sector, investment, and international cooperation, with the following **strategic direction**: an empowered private sector that drives a competitive and globally integrated economy. This direction is realized through seven goals, most prominently a competitive business environment capable of attracting investments in which the government assumes a regulatory role coupled with successful, efficient, and seamless management and an empowered and competitive private sector that leads the economy and observes both economic and social dimensions.
- Development of sustainable governorates and cities, with the following **strategic direction**: comprehensive geographical development according to a decentralized approach that develops a limited number of urban centers and ensures an optimal and sustainable use of lands. This direction is realized through six goals, foremost of which are a balanced and just development that enhances the competitive and comparative advantages of governorates and urban areas, empowered communities involved in setting their socio-economic priorities and operating within a framework of administrative and economic decentralization, and an efficient settlement hierarchy system to guide urban development.
- Natural resources and environmental sustainability, with the following **strategic direction**: balanced and optimal use of natural resources to ensure their sustainability in support of energy security and the national economy. This direction is realized through six goals, notably food and water security that is based on renewable resources and advanced technologies; optimal capitalization on Oman's strategic location and biodiversity; and a protected environment that balances environmental, socio-economic, and labor requirements according to sustainable development rules.

3

Governance and Institutional Performance

calls for a country that enjoys an accountable apparatus, integrated governance, efficient oversight, and a swift judiciary, to be achieved through three national priorities as follows:

- Legislative, judicial, and oversight system, with the following **strategic direction**: a participatory legislative system; an independent, specialized, and swift judiciary; and an efficient and transparent oversight. This direction is realized through seven goals, foremost of which are flexible legislations, an independent legislative authority with full powers, a comprehensive oversight system that protects national assets and observes the principles of accountability, and a society that enjoys legal awareness and actively participates in legislation and oversight.
- Partnership and integration of roles, with the following **strategic direction**: a balanced partnership and an efficient regulatory role of the government. This direction is realized through three goals, notably a balance and sustainable partnership and integrated roles between stakeholders including public and private sectors, civil society, and individuals in order to ensure effective institutional performance and an efficient regulatory framework that motivates CSOs.
- Governance of the administrative apparatus, resources and projects, with the following **strategic direction**: a flexible, innovative, and future-shaping administrative apparatus that is based on the principles of good governance. This direction is realized through six goals, particularly a public sector that is effective in planning, regulation, monitoring, and evaluation, structured sector-wise, and future looking; clear competitive standards for leadership positions in the public sector and its subsidiaries; and institutional transparency and disclosure that guarantee the right to access information.

Oman 2040 defines national priorities through different sets of strategic goals, as indicated in Figure (4) below:

Figure (4): Oman’s National Priorities



As demonstrated above, Oman 2040 national priorities are aligned with the SDGs. Table (1) illustrates the consistency and coherence between the SDGs and the strategic directions of Oman 2040.

Table (1): Consistency and coherence between the SDGs and Oman 2040 strategic directions

Oman 2040 Strategic Directions	Links with the SDGs	
	Direct Links	Indirect Links
1. Inclusive education, sustainable learning, and scientific research that leads to a knowledgeable society and competitive national capabilities	  	  
2. A pioneering healthcare system with international standards		 
3. A society proud of its identity and culture and committed to its citizenship		   
4. A decent and sustainable life for all	   	   
5. A dynamic economic leadership with renewed competencies operating within an integrated institutional framework	  	 
6. A diversified and sustainable economy that embraces knowledge and innovation, operates within integrated frameworks, attains an accomplished competitiveness, keeps abreast of industrial revolutions, and achieves fiscal sustainability	 	   
7. A dynamic labor market that attracts talent and is responsive to demographic, economic, knowledge, and technological changes	  	
8. An empowered private sector that drives a competitive and globally integrated economy	 	
9. Geographically comprehensive development according to a decentralized approach that develops a limited number of urban centers and ensures an optimal and sustainable use of lands	  	 
10. Effective, balanced, and flexible ecosystems in order to protect the environment and ensure the sustainability of its resources in support of the national economy	     	 
11. A participatory legislative system; an independent, specialized, and swift judiciary; and an efficient and transparent oversight		
12. A flexible, innovative, and future-shaping administrative apparatus that is based on the principles of good governance	 	

The Main Challenges to Sustainability in Oman and National Policies to Address them

1.Challenges to Sustainability

The major challenges confronting the achievement of the SDGs in Oman can be summarized as follows:

Regional and international economic changes

Employment creation for job seekers

These encompass chiefly volatility in global oil prices and the global economic downturn, in addition to unstable regional geopolitical conditions that adversely affect Oman's financial situation and require therefore caution and appropriate countermeasures that guarantee fiscal sustainability and a stable macroeconomic environment, as well as an accelerated diversification process.

One of the toughest challenges ahead is creating job opportunities to accommodate job seekers and newcomers to the labor market for which numbers are expected to grow significantly and incrementally considering the youthful structure of the Omani population pyramid. According to the data from mid-2017, those who are aged less than 18 years represent 52 percent of the Omani population. The steady increase in the rate of female participation in economic activity should also be factored in. It is therefore necessary to redress the current labor market conditions in terms of needs and outputs of education and training systems as well as other aspects related to labor law, wages, incentives, and the role of the private sector in employment. It is also indispensable to encourage and support small and medium enterprises (SMEs), concomitantly with the execution of mega projects yielding high economic returns that contribute to job creation. There is consensus that the issue of employment of Omani nationals, especially youth, is the most serious challenge facing policymakers. The problematic issue of employment in Oman does not lie in the lack of demand for workforce (as it is the case in economies with high population density). In fact, the growth rate of the Omani economy creates job opportunities exceeding by far the national workforce supply. In 2017, only 19.2 percent of the total workforce in the Sultanate were Omani nationals, of whom of the vast majority, 84.3 percent, worked in the government and public sector, compared with only 13.7 percent in the private sector. Hence, the real challenge in the labor market is to educate Omani graduates to work in the private sector or opt for self-employment and entrepreneurship, particularly in SMEs. In this context, royal orders have been issued in February 2019 by His Majesty the Sultan to set up the National Center for Employment as the entity in charge of employment affairs and the creation of job opportunities for Omani nationals.

3 Accelerating economic diversification

It is crucial to accelerate the process of economic diversification to reduce the national economy's dependence on oil both at revenues and exports levels, and mitigate the consequences of external shocks resulting from oil price volatility in the global markets. This challenge necessitates a revision of previous economic diversification policies and an adjustment in the course of such policies in order to capitalize on the gains of previous development plans in the areas of infrastructure, logistical services, and newly developed ports, airports, and transportation services; and maximize the use of available natural resources, while taking advantage of Oman's unique geographic location: a waterfront overlooking emerging economies in East Asia and a gateway to East African countries and identifying promising economic sectors that have a competitive advantage to capitalize on these factors. This trend is reinforced by a unanimous agreement around the diversification of growth drivers as the optimal option to guarantee a stable environment conducive of sustainable growth.

4 Building an effective and competitive private sector

It is essential to support and incentivize the private sector, boost its ability to compete and make optimal use of Oman's human and natural resources, and contribute to the process of economic diversification by shifting focus away from conventional sectors (construction and services) towards investment in promising and productive economic sectors. Notwithstanding all new legislative and regulatory frameworks and the improved investment climate, the role of the private sector in the economic process still falls short of expectations. It is thus necessary to rethink current stimulus policies targeting the private sector with regard to economic, legal, and legislative aspects related to investment, labor, and wages regulations with a view to promoting the ease of doing business.

2. National Policies to Address Challenges



Socio-economic
growth stimulus
Policies

The aforementioned challenges served as guidelines to chart the developmental path of Oman's development plans, as they gave momentum to the shift from an economy based on a single commodity, i.e. oil, towards a diverse economy to which other promising sectors contribute. With a view to expediting this shift, the 9th Five-Year Plan focuses on the following objectives and pillars:

- Sustainability of economic growth in a changing world,
- Economic diversification and expansion of production base, and
- Creation of productive and rewarding job opportunities for citizens.



Policies aimed at developing the private sector and improving the business environment and investment climate

Promoting the role of the private sector is one of the main pillars of the 9th Plan. An array of policies, programs, and trends have been brought into effect, including enhancing the business environment and investment climate, improving Oman's ranking in international indices, promoting investment between the public and private sectors, and activating the privatization program and SME development schemes.

Policies aimed at ensuring fiscal sustainability

Oman pursues a fiscal policy tailored to rationalize public expenditure, increase non-oil revenues, control and rationalize current expenditure, and catalyze infrastructure and strategic projects in order to spur growth and boost economic diversification levels.

The adopted fiscal policies also aim at achieving a set of targets and priorities, at the forefront of which are ensuring fiscal sustainability to support the national economy in attaining targeted growth rates, implementing economic diversification programs, enabling the private sector to play a larger role in the economic process, and providing job opportunities. Measures taken to achieve fiscal sustainability include:

- Reordering spending priorities to align them with available financial resources and yield targeted socio-economic revenues,
- Maintaining deficit at an acceptable level and reducing public debt,
- Improving the structure of public revenues by raising the contribution of non-oil revenues in order to reduce oil dependency, and
- Reducing further the breakeven point of oil price under the general budget.

SDG Indicators of Oman

Statistical agencies around the world endeavor to collect, tabulate, and calculate indicators measuring the achievement of the SDGs. The National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI) monitors the SDG indicators of Oman. It has in fact set up a database and launched a website in March 2019 in order to disseminate and provide access to available data and indicators related to the Sultanate. In the framework of planning to ensure the availability of these indicators on a periodic, regular basis, it has formed a working group mandated to communicate with concerned

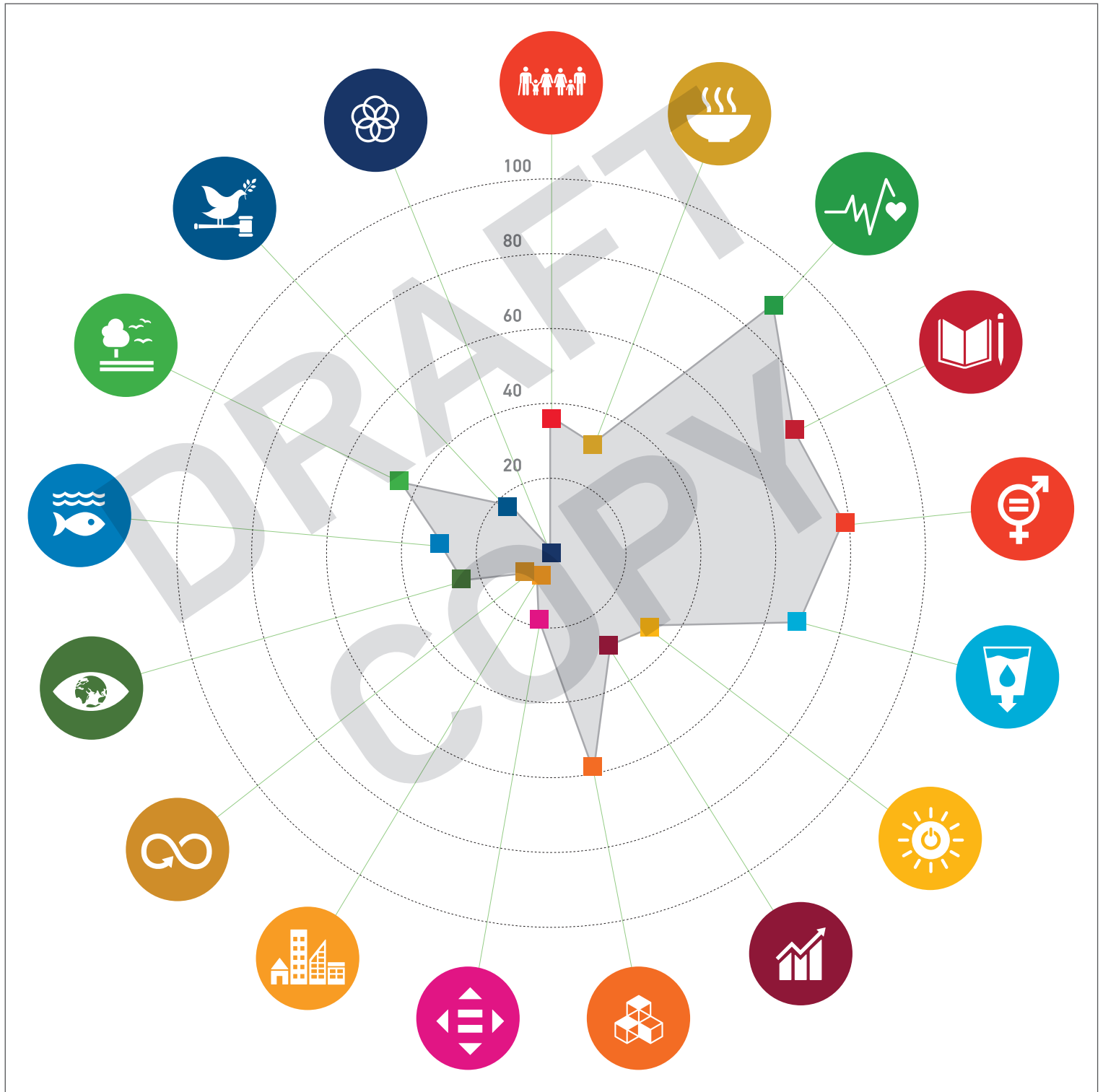
ministries and bodies and provide required data in accordance with United Nations methodologies. The NCSI ensures a continuous follow-up on the SDG indicators with international organizations, reviews Oman's data posted on the United Nations website to verify their validity and accuracy, and coordinates with concerned organizations regarding the amendment and provision of national data on SDG indicators.

The following table illustrates the situation in terms of availability of measured indicators.

Table (2): Availability of SDG indicators in Oman

Goal	Targets	Available Targets	Total Number of Indicators	Available Indicators	Percentage of Target Availability (%)	Percentage of Indicator Availability (%)
1	7	4	14	5	57%	36%
2	8	3	13	4	38%	31%
3	13	12	27	24	92%	89%
4	10	7	11	8	70%	73%
5	9	8	14	11	89%	79%
6	8	5	11	7	63%	64%
7	5	1	6	2	20%	33%
8	12	5	17	5	42%	29%
9	8	4	12	7	50%	58%
10	10	2	11	2	20%	18%
11	10	1	15	1	10%	7%
12	11	1	13	1	9%	8%
13	5	1	8	2	20%	25%
14	10	3	10	3	30%	30%
15	12	5	14	6	42%	43%
16	12	3	23	4	25%	17%
17	19	7	25	8	37%	32%
	169	72	244	100	43%	41%

Percentage of indicator availability by SDG



Challenges and Mechanisms to Overcome Them

The process of measuring SDG indicators is confronted with several challenges that require combined efforts not only at the local level but also at the international level, if they are to be overcome. Chief among these are the multitude of topics tackled by the SDGs which necessitate enormous efforts and close collaboration between stakeholders, ministries, and private sector entities; the degree of detail in SDG indicators; and incomplete methodologies, not to mention financial challenges stemming from the need to conduct field surveys for a considerable number of indicators and the large budgets associated with them.

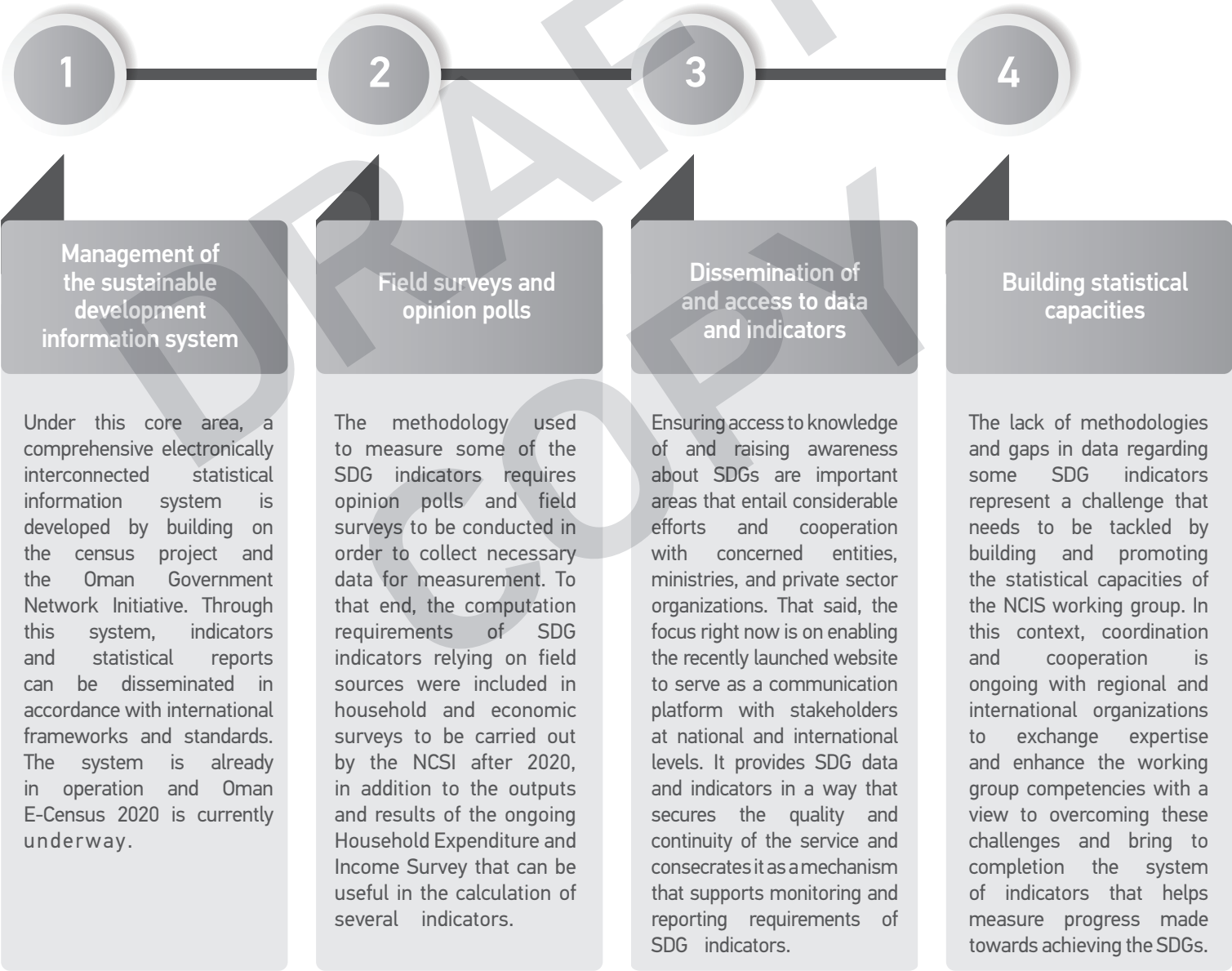
Mechanisms and Tools to Address Challenges:

The Sultanate of Oman places great emphasis on making necessary data and indicators available to monitor the efforts aimed at achieving the SDGs, considering the multitude of topics tackled by the SDGs that necessitate enormous efforts and constructive collaboration between stakeholders, ministries, and private sector entities. It also devotes considerable attention to providing indicators with the required details and ensuring an uninterrupted flow of data. To that end, it is imperative to build statistical capabilities and provide financial resources to carry out field surveys. To overcome these challenges, Oman coordinates its actions and collaborates with various international and regional organizations to exchange expertise, promote its working group capabilities, complete the system of indicators that supports development planning purposes, and measure progress towards the SDGs.



Future Plans to Monitor SDG Indicators

Bridging gaps in data and methodologies related to indicators requires full cooperation with concerned government bodies and agencies in order to obtain accurate and reliable data and indicators. The future plan to complete the monitoring of SDG indicators is underpinned by the following core areas:



Central Issues to the Achievement of the SDGs in Oman

The Sultanate attaches great importance to several issues deemed as key determinants of the country's success in achieving the SDGs.



The basic directions of the Sultanate regarding these issues are explained below.

Sustainable development is an essentially local issue

Oman firmly believes that achieving the SDGs depends largely on promoting the role of governorates and local communities throughout the sustainable development phases, starting with the elaboration of strategies and plans through the various phases of execution, follow-up, and evaluation. Hence, the 9th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) pays particular attention to the development of governorates in order to deliver a balanced development and just distribution of development benefits among citizens across the country, including the attainment of comparable levels of development

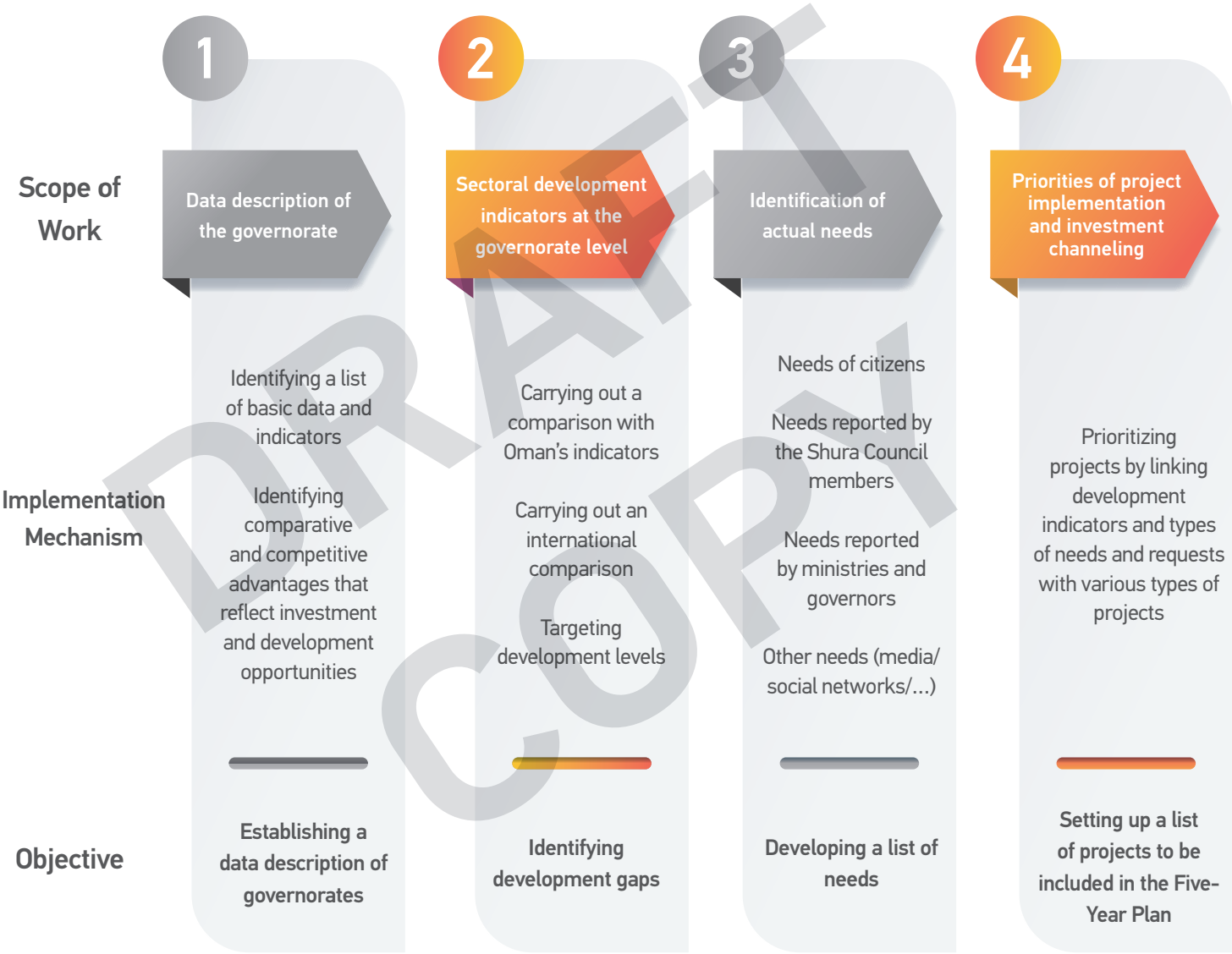
Development plans paid great attention to the development of governorates and local communities

in the areas of health, social services, job creation, infrastructure development, and public utilities.

The Plan follows a methodology that is based on data description and an accurate identification of the needs and requirements of economic, social, environmental, and urban development in each governorate, in a way that depicts a complete picture of the situation and priorities in every governorate. Such methodology allows for the elaboration of a development and investment program that is consistent with the said priorities.

The figure below outlines mechanisms adopted by the 9th Plan to select and implement development projects at the governorate level.

Figure (5): Mechanism for the selection and implementation of development projects at the governorate level



“All of Oman” is an outreach initiative devised under the communication and stakeholders’ involvement strategy with the aim of promoting a participatory approach in the process of preparing and drafting Oman 2040 Vision and expanding the scope of community participation by involving all groups of society in the said process. The initiative seeks to ensure that the priorities and future aspirations of local communities are taken into account during the elaboration of the Vision and provide different society segments in the governorates, especially youth, women, the private sector, and the civil society, with an opportunity to actively engage in the sustainable development efforts exerted in Oman.

The All of Oman initiative started off in March 2018 from Al Buraymi Governorate and toured in total five governorates; it targeted governors, walis, representatives of government bodies, members of State and Shura Councils, members of municipal councils, CSOs, heads of sports clubs, teaching and academic staff, Omani women's associations, the youth, school and higher education students, businessmen, disabled persons, and other segments of society.

All of Oman was implemented and organized to encompass all the themes, pillars, and fundamental issues of Oman 2040 in order to ensure that local communities are involved in the drafting of this future vision according to the following outline:

- **Phase 1:** Reviewing the general context of the Vision and the aim of the meeting.
- **Phase 2:** Panel discussion facilitated by a native of the concerned governorate, with the participation of representatives of the Vision committees and experts from the Vision office.
- **Phase 3:** Workshop on the future directions of Oman 2040, including three main themes, namely the Individual and Society, Economy and Development,

The "All of Oman" initiative consisted of holding a one-day meeting in each governorate attended by 200-300 targeted men and women, during which the general context of Oman 2040 is presented. This meeting is followed by a dialogue session led by natives of the concerned governorate with the participation of representatives of Oman 2040 committees. Then a workshop on the future directions of Oman 2040 is organized covering the following themes: the Individual and Society, Economy and Development, and Governance and Institutional Performance. Under these themes, the outcomes of specialized workshops that involved around 200 experienced and competent Omanis representing all society segments were presented and the views and suggestions of locals regarding those themes were gathered in community brainstorming sessions aiming at exchanging ideas and devising a vision that captured the ambitions and aims of all groups of society.

Governance and Institutional Performance, in addition to a youth session held in collaboration with the Youth Vision Foundation.

Moreover, a new mechanism was initiated to guarantee the participation of all segments of society through social media platforms. Under **Phase 1**, participants were introduced to the Vision, its themes, pillars, and phases; its committees and their functions; and the objectives of communication initiatives targeting different social components and groups. **Phase 2** involved a general meeting held with the participation of citizens from the concerned governorate and representatives of the Vision committees and office to listen to the views, suggestions, and aspirations of attendees. Different civil society components, including entrepreneurs, youth, women, people with special needs, and academics, took part to **Phase 3**, which consisted of workshops on future directions. A number of sessions were also dedicated to gaining a better understanding of the views of Omani youth regarding Oman's future and future skills and technologies, in addition to the holding of the Best Youth Initiative competition which furthers the Vision and its main issues.



The Issue of Funding Efficiency

The Sultanate endeavors to implement an integrated set of tools that can give momentum to the sustainable development drive with a view to advancing action towards delivering and tracking the implementation of the SDGs. The essential tools used in this regard are as follows:

Program and Performance Budget

Convinced that the quality of budget allocation is in no way less important than the provision of funds, the Sultanate initiated the pilot application of program and performance budgets, shifting from item-based budgets to program budgets, whereby the official in charge of an administrative unit tasked with implementing a particular program is responsible and held accountable for the performance of this program. Each program shall be mandated to assume a responsibility in connection with strategic objectives falling under the competence of the concerned government body. All these objectives are translated into an operational work plan in line with the strategic plan of the same body. Funding is then allocated to each body based on priorities set forth in its programs. The application of program and performance budget establishes a direct link between national priorities and budgets to be allocated to their implementation and represents a seamless tool of performance tracking and accountability. A multi-phased measurement system was also developed, enabling smooth and timely tracking and thus turning this tool into a sort of early warning system in support of opportune decision-making and intervention.

Public Projects Selection Criteria

A set of criteria was developed for the selection of government projects and projects implemented in partnership with the private sector in a way that instates SDGs and their linkages with the Five-Year Plan objectives as fundamental for approving the provision of allocations to projects funded by the general budget upon the proposal of government bodies. The new framework of project selection will be worked out with a degree of detail that allows tracking deliverables put forward during the approval stage and to learn, in order to strengthen interlinkages between government projects and fiscal efforts exerted by the Omani Government on one hand and the achievement of the SDGs on the other hand.

The Issue of Technological Advancement and Oman's Readiness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The World Economic Forum published "The Readiness of the Future of Production Report 2018" that measures countries' readiness to capitalize on the Fourth Industrial Revolution opportunities and avert its risks and their preparedness for future changes. The Sultanate was ranked 45th out of 100 countries in terms of drivers of production and 70th in terms of the structure of production components. Since 2011, Oman has put into effect a number of national strategies to enhance its readiness and preparedness to keep abreast of accelerated advances in fourth revolution technologies.

These strategies are the Digital Oman Strategy, the National Broadband Strategy, the National Innovation Strategy, the E-Commerce Strategy, and the National Information and Communications Technology Strategy.

Oman embarked on its ambitious journey towards inducing a quantum shift to a knowledgeable society by launching the Digital Oman Strategy. This strategy aims at activating information and communications technologies (ICTs) to promote government services, enrich the business sector, and enable individuals to conduct transactions digitally. It also seeks to set up an integrated infrastructure that provides excellent government e-services to citizens and businesses in the Sultanate, build knowledge-based industries, and create ample and diverse job opportunities for Omani nationals.

In seeking to advance and keep pace with global accelerated changes in the communications sector that serves as an essential cornerstone of development and attract foreign investments given their pivotal role in various commercial and industrial areas, the Sultanate has founded Oman Broadband Company with the mandate of building an integrated national broadband network that meets the needs of the country.

Oman National Computer Emergency Readiness Team (OCERT) is an Omani digital initiative that epitomizes a turning point in security incidents in the Sultanate. Inaugurated in April 2010, it is tasked with providing a secure cyber environment to every user of any government or private website.

OCERT strives to build trust in the use of government services and devise

information security strategies and policies benefiting both public and private entities. It also offers preliminary technical advice and produces technical reports to help administrators of networks, systems, and applications in both the public and private sectors protect their websites against security risks. OCERT was awarded the prize of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) under Action Line C5 pertaining to building confidence and security in the use of ICTs.

The National Youth Program for Skills Development was instituted with the aim of equipping the youth and juveniles, designated as targeted beneficiaries, with the fourth revolution skills and building Oman's digital capacities and competencies

In 2016, Oman launched the Oman Technology Fund (OTF), which focuses on investment in emerging enterprises and innovative ideas in the IT sector in Oman and the region. The Fund's structure relies on partnerships with international leading companies renowned for their audacious IT investments.

Its work consists mainly of identifying pioneering ideas in the ICT sector and entrepreneurs that have ideas and projects with high-growth potential and developing these enterprises, while giving them the opportunity to gain a global footprint by capitalizing on the advanced capabilities of its international investment partners.

Oman also devotes particular attention to major changes that loomed on the horizon as quantum leaps started to occur under the Fourth Industrial Revolution, including artificial intelligence (AI), blockchains, the Internet of Things (IoT), virtual reality, and enhanced reality. It has consequently put in place a number of initiatives to implement artificial intelligence, blockchain, and other emerging technologies.

The Sultanate is fully aware of the importance of developing human cadres through a training that is attuned to future challenges and requirements. Required skills vary with economic changes and depending on labor market needs. That is why Oman it is keen on arming the youth with skills that are indispensable for the use of new emerging technologies. In this vein, the National Youth Program for Skills Development was instituted with the aim of equipping the youth and juveniles, designated as targeted beneficiaries, with the fourth revolution skills and building Omani digital capacities and competencies.

A number of national initiatives were launched in order to lay down a solid foundation for the transformation and readiness to the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Notable among these are:

- **G-Cloud:** This central platform of integration provides shared infrastructure to government entities, including servers, networks, storage, and applications; and supports the exchange of data between government e-services outlets.
- **Oman Government Network:** This is a national telecommunications network that strives to enhance the level of services provided by government entities by facilitating communication and coordination between them in order to ensure integrated government e-services.
- **The National Digital Certification Center (NDCC):** Set up in 2013, it aims at ensuring confidence in electronic transactions and a unified access to all government e-services; it offers an electronic signature service as well.
- **The Smart City Platform:** This participatory knowledge platform encourages smart city initiatives in Oman. It seeks to disseminate best practices related to smart cities through seminars and workshops, support research and innovation in smart cities, and build partnerships with stakeholders to execute smart city projects.
- **Nibras Project of Petroleum Development Oman (PDO):** It is an electronic platform internally developed by PDO in order to collect, categorize, and present data about oil wells (10,000 oil wells) in an exceptional way using techniques of big data analysis and the Internet of Things. Thanks to this data, a company can identify productive wells and take the appropriate decisions in well management, which allow it to save time and effort and enhance its efficiency and productivity.
- **The Oman Research and Education Network (OMREN):** OMREN provides high-bandwidth connectivity and efficiency services among research and education institutions to foster collaboration among them in the provision of research and education services, such as online virtual libraries, virtual laboratories, telemedicine, grid computing, cloud computing, high-performance computing, and video conferencing.
- **The Oman Eco-Friendly House Competition:** this aims to develop Omani designs of eco-friendly houses characterized by low energy and water consumption and using renewable energy, in partnership with academic institutions, government bodies, and the private sector. Data on performance efficiency is collected from these dwellings through sensors and stored on a unified website. The Research Council, in collaboration with the Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is currently preparing for a new competition that covers the use of 3D printing technology for buildings.

The Issue of Availability of Sustainable Development Data and Indicators

Data availability is a crucial factor in measuring progress made towards the SDG achievement. The SDGs not only tackle a wide range of topics, but also require detailed data and statistics on targets associated with most of the goals that are often not available. This lack of availability constitutes a major hindrance to the monitoring of the SDGs, not to mention that providing high-quality data entails the availability of sophisticated statistical systems and capabilities.

The Sultanate pays great attention to the provision of necessary data and indicators for the follow-up of SDG achievement. In this context, the NCSI assumes a pivotal role in monitoring the SDGs and their targets.

It is worth noting that Oman is currently preparing for the

2020 E-Census for Population, Housing and Establishments. The methodology adopted in this census relies on data collection and indicator production in real time, provided that data connectivity and integration is ensured among government databases

and administrative records. The 2020 E-Census is expected to provide data that meet the SDG computation requirements.

The 2020 E-Census for Population, Housing and Establishments is an effective mechanism to meet the requirements of tracking progress towards the SDGs.

Sustainable Development Goals

01



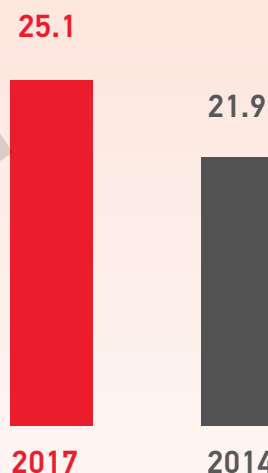
No Poverty

Key Messages:

SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

- Poverty indicators contained in the SDGs do not apply to Oman, since the country is way ahead of that stage. According to the Household Expenditure and Income Survey data emanating from the findings of the first quarter of 2018/2019 survey, the percentage of people living on US\$1.9 purchasing power parity (PPP) per day is zero.
- An integrated system of social protection allows for the improvement of living conditions, especially for the neediest (widows; orphans; the elderly; divorced, unmarried, and abandoned females; families of prisoners; incapacitated individuals; and disabled persons).
- The Social Action Strategy 2016-2025 is underpinned by three principles: social integration, equity, and empowerment. It aims to lay down a system of social protection that is effective, efficient, and sustainable; and contribute to the socio-economic empowerment, through a complementarity partnership between the public, private, and civil sectors.

Public expenditure on basic services (education, health, and social protection) as a proportion of the total public expenditure between 2014 and 2017



SDG1: No Poverty



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG1

Since the onset of the blessed renaissance, the directives of his Majesty the Sultan have been strongly emphasizing the need to focus on plans and programs that enhance the living conditions of Omani citizens. These directives paved the way for significant progress towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the time and enabled the Sultanate to move forward steadily and confidently towards achieving the SDGs, thanks to a clear vision and a steadfast political will to defeat the fundamental causes of poverty through various programs that successfully tackled them. As a result, Oman is ranked today among high-level income countries and incarnates an inspiring model of focus on investment in human capital and infrastructure of the knowledge development necessary to deliver socio-economic sustainability.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) puts Oman in the high human development category (0.8-1.0), with a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.821 in 2018 on a scale of 0 to 1, which positions it 5th among Arab countries and 48th out of 189 countries globally.

In light of these facts and developments, it becomes evident that the Sultanate has moved above the international poverty line, and is therefore not subject to the SDG poverty indicators as it is now far beyond that phase. **In fact, the percentage of the population living on US\$1.9 PPP per day is zero.**

The social protection scheme in Oman encompasses an array of programs and policies such as retirement and social insurance systems that are tailored to fit every sector in the country including the private sector.

These systems provide primarily protection against aging, disability (including work injuries), and death, together with other benefits.

Such insurance protection is extended to cover Omanis working in public and private institutions outside of the Sultanate. Aside from these social insurance systems, the Government has put in place other programs that secure the right of all individuals to a proper level of justice and equity, particularly those in need. These programs include schemes against poverty aiming at enhancing living conditions such as the **Social Security Program** that supports persons with difficult social situations, namely widows; orphans; divorced, unmarried, and abandoned females; incapacitated individuals; elderly; and families of prisoners.

The Social Security Program disburses monthly cash assistance pursuant to the Social Security Law of 1984 and its amendments, which stipulate the allocation of monthly salaries to households and individuals in case of absence of a person to support them or a source of adequate income. In addition to monthly cash assistance, beneficiary households and individuals are eligible to other benefits, including academic grants and scholarships in Oman and abroad, housing and financial assistance in the case of emergencies and disasters, and exemption from public utility charges.

Housing programs have also been developed by the Sultanate in order to ensure adequate housing to society members, by building housing units for persons with limited income and providing them with housing assistance and concessional housing loans. The primary aim is to ensure that these persons have access to decent livelihoods and appropriate housing in proximity to their villages to enable them to carry out their socio-economic activities and contribute to the development of local communities. The governmental service units in collaboration with both private and civil sectors build housing units and provide housing assistance and housing loans and they ensure houses maintenance and rehabilitation services for the beneficiaries of the social security, persons with disabilities, elderlies and low- income individuals.

Ranked 48th out of 189 countries in 2018, Oman is placed in the category of countries with high human development

Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The process of enhancing social welfare and the social protection system in Oman both face several challenges addressed by multiple policies that lay down a set of relevant measures and procedures. Principal among these challenges is the sustainability of retirement systems. Retirement and social insurance systems aim at protecting the insured against aging, disability, and death. However, the generosity of these systems allows early retirement, posing a major challenge to their sustainability and exposing them to the risk of accrual deficits if the situation remains unchanged. The Sultanate is also bracing for major demographic and socio-economic changes expected during coming decades. The 2040 population projections indicate that the Omani population is expected to

witness a significant increase of around 2.4 million between 2011 and 2040, reaching 5.7 million on a medium fertility rate variant. In this context, it is noteworthy that the Omani society is young and approaching what is called “the demographic window” expected to be reached by 2040, as the percentage of Omanis aged less than 15 years is projected to decrease from 35 percent in 2010 to 27.4 percent in 2040 and the percentage of working-age population is expected grow to account for two thirds of the total population by the same year. Such change will affect family structure, internal migration, rural-to-urban shift, social mobility, and the rise in the number of older persons.

Future Plans:

The Social Action Strategy 2016-2025 was devised by the Ministry of Social Development in order to address the challenges explained above. It brings a change in the prevailing perception of cash assistance as a hindrance to economic growth to one that views cash assistance as a catalyst of growth, by reducing inequalities and alleviating destitution.

The Strategy perceives cash assistance provided for social protection and development purposes as a principal direct contributor to economic growth. In this spirit, it focuses on enhancing channels that affect economic growth by supporting the labor market and increasing the involvement of women, youth, and other categories that face difficulties, preventing their contribution to the national economy.

Three guiding principles underpin the Social Action strategy:

- Social integration;
- Equity; and
- Empowerment.

The Strategy works towards putting in place an effective, competent, and sustainable scheme of social protection that contributes to socio-economic empowerment, through a complementarity partnership between the public, private, and civil sectors.

Oman 2040 Vision lays down the necessary tenets and directions to build a comprehensive system of social protection linked with the macro-economy, while bringing about social integration and contributing to social stability. To that end, it instituted “The Individual and Society” as one of its main themes.

SDG1: No Poverty



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG1

1-The Unified System for the Extension of Insurance Protection:

Through the GCC scheme, Oman strived to adopt the Unified System for the Extension of Insurance Protection for GCC nationals working in other GCC countries. In addition to promoting the systems and procedures of social protection at the national level, ensuring equality between all Omanis in Oman and other GCC countries, and setting minimum social protection standards that guarantee a decent and secure life, the Unified System contributes to the creation of a common GCC market by encouraging GCC nationals to work in and move between GCC countries.



These efforts successfully led to a decision by the GCC Supreme Council to launch the actual implementation of the system. By the end of 2018, 6,823 users from the public and private sectors were registered in the Unified System, which contributed to the stability of workers and the protection of their retirement rights.

2-Social Insurance System for Self-Employed Omanis and Their Equivalents

In its efforts to encourage liberal and conventional professionals, the Sultanate was faced with a number of challenges, not the least of them is how to widen the coverage of insurance protection to these professionals in order to urge them to engage and invest in these professions. With a view to tackling this challenge, Royal Decree No. 44 of 2013 was enacted to grant insurance protection to the self-employed working, inter alia, in handcrafts, fishing, agriculture, driving, public services, and home-based businesses against the risks of aging, disability, and death. The system offers several insurance benefits that help the self-employed enjoy stability by allowing them to exercise their profession with rigor and steadiness.

This system heeds the economic background of the insured businessperson or self-employed, by affording them the option of choosing among multiple modalities of reimbursement in accordance with their monthly wage, the first category of income ranging from OMR 225 to 250.

By the end of 2018, 9,845 workers were registered under this system, compared to 274 beneficiaries during the same period of time.



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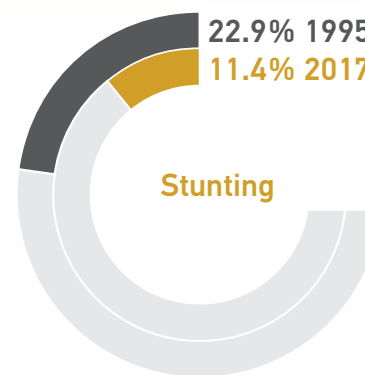
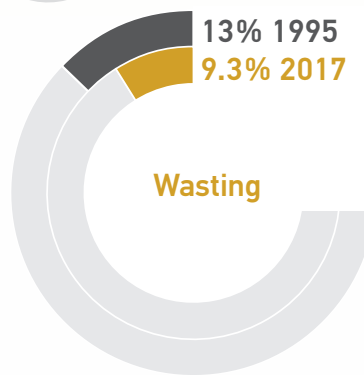
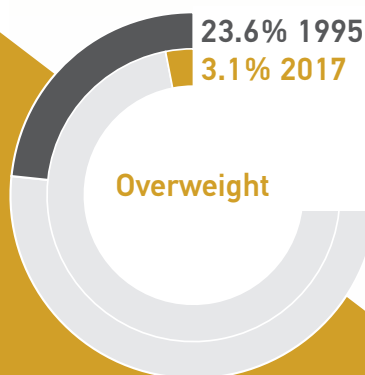
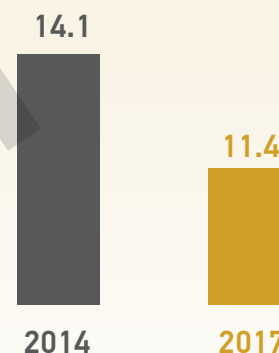
Zero Hunger

Key Messages:

SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

- The Sultanate has developed a comprehensive food security strategy (2020–2040) that sets forth a number of objectives seeking generally to enhance Oman's food security system in terms of production, import, storage, and distribution, through three key themes: food demand, local food production, and securing imports.
- The 2040 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy in Oman aims to promote agricultural sector sustainability, increase economic revenues, create job opportunities for nationals, support rural communities, and limit structural imbalances in the agricultural sector.
- Oman's strategies have been successful in controlling malnutrition diseases among children. The percentage of overweight among children under 5 years of age was reduced from 23.6 percent in 1995 to 3.1 percent in 2017 and wasting has also declined from 13 percent to 9.3 percent, while stunting dropped from 22.9 percent to 11.4 percent during the same period.

Prevalence of stunting (height for age value to be less than two standard deviations of the WHO Child Growth Standards median) among children under 5 years of age between 2014 and 2017





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG2

The Sultanate devotes utmost attention to the issue of food security and food supply and has developed a wide array of plans and programs focused on the security and sustainability of food supply for nationals and expatriates.

In this context, the local production value of the agriculture and fisheries sector contributed a share of 49 percent to the total value of food supply available for consumption in 2018, up from 36 percent in 2011. This is a significant figure, especially when considered on the backdrop of continued population growth coupled with improved consumption patterns. The overall self-sufficiency in local food products compared with their imported counterparts stood at 79 percent in 2018, while the percentage of locally produced food items of the total goods available for consumption was at 58 percent during the same year. These figures are expected to rise with the start of the actual production in investment projects currently underway.

The success of the Sultanate in this regard was reflected in the 2018 Report of the Global Food Insecurity Index issued annually in conformity with international standards, including on food availability, access to food, stability of food supply, and food safety and quality. Out of 113 countries, Oman came in the 29th position; thus, it can be argued that the initiatives implemented to improve the conditions of limited-income persons have played a positive role in this regard. In fact, a number of new programs were launched with the aim of

capitalizing on the potential of individuals and households, engaging them in the development process, and empowering and enabling them to become productive and self-dependent. These programs sought to turn social security households into self-dependent ones; invest in their capabilities; and support them at administrative, technical, and financial levels in the management of SMEs. As a result, a positive impact was noticed among social security households in terms of ensuring food availability.

Government strategies were also successful in controlling malnutrition diseases among children. The percentage of overweight among children under 5 years of age was reduced from 23.6 percent in 1995 to 3.1 percent in 2017, and wasting has also declined from 13 percent to 9.3 percent while stunting dropped from 22.9 percent to 11.4 percent during the same period.

Moreover, Oman is striving to maintain its agricultural acreage in order to preserve agricultural lands and allow workers in the agricultural sector to settle down in their villages, which contributes to the sustainability of this sector, promotes its productivity and role in achieving food security, and protects the Omani environment from change and deterioration.

In the same vein, the Government is currently executing construction projects of protection walls for farms located on the banks of wadis to prevent their deterioration due to precipitations and wadi floodwaters.

In 2018, locally produced food items accounted for 58 percent of the total goods available for consumption

Furthermore, the Government is implementing a set of procedures and projects intended to regulate the use of agricultural land. In this context, the Regulations on the use of agricultural land were issued with the aim of regulating the use of agricultural land and preserving them.

The government opts to encourage its citizens to produce and invest in agriculture and livestock fields by providing them with lands to establish economically viable projects. Many programs and projects were also dedicated to sustainable consumption and production, including agricultural pests and technical employment for production operations, with a view to preserving agricultural products, reducing damage caused by pests, and ensuring optimal employment and sustainability of available agricultural resources. Efforts have also been directed towards improving and updating relevant laws and executive regulations that organize agricultural development action and maintain the sustainability of agricultural production and food safety.

Prominent among these laws are:

- The Law on Pesticides and its implementing regulations;
- The Law on Seeds, Grains, and Plants;
- The Law on the Handling and Registration of Fertilizers;
- The Law of Agricultural Quarantine; and
- The Agriculture Regulation Law.

The Government is currently carrying out various programs and projects to promote date palm crops (strategic crops in Oman). These projects focus on the production and marketing of Omani dates - as it is the case in the Program for the multiplication, dissemination, and distribution of tissue-culture date palm seedlings - with the aim of renewing farms of perennial palm trees suffering from declining productivity and low-quality species.

The Sultanate is ranked 29th out of 113 countries on the Global Food Security Index

In terms of productivity enhancement, a number of guidance programs are specifically dedicated to palm agriculture and intended to introduce farmers to the importance of palm quality control in order to secure good economic returns by using appropriate modern equipment such as drying rooms, presses, and packaging machines; substituting excellent types of dessert dates; and embracing modern scientific methods that boost palm productivity. As for marketing-focused

efforts, these include the execution of the project for the development of date packing units, in addition to promoting date marketing and export outlets and encouraging date exhibitions such as the Omani Dates Festival.

In parallel, a special focus is placed on conducting research on palm trees and direct and indirect food processing industries, such as the production of jam, molasses, sugar syrup, vinegar, and other products, as well as studies on palm-based non-food products and industries similar to wood and forage production from palm leaves and stems.



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

By limiting the quantity of food available for human consumption, agricultural pests as well as animal-borne diseases and epidemics have an adverse effect on food provision, not to mention the scarcity of water due to Oman's location in a semi-desert area with low precipitation.

Future Plans:

To address these challenges, the Sultanate devised a number of long-term strategies including:

- **The 2040 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy in Oman:** This seeks to promote the agricultural sector sustainability, increase economic revenues, create job opportunities for nationals, support rural communities, and limit structural imbalances in the agricultural sector.
- **The Long-Term Fisheries Strategy:** It aims at increasing fisheries production, promoting the sector's efficiency in a sustainable manner, and improving the exploitation of fish stocks, in addition to boosting private sector investment and attracting foreign investment in fish industries and aquaculture projects.
- **The Food Security Strategy (2020-2040):** It sets forth a set of objectives seeking generally to enhance Oman's food security system in terms of production, import, storage, and distribution. It focuses on three key themes, namely food demand, local food production, and securing imports.



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG2

The One Million Date Palm Project

This project is a model of success in achieving the SDGs at the environmental, social, economic, and health levels. Palm agriculture plays a crucial role in managing natural resources and enhancing soil texture and fertility. Palm plantations help protect soil against erosion, combat desertification, and improve local climate through evaporation and humidification. They also play a positive role in enriching biodiversity and ecological balance. This project offered a full opportunity to find sustainable solutions and alternatives to the challenges of nature and the lack of human and financial resources, by capitalizing on traditional knowledge, innovating solutions and mechanisms based on the latest techniques of irrigation and

unconventional water resources, enhancing the soil, using best agricultural practices, applying remote farms management, and developing disease control and vaccination techniques. The execution of this project entailed collaboration between farm owners, SMEs, factories, labor service agencies, commercial agents, and local communities, under the supervision of the Diwan of Royal Court. Under this project, 11 farms were set up in six governorates across the Sultanate. They embrace the latest agricultural techniques and artificial intelligence applications to boost production. The Project production is expected to reach 96 thousand tons of dates by 2034, in addition to 49 thousand tons of byproducts.



Sustainable Development Goals

03



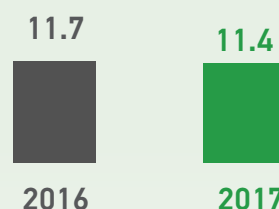
Good
Health and
Well-Being

Key Messages:

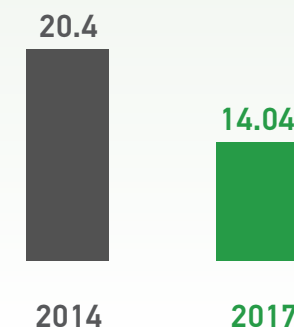
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- The Sultanate has made great strides in the area of health development, which was demonstrated by a significant improvement in the overall health of the Omani society. In particular, death rates dropped remarkably over the past years, especially among infants and children under 5 years of age, which led to a rise in average life expectancy at birth.
- The health system also laid down a host of procedures to control communicable diseases and succeeded consequently in eradicating a great number of them and driving the incidence of the others to endemic levels. It also took necessary measures to tackle the epidemic shift to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) with a view to controlling them and their complications.
- The Sultanate witnessed a considerable decrease in deaths resulting from road traffic accidents, as it has set a priority to half road traffic fatalities and injuries by 2020.
- Putting in place a pioneering health system in line with international standards is one of the main strategic directions of Oman 2040 towards which all actors from the public, private, and civil sectors are working jointly in order to set up an expanded system that provides universal and just health care across the Sultanate. Such action is in complete harmony with the way forward for the Omani health system laid down by the Health Vision 2050, whose primary focus is to ensure quality care and sustainable health for all.

Under-five mortality rate (number of deaths per 1,000 live births) between 2016 and 2017



Mortality caused by road traffic injuries between 2014 and 2017





Oman is on the way to Achieving the Targets of SDG3

Oman has made tremendous headway in the area of health development, which was reflected positively in the main health indicators. The health system provides a follow-up of women during pregnancy and up to six months after delivery in order to monitor their health condition, address risk factors, and ensure that the mother and the fetus are in good health. In fact, 73.3 percent of pregnant women were registered during the first trimester of their pregnancy in 2017, while less than 1 percent of those who delivered were not subject to any monitoring during the postnatal period because they were not registered on the pregnancy care record. Statistics indicate that the percentage of pregnant women who visited antenatal care (ANC) clinics at least 4 times during their pregnancy stood at 73.3 percent in 2017, while the number of new female outpatients of birth spacing clinics grew by 15.6 percent from 18,000 women to over 21,000 in 2017. As a result of this growing interest in birth spacing methods, the number of women who spaced their deliveries by three or more years rose from 35.2 percent in 2010 to 40.1 percent in 2017. Moreover, the needs of 38 percent of married women were met in terms of modern birth spacing methods.

The Government also sought to reduce the birth rate among adolescent females by focusing on enabling adolescent girls to pursue education and managed to induce an increase in the average age at first marriage to 26.1 years among females in 2008, in contrast with 20.7 in 1993. Government efforts also resulted as well in a decline in the adolescent birth rate from 14.5 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years in 2015 to 12.5 in 2017.

On the other hand, the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) decreased from 26.4 per 100,000 live births in 2010 to 20.2 in 2017. Similarly, the child mortality rate and infant and newborn (aged less than one month) mortality rate dropped to 9.5 and 6.3 per 1,000 live births respectively. As for children under the age of five, they also registered a decline in mortality rate to 11.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2017, in contrast with 21.7 in 2000.

On the other hand, the health system is equipped with an epidemic

monitoring system that monitors and curbs the spread of communicable diseases and ensures optimal preparedness and alertness to counter the risks of global diseases considering potential epidemic transmission of diseases on a global scale. The measures taken by the health system to combat communicable diseases eradicated many of them, including polio, diphtheria, and tetanus, and brought the incidence of the others to endemic levels.

Malaria had remained one of the biggest issues confronting the Sultanate until the Malaria Eradication Program was launched in 1991, which paved the way for Oman to become a success story in this area. In fact, registered malaria cases plummeted from around 33,000 in 1990 to almost 1,000 cases in 2017, while the incidence rate reached 0.41 per 100,000 population. A decline was also registered in the incidence of tuberculosis (all types combined) to 5.8 per 100,000 population in 2017, down from 11 in 2010.

The incidence rate of Hepatitis B is extremely low in the Sultanate, as it did not exceed 0.72 cases per 100,000 population in 2017. Data indicates that no more than 150 cases of HIV (AIDS) were registered among Omanis in 2017.

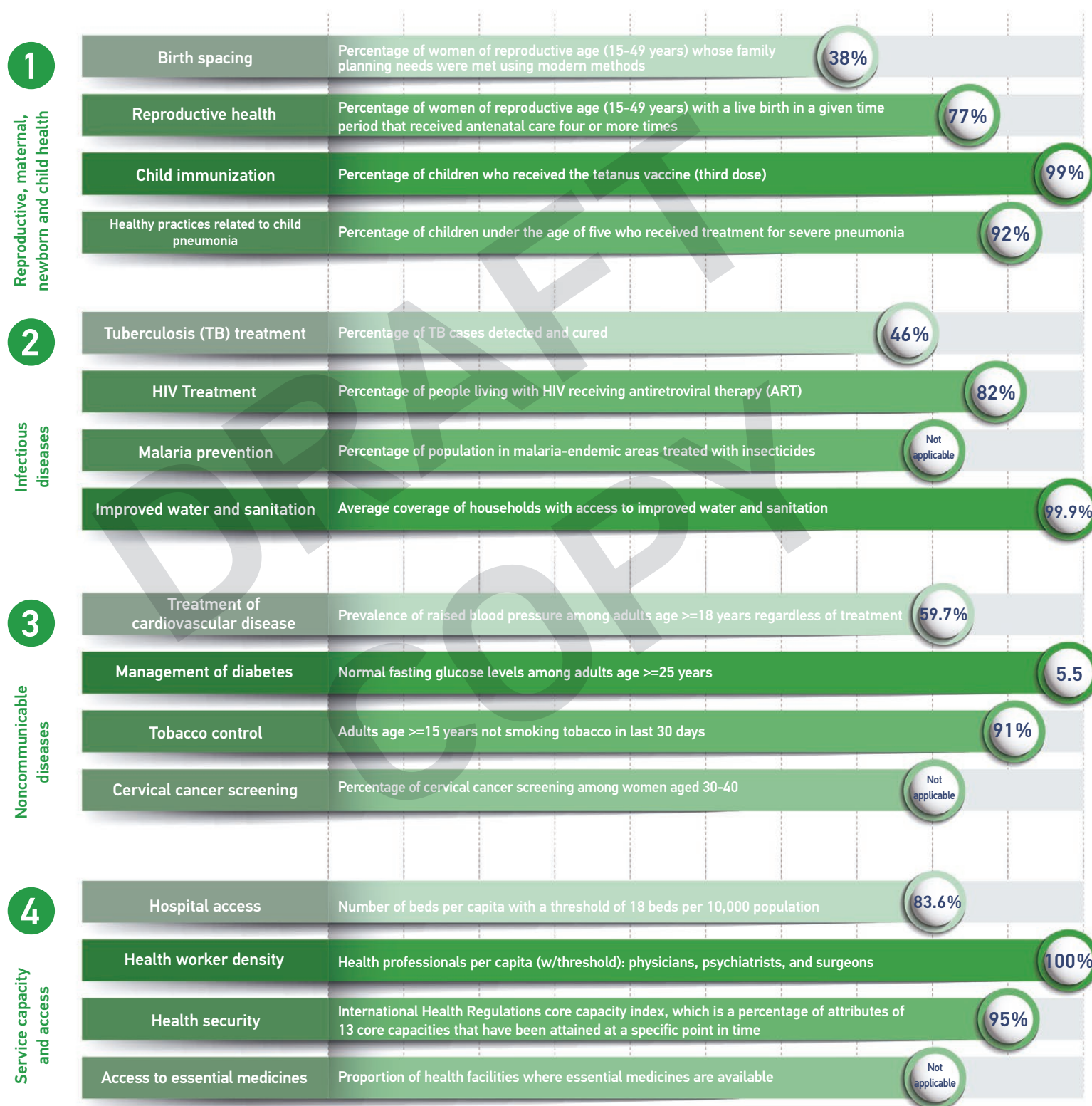
As for the rate of mortality caused by heart and cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases among those aged between 30 and 70 years, it registered a decrease from 142.9 per 100,000 population in 2016 to 138.7 in 2017. Suicide is a rare phenomenon in the Sultanate where 2.7 individuals per million population committed suicide in 2017, which reflects the remarkable level of stability in medical and social conditions in the country.

Moreover, the Sultanate witnessed a remarkable decline in road traffic deaths, as the road traffic death rate dropped by more than a half from 31.4 per 100,000 population in 2012 to 14.1 in 2017.

The World Health Organization (WHO) calculates the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) index based on 16 tracer indicators selected for four service coverage categories, namely reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health; infectious diseases; noncommunicable diseases; and service capacity and access. As shown in the figure below, UHC index in Oman was equal to 75 percent in 2017.

According to WHO,
Oman achieved a
universal health
coverage of 75
percent in 2017

Figure (6): UHC indicators



UHC: 75%



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG3

The Sultanate endeavors, through its health plans, to substantially reduce the number of deaths caused by exposure to dangerous chemicals and air, water, and soil pollution. In 2017, the rate of mortality resulting from household and ambient air pollution in Oman was at 11.2 per 100,000 population, in contrast with 0.04 for mortality attributable to unsafe water and sanitation, while no cases of accidental poisoning were registered during the same year.

Oman is determined to uphold its commitment to promote the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in all countries. According to the 2009 WHO Report on Tobacco Control, it has the lowest number of male and female smokers above 15 years of age among the Arab countries. The findings of the Oman National Noncommunicable Diseases and their Risk Factors Survey conducted by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in 2017, report that the prevalence of smoking in the Sultanate does not exceed 8 percent (6 percent among Omanis compared with 13.4 percent for non-Omanis). From a gender perspective, only 0.4

percent of women are smokers, in contrast with 15.1 percent for men.

Owing to a developed health system and a scrupulous attention to child health by the Government (represented by the MoH), vaccines were made available nationwide and particularly to children, which ensured a 100 percent immunization coverage against childhood diseases since 2010 to date. According to 2017 data, a set of affordable essential medicines is available on a sustainable basis at 100 percent of health facilities in Oman.

Medical manpower statistics reveal that, in 2017, there were 20.1 physicians, 43.7 nurses, 3 dentists, and 5.4 pharmacists per 10,000 population. As for the capacity to implement International Health Regulations (IHR) and preparedness for medical emergencies, it is expressed as a percentage of attributes of 13 core capacities that have been attained at a specific point in time.

For every 10,000
population, there are:

- 20.1 physicians,
- 43.7 nurses,
- 3 dentists, and
- 5.4 pharmacists

The table below illustrates the IHR core capacities and preparedness for medical emergencies in Oman.



Table (3): IHR core capacities and preparedness for medical emergencies in Oman

Core Capacity	Percentage of core capacities attained (per year)		
	2015	2016	2017
National legislation, policy, and financing	100	100	100
Coordination and national focal point communications	100	100	100
Surveillance	100	100	90
Response	100	100	100
Preparedness	100	100	100
Risk communication	100	100	100
Human resources	100	100	100
Laboratory	100	100	100
Points of entry	69	86	80
Zoonotic events	100	100	100
Food safety	100	100	100
Chemical events	100	92	69
Radio nuclear emergencies	54	54	31
Average of Core Capacities	94	95	90



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

In light of the continuous rise in the cost of diagnosis technologies, treatment, and health services operations, and demographic and epidemiological evolution and changes, the size of healthcare spending poses a major challenge to the Sultanate, as government spending represents around 90 percent of total healthcare spending, imposing a heavy burden on fiscal sustainability. The shift in the epidemiological map is another challenge associated with the predominance of noncommunicable and chronic diseases which have become prolonged with increased longevity and involve high diagnosis and treatment costs.

Oman is also faced with the demographic challenge of ageing, which is partly responsible for illness, disability, death, and multiple diseases, particularly life-threatening chronic ones. According to statistical data, the elderly (those aged 60 and above) constitute today around 6 percent of the total population, a figure that is projected to rise in the next years as high-quality healthcare services will improve further. Population projections expect this figure to reach 9.8 and 13 percent in 2040 and 2050 respectively, which will place a heavy burden emanating from the need to cater for these persons, let alone the daunting challenges of injuries and disabilities exacerbated by the lack of data on disabled people, such as data on demographic aspects, types of disability, and health condition. The 2010 Census reports a disability prevalence of 32 persons per 1,000 population in Omani society.

Congenital malformations and hereditary diseases are among the leading causes of loss of health. Congenital malformations are a leading cause of infant mortality (around 21.3 percent), while 12.3 percent of fetus deaths are also attributed to the same factor. According to the 2010 Census, congenital malformations account for 31.4 percent of the total number of persons with disabilities in Oman. On the other hand, the Omani geographical nature adds to the challenge of deploying the health system, with a surface area of 309,500 km² of diverse terrain of which mountains represent 15 percent compared with around 82 percent of desertic areas. The population is therefore concentrated on the coastal strip that amounts to 3 percent of the total surface area of Oman, while the rest of the population is scattered across its vast territory where almost 94 percent of human settlements do not exceed 1,000 inhabitants and constitute in total 15 percent of the total population, further adding to the administrative and financial burdens associated with the provision of healthcare services.

Future Plans:

The Sultanate tackled these challenges by adopting a number of plans and strategies as follows:

The National Policy and Multi-sectoral Plan for Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2016-2025 was translated into a national plan in line with the framework for action to implement the United Nations Political Declaration on Noncommunicable Diseases; improve access to early detection of NCDs; provide appropriate technologies, medicines, diagnosis, and treatment; draw up NCD registries allowing the monitoring of these diseases; and activate and implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The Sultanate also strives to support and enhance geriatric healthcare services at primary healthcare institutions and is currently building a register of older persons suffering from chronic diseases to ensure their follow-up and rehabilitative care. Home-based healthcare services are offered to the elderly and other persons that cannot reach health institutions. Efforts are also directed at raising public awareness about enhancing community participation by and care towards the elderly.

Furthermore, considerable efforts are being exerted by concerned authorities to inventory persons with disabilities and collect important data, inter alia on demographic aspects, disability type, and medical condition, to help the Sultanate adopt measures to overcome current difficulties. A premarital medical examination service was initiated for young persons intending to marry in order to identify if they carry or suffer from any genetic disease and give choices and alternatives to prospective couples allowing them to plan a healthy family. This examination helps curb the transmission of recessive hereditary diseases to children, such as sickle cell anemia and thalassemia, and protect children from hereditary diseases and other congenital malformations.

The Sultanate is currently in the process of devising future development plans, epitomized in Oman 2040 vision and the future vision of the healthcare system “Health Vision 2050”.

Oman 2040:

The Sultanate is engaged in drafting an enhancement and development vision for the period 2020-2040. Oman 2040 Vision revolves around three main themes, namely the Individual and Society, Economy and Development, and Governance and Institutional Performance. The Individual and Society theme is underpinned by three pillars, primarily the promotion of social welfare, a fundamental principle to attain equality and justice between all society members in access to healthcare so as to enable them to work and develop their community. As such, it is in harmony with the principles of the SDGs.

Health Vision 2050:

“Health Vision 2050” scrutinizes the future of the health system. It encompassed a huge amount of information and analysis on the health situation based on seven fundamental pillars of the health system, in addition to partnership with sectors concerned with health. It has given rise to 28 visions and 142 strategic measures aimed at improving health sector performance in the future. The formulation of Health Vision 2050 went hand in hand with the development of a health atlas that covers forecasts, future population projections, and future needs in terms of health services and medical equipment, in addition to forecasts of the amount of use for these services and the health human cadres required to develop the healthcare system at national and governorate levels. The said projections, forecasts, and needs are displayed in maps through a geographic health information system illustrating the evolution of needs over the years preceeding 2050. All the visions and information presented in Health Vision 2050, as well as in its relevant working papers and strategic studies and the health atlas, lay down the foundation that guides the elaboration of five-year plans for health development. The MoH revises Health Vision 2050 on a regular basis to assess the validity of proposed visions and strategies, subsequently build on new evidence to evaluate and update it, and achieve the SDGs



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG3

1-Oman's Efforts in the Muscat Campaign to Eradicate Egyptian Zebra Mosquitoes

After the detection of local cases of dengue fever in a province (wilaya) in Muscat Governorate, an entomological and epidemiological investigation was carried out and revealed a breeding site for Egyptian zebra mosquitoes (*Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes). Subsequently, a full entomological investigation was conducted to identify the geographic spread of these mosquitoes. Based on the data and locations reported in this investigation, a campaign was planned and executed to eradicate the mosquitoes and render the environment non-conducive to their breeding. The said campaign relied on community mobilization and the promotion of community action and inter-sectoral cooperation. The campaign resorted to environmental correction and integrated control methods to eradicate Egyptian zebra mosquitoes in the adult stage.

Efforts aimed at the eradication of the Egyptian zebra

mosquitoes contributed to the protection of society against serious diseases transmitted by these mosquitoes, such as yellow fever, dengue fever, zika virus, and chikungunya. The campaign helped reinforce the concept of community collaboration and integration between

all sectors concerned with public health. It was also an opportunity to bolster up the system of entomological investigation of disease vectors.



حملة مسقط لاستئصال الزاعجة المصرية

2-The E-Health Application “Al-Shifa System”

The pioneering status of Oman in the area of e-health has been evidenced by numerous international recognitions. “Al-Shifa System” is one of the most important health programs implemented in the Sultanate and has been awarded several local and international prizes. By providing a secure platform to store all data pertaining to patients and their medical history, it has been instrumental in improving health services. Various electronic programs that facilitate the tasks of health workers originated from “Al-Shifa System”.

Due to the geographic scope of Omani health facilities, setting up

national electronic health files was prioritized in Oman's strategic plans. Every patient has an integrated electronic medical record (EMR) that includes all visits paid to any health institution under one number. As a result, the continuity of treatment and integrity of data are secured without the need to run tests or laboratory, radiology, and other diagnostic procedures that have already been carried out. This in turn shortens the period of time needed to gather detailed knowledge about medical cases and reduces financial costs by avoiding repetition of tests or procedures.

3-National Campaign for Immunization Against Measles

This is a nationwide campaign that covered all the Omani governorates and targeted the age group of 20-25. It has been conducted after a study of measles in all age groups carried out across the Sultanate between 2015 and 2016 pointed to an immunity gap accumulated over the years among those aged between 20 to 25 years. Based on the findings' analysis, the technical committee recommended the

implementation of a national campaign of immunization with measles vaccine targeting specific age groups. The campaign achieved 93 percent success in preventing local transmission of measles for more than 18 months.



4-The National Road Safety Program

As in many other countries, high rates of road traffic deaths are registered in the Sultanate, leading to serious socio-economic consequences. Urged by royal directives from His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said who has relentlessly underscored in his addresses the importance of concerted efforts and collaboration in tackling this serious phenomenon, joint national efforts were initiated and translated into an integrated package of measures that included comprehensive awareness raising and practical steps taken by diverse public and private entities under the supervision of the Royal Oman Police (ROP), in addition to technical measures and the enactment of necessary relevant legislations. Broad community participation also played a crucial and fundamental role in delivering

success in this program. Moreover, a research program was founded in collaboration with several institutions inside and outside Oman to help achieve Target 6 of SDG3 aimed at halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020. And it is in this same vein that the National Strategy to Reduce Road Accidents was devised.

The aforementioned results led to a decrease in fatalities by 44 percent from 1,139 in 2012 to 637 in 2018. The 2019 statistical data until 21 May 2019 also reports a considerable decline of 30 percent in road traffic accidents compared to the same period of the previous year from 825 to 350, as well as a drop of 26 percent in deaths from 169 to 59 and 12 percent in injuries from 941 to 132.

5-The Central Birth and Death Registry

The Central Birth and Death Registry (CBDR) system that is electronically connected to the ROP Directorate General of Civil Status is a remarkable achievement in the area of health technology in Oman. The CBDR facilitates the processes of reporting and registration of any case of death or birth through a health facility where the case occurred. At the said facility reporting procedures

are completed before extracting the needed certificate from the Directorate General of Civil Status. The CBDR also accommodates automatic reading of medical data available in Al-Shifa System and can electronically retrieve demographic data related to the parents from the ROP National Civil Registration system in a way that enhances the quality of inserted data.

04



Quality
Education

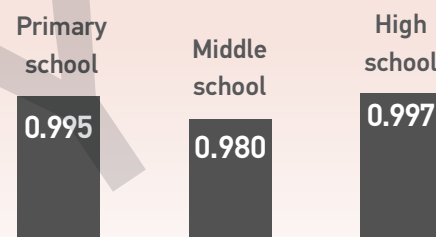
Key Messages:

SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- The Sultanate considers education as the key to all dimensions of sustainable development, as quality education leads to greater prosperity and abundance, improved health, more gender equality, women's empowerment, and the promotion of equality in society.
- Education is a right for all guaranteed by the Basic Statute of the State, and gender equality and quality education are among the fundamental principles guiding educational work in Oman.
- The Sultanate ranks 19th out of 126 countries in the proportion of GDP expenditure on education according to the 2018 Global Innovation Index.
- Education is part of the strategic directions of Oman 2040 Vision, which emphasizes inclusive education, lifelong learning, and scientific research that leads to a knowledgeable society and competitive national talents.

Equality Index

Ratio of female to male enrollment in:



2016/2017





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG4

The Government of Oman considers education as the key to all dimensions of sustainable development, as quality education leads to greater prosperity and abundance, improved health, more gender equality, women's empowerment, and the promotion of equality in society. It has therefore devoted considerable attention to educational standards and quality in order to enhance the efficiency of human resources and enable them to contribute to national development. Since the beginning of the Sultanate's Renaissance, educational plans were directed towards the spread and universalization of education, as well as its improvement in line with Oman's five-year development plans. The Philosophy of Education document, regarded as a principal driver and main reference for educational policymaking and planning in the Sultanate, emphasized the importance of education for sustainable development in the eighth of its 16 principles.

In 2012, the Sultanate embarked on a new phase by establishing the Education Council as the umbrella under which educational policies are developed and direct, support, and follow up on the performance of educational institutions in line with national development plans and programs, in a way that meets the requirements of sustainable development. The Council developed the National Strategy for Education 2040 to serve as a guide for all policies and plans aimed at developing the Omani education sector as part of future five-year development plans. The vision of the Strategy is to equip human resources with the skills needed for work and life, thus enabling them to be productive in the world of knowledge economy, keep pace with changing realities, preserve their national identity and intrinsic values, and contribute to the advancement of human civilization.

During the period 12-14 May 2014, the Sultanate of Oman hosted the Global Education for All Meeting which called for a new education vision for the 21st century, marking a milestone in the formulation of the Muscat Agreement educational goal, which in turn helped define the global educational goal and targets, as well as the means to achieve them.

The Government endeavors to provide the necessary financial resources for the education sector. In 2017, expenditure on education as a percentage of the GDP was at 6.6 percent and at 15.5 percent as a percentage of total public expenditure.

According to the 2018 Global Innovation Index, Oman was ranked 19th out of 126 countries in the proportion of GDP expenditure on education.

The average number of schooling years increased from 8.1 years in 2016 to 9.5 years in 2018, and the indicator of expected years of schooling (EYS) rose from 13.7 in 2016 to 13.9 in 2018.

Education in Oman is a right for all guaranteed by the Basic Statute of the State, and gender equality and quality education are among the fundamental guiding principles in educational work.

The Government provides free education for all boys and girls in the Sultanate throughout general education, from Grades 1 to 12, knowing that education is mandatory until Grade 10 under the Child Law No. 22/2014.

School education caters for basic educational needs in terms of information, knowledge, and skills. It also promotes values and orientations that enable learners to continue their education and training

in accordance with their preferences, aptitudes, and abilities, which education aims to develop in order to enable learners to meet current challenges and circumstances and brace for the future in the context of societal development. In the academic year 2017/2018, the overall enrollment rate in the last grade of primary education was 102.5 percent, while the overall enrollment rate in the last grade of lower secondary school was 104.0 percent.

In order to measure learning outcomes, the Ministry of Education (MoE) conducts annual national examinations to assess the performance of Grade 4 and 10 students. The Sultanate also took part in The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in the years

The Sultanate regards education as the key to all dimensions of sustainable development, expenditure on education amounting to 6.6 percent of GDP and 15.5 percent of total public expenditure

2007, 2011, and 2015.

In 2015, the percentage of fourth graders performing at or above proficient level in mathematics stood at 65 and 56 percent for girls and boys respectively. On the other hand, in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), proficiency percentages were at 68 percent for girls and 50 percent for boys.

The Sultanate attached great importance to early childhood development across sectors including developmental, social, health, education, cultural and other aspects, as it strongly believes in the importance of investing in this segment of society. National plans, policies, and strategies were formulated to improve the quality of services provided in this field. And in view of the importance of providing children with quality early childhood development and care, laws and legislations were enacted to encourage the establishment of child-upbringing institutions.

The Sultanate is working to expand early childhood education and boost participation rates.

The enrollment rate in early childhood education was at 50.2 percent for the academic year 2016/2017, whereas the participation rate in organized learning (one year before the age of enrollment in formal education) was at 75.6 percent in 2017.

The MoE has initiated the opening of preschool classes in primary education schools in remote governorates with no private schools in order to provide some type of preschool education that contributes to a smooth and efficient transition of children between the different stages of education, knowing that early childhood education programs in the Sultanate are provided by the private sector. Childcare institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) also play a major role in providing pre-school education through Child Growth Houses and Child Corners distributed throughout Oman's governorates.

As of the end of 2018, there were 295 nurseries, 11 Child Growth Houses and 84 Child Corners spread across the governorates of Oman. Furthermore, in cooperation with relevant bodies, the MoSD implemented a number of programs and projects in the early childhood field, most notably the Guide to National Standards for the Nurseries, considered a vital development project in the area of child rights.

The Sultanate also attached great importance to literacy and adult

education. Statistics show that the total literacy rate among persons aged 15 years and above was at 96.3 percent in 2018, achieved by the adoption of a variety of unconventional formal and informal programs and by building on international experiences in this field. With the aim of providing equal opportunities for all, the Sultanate also applies the adult education system which runs parallel to the formal education system from Grade 7 to Grade 12 and targets learners liberated from illiteracy or persons who completed Grade 6 in formal education and then dropped out of school for various reasons, provided that their age exceeds the legal age for formal schooling.

School infrastructure is a key element of any effective learning environment and contributes to the improvement of learning outcomes. In accordance with Target 4.a concerning education facilities and the learning environment, all the schools in Oman have access to electricity (100 percent), the Internet for pedagogical purposes (91 percent), computers for pedagogical purposes (100 percent), basic drinking water (100 percent), and sanitation facilities (100 percent).

Teacher competence is also a crucial factor that affects the quality of student learning. Therefore, the MoE adopted national standards for teacher selection for quality assurance purposes, as part of the National Strategy for Education 2040. The Ministry also provided up to 100 percent qualified teachers in accordance with national standards. Additionally, it has established the Specialized Center for Vocational Training for Teachers with a view to providing high quality on-the-job training

aimed at improving teacher qualifications in scientific disciplines and employing appropriate teaching methods. The Ministry devised as well the Omani National Framework for the Teaching Profession intended to form qualified teaching staff that perform their tasks in keeping with the standards of the teaching profession. And as part of its efforts to ensure an appropriate learning environment, it established the Teaching Excellence Award granted every two years to distinguished teachers. It is worth noting that, according to the 2018 Global Competitiveness Report issued by the World Economic Forum, the Sultanate ranked 14th out of 140 countries in the average pupil-teacher ratio with 11 pupils per teacher, whereas the national statistics for the academic year 2017/2018 place this ratio at 10.3 pupils per teacher.

The Sultanate also placed utmost emphasis on higher education, in view of its role in developing human resources and providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills which represent key inputs to the economic, social, and environmental development process desired by the

Oman ranks first among 126 countries in the proportion of graduates in engineering and scientific disciplines according to the 2018 Global Innovation Report



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG4

Sultanate. The higher education system in Oman consists of 61 institutions, of which 33 are government institutions and 28 are private, spread across Oman's governorates and wilayats, according to the statistics for the academic year 2018/2019.

The Government provides free higher education to students enrolled in government higher education institutions, while also offering nearly 9,000 internal scholarships for students to study in private higher education institutions. The education policy in Oman aims to ensure competition for entry into higher education for all students, both males and females, who meet the admission requirements among holders of the General Education Diploma or equivalent. According to statistics for the academic year 2015/2016, the overall higher education enrollment rate was 50.5 percent, 64 percent of students were females and 39 percent of them were males. The 2018 Global Competitiveness Report issued by the World Economic Forum placed Oman's higher education and training under the Skills pillar in the 36th position out of 140. And according to the 2018 Global Innovation Report, Oman topped all 126 countries in the proportion of graduates in engineering and scientific disciplines.

In the field of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), the TVET system in the Sultanate works towards high quality vocational outputs that meet the market qualitative and quantitative requirements and are able to perform vocational tasks under modern technological circumstances that simulate the technological advancement in public and private sector institutions. This system also works on instilling competitive concepts and business entrepreneurship to achieve both the quantitative and qualitative objectives of TVET by involving students in national, regional and international competitions, namely the 3rd Oman Skills Competition, the Innovation Award, the Hackathon Award for technical and vocational faculties' students for 2018. For the academic year 2015/2016, 26 percent of the overall number of higher education students in the Sultanate were enrolled in technical education. Oman also was ranked 26th in terms of the quality of vocational training in the 2018 Global Competitiveness Report.

And as part of the development of the TVET system, the Education Council

decided to change the names of vocational training centers to vocational colleges that offer four education and training pathways.

In 2018, the number of trainees enrolled in these vocational colleges reached 5,088, of which 46.8 percent were females. There are also private training institutions providing vocational training and practical skills services and programs. Their number amounted to 359 institutions in 2017.

As for higher academic education, universities and colleges offer various areas of specialization and educational qualifications and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs through practical and educational services, as well as scientific research, consultancy, and community participation. Furthermore, higher education institutions included the concepts of sustainable development in their programs and activities through scientific competitions and student activities, most notable of which was the Oman Eco-House Design Competition, organized in 2011 by the Research Council, during which academic institutions were invited to provide perspectives and conceptions for the design of fully efficient sustainable houses in order to raise the awareness of Omani society about the need for sustainable green buildings and find innovative ways to use renewable energy sources in dwellings.

Under its external scholarship policy, the Government has set up an external scholarship program for General Education Diploma holders wishing to pursue undergraduate studies in international universities. Between the academic years 2011/2012 and 2018/2019, the number of female and male students granted scholarships amounted to 9,324 studying in 14 countries, of which nearly 40 percent are females. A portion of the scholarships was reserved for students with disabilities. On the other hand, the Sultanate receives students from different countries who enroll in higher education institutions, and the number of non-Omani higher education students in the Sultanate was at 4,015 students in the academic year 2015/2016.

Regarding the quality of education, the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority has developed a system that includes standards and procedures

Oman's educational policies aim to raise a generation that is aware of sustainable development themes and objectives

for quality audit as well as institutional and program accreditation for higher education institutions, in addition to procedures for recognizing foreign higher education academic programs offered in Oman. It also engaged in developing and updating the Oman Qualifications Framework.

With the aim of imparting skills for work and employment or entrepreneurial activities, the National Training Fund was established in 2018 (Royal Decree 48/2016), in order to bridge the gap between the needs of the private sector and national projects for talents and experts and labor market supply, and fund training programs aligned with the national vision and priority sectors. Oman also launched the National Youth Program for Skills Development in May 2018.

The Sultanate has long been working to integrate education for sustainable development and citizenship into all its educational policies in order to raise a generation that is aware of sustainable development themes and objectives. Oman's educational system also focused on achieving educational outputs imbued with and aware of the concepts of tolerance and respect for others, the values of goodness and volunteerism, citizen education and its goals, and the concepts of human and child rights. In this regard, the MoE developed curricula and textbooks to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and values that will help them grasp and understand the concepts of social, economic, and environmental sustainability, in addition to integrating the principles and concepts of sustainable development into teacher education programs. The establishment of a Citizenship Department in the Ministry consolidated the values of citizenship by promoting the infusion of school curricula with the values of citizenship as well as shared universal values. Regarding balancing national identity and global citizenship, the Sultanate implemented the national program Values and Responsibility Shape Our Identity, targeting children and youngsters aged 6 to 24 years through a set of programs and projects aimed at fostering a sense of belonging, preserving identity, and owning responsibility.

In the latest UNESCO report, Oman was listed as one of the major partners engaged in the Global Program of Action on Education for Sustainable Development. The Sultanate was the first Arab country to cooperate with the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Centre for Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) in promoting the values of global citizenship. Furthermore, in 2018, the College of Education in Sultan Qaboos University launched, with the support of the same center, an elective course on Global

Citizenship Education. The College cooperated with UNESCO-APCEIU to develop the course in accordance with the Omani context regarding the subject of citizenship and national identity. In addition, the Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Science organized in 2018, in cooperation with UNESCO-APCEIU, the Regional Seminar on integrating Global citizenship education in teacher training in the Arab countries.

The Sultanate believes in the importance of cultural and scientific cooperation with all the countries in the world through education, as it contributes to achieving prosperity, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Under this approach falls the Omani Program for Cultural and Scientific Cooperation, which offers a number of scholarships every year to students from brotherly and friendly countries to study in public and private higher education institutions in the Sultanate, noting that the number of scholarships granted during the period 2010-2018 amounts to 451 distributed among 37 countries.

Believing in the principle that no one should be left behind, school education in Oman has achieved gender equality

Believing in the principle that no one should be left behind, school education in Oman has achieved gender equality, scoring 0.99 on the Gender Equality Index in 2017. People with disabilities were not overlooked by the education sector in the Sultanate, and the MoE is continuously providing support to special education schools and programs, including students with disabilities (motor, visual, auditory, and mental) as well as students with special needs (learning difficulties program, and speech and communication disorders program). The Ministry also implemented the program for the integration of students with special needs in general education schools since the academic year 2005/2006.

At the higher education level, the Ministry of Higher Education allocates 50 internal scholarships every year for students of this category to study in private universities and colleges, and has offered to them 50 external scholarships in the academic year 2013/2014. The Ministry also seeks to empower and qualify children of social security households in order to develop and grow their potential, and subsequently build their self-reliance.

In this context, the Ministry grants annually 2,138 scholarships to children of social security and low-income households who did not meet the admission requirements of public higher education institutions to pursue their studies in private universities and colleges. Vocational colleges also offer training and qualification opportunities for people with disabilities, according to their physical abilities, mental aptitude, talents, capabilities, and preferences.



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

Relying on the government as the main source of funds is probably the most prominent challenge facing the education sector. The requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and its impact on the future of jobs and the skills required in the labor market are also among the main challenges at hand. It is estimated that 65 percent of primary school children will be employed in jobs that do not yet exist. Oman's education system needs therefore to be upgraded, developed, and prepared to meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Future Plans:

Education is one of the strategic directions of Oman 2040 Vision which emphasizes inclusive education, lifelong learning, and scientific research that leads to a knowledge society and competitive national talents. **The National Strategy for Education 2040** includes the same determinants and directions.



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG4

1 – The Sultan Qaboos Award for Sustainable Development in the School Environment:

The Sultan Qaboos Award for Sustainable Development in the School Environment is based on the vision of an “initiating, innovative, and sustainable school community”.

This award aims at spreading and fostering the culture of sustainable development in the school and local community; promoting the values of sustainable development among members of the school community and developing their attitudes towards related issues in the school and local environment; enhancing the skills of the members of the school community and developing their competencies to achieve the goals of education for sustainable development; strengthening the students' national identity and instilling the values of good citizenship in them in order to prepare them to contribute effectively to the country's development and construction process; building all aspects of students' personalities and equipping them with 21st century skills to handle issues and challenges positively; developing their leadership and dialogue skills and diversifying their creative abilities; and encouraging school administrations and the school community to apply best practices in education and create sustainable projects that further teaching and learning programs.

The Sultan Qaboos Award for Sustainable Development in the School Environment stimulates the school

community to advance the reality of school and community environment, and foster a culture of initiative by implementing projects and innovating sustainable solutions while investing available resources through an effective community partnership in three key themes:

- The environmental and health theme
- The socio-cultural theme
- The economic theme

The support that this national project received from parents' councils, public and private institutions, the private sector, and individuals was instrumental to its success.

جائزة
السلطان
قابوس

للتنمية المستدامة
في البيئة المدرسية





Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG4

2 – The Education Indicators System Project:

The Educational Indicators System is one of the most advanced digital services developed recently by the MoE as part of its ongoing commitment to digital transformation and the use of technology to improve education.

The Educational Indicators System is linked to the large databases of the Oman Education Portal, which provides detailed numerical data on the performance of schools, teachers, and students over a period of more than 10 years.

With an efficient high-speed display of cumulative data on all components of the educational system accompanied by graphs, this intelligent electronic system helps decision makers to extrapolate and follow up on the level of performance in the different areas of work in the Ministry.

It also enables school administrations, teachers, and various oversight bodies to use facts and scientific evidence provided by the System to improve performance and reveal the strengths and development priorities of the education system.

Another important aspect of this system is its use of pedagogical indicators to analyze the situation and build future plans accordingly, in addition to following up on school educational performance. It has an exceptional ability to schematize and examine the evolution of attainment and student performance, throughout the academic years in various subjects. It also provides detailed monitoring of

teacher performance as well as overall monitoring of the school performance and the Sultanate's educational system as a whole. Furthermore, the Education Indicators System produces data on the quality of learning environments and accurately determines the schools and students in need of further care, as well as high-performing schools, which contributes to the channeling and management of human and material resources with high efficiency.



3 – The National Youth Program for Skills Development:

The Sultanate is aware of the increasing importance of technology as one of the main development drivers in societies and an essential input to development. It has therefore adopted a strategy to equip Omani youth with the capabilities and skills that enable them to keep pace with the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In this context, the National Youth Program for Skills Development was launched with the aim of providing Omani youth with the skills of the future. Careful consideration was given to the selection of participants in two tracks:

First Track: It involved training 150 participants aged 15 to 17 years in programming, digital media, computational thinking, robotics and digital citizenship.

Second Track: Held with the participation of one thousand

Omani youth selected among ten thousand applicants through an elimination process based on evaluations, this track consisted of two stages. First, participants were trained and equipped with the skills qualifying them for a Nano Degree. Then in the second stage, the top 100 candidates are shortlisted as part of the Programs practical component under which their ideas are transformed into operational projects.

This Program is the first of its kind and has prompted a national trend that puts the focus on the skills of the future and the preparation of youth and youngsters to meet labor market requirements. It will also generate investable projects that bring social and economic value to the Sultanate by creating new jobs. It is worth mentioning that work is underway to increase the number of Program beneficiaries by making it accessible to a wider segment of the population via online learning platforms.



Sustainable Development Goals

05



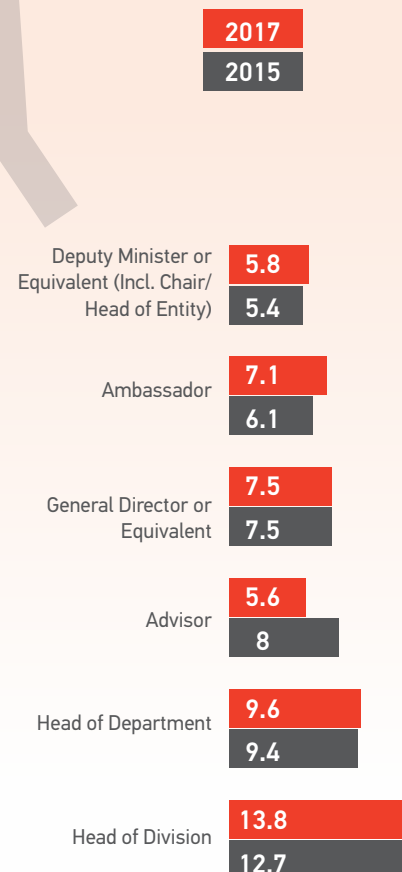
Gender
Equality

Key Messages:

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- The Basic Statute of the State provides for gender equality whereby it states: “All citizens are equal before the law and share the same public rights and duties. There shall be no discrimination among them on the ground of gender, origin, color, language, religion, sect, domicile, or social status.”
- The Sultanate of Oman is committed to a number of international conventions and treaties pertaining to human rights, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the optional protocols thereto, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- The Sultanate is achieving significant progress regarding women’s empowerment, which was reflected in the “elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls,” particularly in educational and employment spheres.
- Omani women occupy leadership public-sector positions in ministries as well as diplomatic bodies abroad. They also occupy high and medium level administrative positions in Government departments. Moreover, the Sultanate consecrated in 1994 women’s right to vote and run for elections, thus becoming the first Gulf country to do so.
 - All national blueprints and strategies on development, the most recent of which was Oman 2040 Vision, have focused on empowering women and promoting their role, by creating a favorable environment for them in the economic and social spheres, fostering their participation in the decision-making process and bolstering institutional capacities on gender analysis.

Percentage of women in Administrative positions between 2015 and 2017





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG5

The Sultanate of Oman has strived to provide equal opportunities for women across all fields. It continues to exert efforts to improve the reality of Omani women, particularly in terms of economic, political, social, and public participation. In this context, policies, programs, and laws pertaining to women were reviewed in order to have them developed and their blueprints improved, in accordance with the social, economic, and professional changes taking place. To achieve SDG5, the Sultanate relies on several starting points, predominantly the Basic Statute of the State, the speeches of His Majesty, international conventions pertaining to human rights, Oman Vision 2040 and the Social Action Strategy (2016-2025).

As a result, the Sultanate has made substantial progress in achieving gender equality throughout the past four decades, thus leading to the “elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls”. The Sultanate has also achieved gender equality in education, whereby the total enrollment of females between grades 7 and 9 reached 101 percent for the academic year 2016/2017. The percentage of illiteracy among females also witnessed a significant drop from 12.6 percent in 2013 to 6.3 percent in 2018.

Oman's key achievements in gender equality over the past period can be highlighted as follows:

- The Sultanate of Oman became a party to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by virtue of Royal Decree No. 42/2005; then Royal Decree No. 3/2019 was issued ratifying the amendment of paragraph 1 of Article 20 of the Convention and lifting the Sultanate's reservation to paragraph 4 of Article 15 regarding the freedom of movement and residence.
- The Sultanate continued to draft the preliminary report and periodical report, which encompasses both the second and third follow-up reports on the implementation of CEDAW. These reports were the subject of praise and acclaim from the CEDAW

Committee during panel discussions held in Geneva for the tangible progress achieved towards the advancement of women in Oman.

- The Sultanate has ensured that every woman receives a piece of land as a grant from the State and that Article 12 of the Omani Passport Law be amended. Moreover, Royal Decree No. 55/2010 regarding the prevention of marriage was issued and the Civil Service Law was amended to include world-class work standards whereby justice and equal opportunities underpin any employment process.

- The Sultanate ensured access to equal opportunities in employment, appointment, promotion, job security, and service conditions and benefits, in addition to securing the right to receive training and rehabilitation in both the private and public sectors.

- The celebration of Omani Women's Day on October 17th of every year was the fruit of recommendations raised by the Omani Women's seminar and endorsed by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. The day is dedicated to celebrating the many accomplishments of women, shedding light on their role in achieving development, and promoting their continuous initiatives. Omani Women's Day is an occasion to look into studies on women's rights; hold events that bring together scientific experts to promote the contribution of women to political, economic, and social life; and

honor pioneering women in development action.

- The Sultanate granted women with disabilities equal rights in accessing job opportunities and education and receiving healthcare services. The percentage of women with disabilities working in the private sector in 2017 amounted to 11 percent of Omani employees with disabilities. The Social Security Law also grants persons with disabilities from both genders, without discrimination, the right to a social security salary.

The Sultanate of Oman has pledged to protect women from all forms of violence (including sexual violence, abuse within the

family, and sexual harassment at the workplace), through several laws and legislations.

The Sultanate of Oman has always been keen on moving forward on this path through a set of policies and initiatives, as follows:

- The Sultanate has issued the Penal Code, which explicitly focuses on the protection of women from all forms of physical and psychological violence.
- The Sultanate has guaranteed legal protection to women subjected to any form of violence through a number of legal procedures and measures. Personal status court cases are referred to a speedy trial and are dealt with in full privacy and confidentiality whenever they are brought before an Omani court.
- The Sultanate has established several mechanisms to protect women and girls, particularly the National Committee for Family Affairs, the CEDAW Implementation Follow-up Committee, the National Committee for Human Rights, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking, the National Committee of Disabled Persons Welfare, and the CRC Implementation Follow-up Committee.
- According to the Law Combating Trafficking in Persons, it is prohibited to carry out any form of human trafficking; and individuals found guilty of perpetrating such offence shall be punished by law. Similarly, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking has set a nationwide blueprint to raise society's awareness on the subject and protect citizens and residents from human trafficking. The Committee also established a hotline dedicated to receiving complaints and reports on human trafficking cases.
- Oman's Cybercrime Law punishes actions that involve misusing information technology and using it as a means to abuse women and girls.
- In 2012, the Family Protection Department was established,

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followed by the Dar Al-Wifaq Centre for the protection of women, including those who are victims of human trafficking. The Centre provides temporary housing for women and offers them a plethora of social and psychological programs, in addition to legal counseling. The Centre also helps bring criminals to justice, meet the needs of victims, and solve their problems; and it has implemented 34 awareness raising programs in 2018.

- The Sultanate established a free protection hotline (1100) dedicated to receiving reports and complaints round the clock. The line is operated by specialized and well-trained national personnel; and received cases are redirected depending on their requirements.
- The Sultanate established the toll-free line for family counselling, which represents a central component for providing psychological and social guidance to members of society. Individuals seeking counseling for post-marital problems can access marriage counseling services which have been free of charge since their launch in 2009.

On another hand, Omani laws and legislations prohibit all harmful practices related to child marriage, early marriage, forced marriage, and genital mutilation. They have also specified the legal age of marriage, despite early marriages not being a widespread phenomenon in the Omani society. The average age at first marriage was estimated at 28 for males and 26 for females

in 2010. The most remarkable milestones achieved in this context are as follows:

- The Omani Child Law entered into effect by virtue of Royal Decree No. 22/2014 which ensures that children are protected against harmful traditional practices, the promotion of such practices, and the assistance therein.
- The Omani Child Law consecrates children's right to protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse, and to a humane and decent treatment that preserves their dignity, reputation, and honor. The State also guarantees that all children enjoy the said right by all means possible, through the prohibition of any act of



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG5

kidnapping, rape, and engagement in any sexual activity, among others.

- Article 7 of the Omani Personal Status Law stipulates: "Eligibility for marriage is achieved if the person in question is mentally sound and has completed 18 years of age." This article applies to both genders. Therefore, it is the notary public's right to refuse a request for a marriage certification if one or both spouses are below the age of 18 and refer the case to the competent court of law.

The Sultanate's policies paid particular attention to family development programs, in addition to programs seeking to empower women and develop their capacities by supporting and promoting the role of families and providing them with training across different fields. These programs also sought to promote and empower the role of women and integrate them in development activities and projects, while taking into consideration their family circumstances through the following:

- The increased participation of women in volunteering serves as an indicator of women's current situation and their status in society. In this regard, the creation of Omani women associations is considered one of the main components of volunteerism, with the number of women associations reaching 65 with 8,021 female members by the end of 2018.
- The Ministerial Decree No. 4/2011 issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry granted women permission to carry out commercial activities from home and laid out the specific business activities that women can engage in at-home.
- The Public Authority for SME Development (Riyada) was established with the aim of supporting entrepreneurship and reinforcing the role of SMEs in providing diversified and renewable job opportunities for both genders. Likewise, Al-Raffd fund was

founded to support business projects of young Omani men and women, with the percentage of female beneficiaries reaching 28.4 percent.

- The Sultanate has strived to help families uphold their responsibilities in raising children. It also sought to promote the values of shared family and livelihood responsibilities within households. Several programs were implemented to achieve these aspirations including Tamasok (Solidarity) program which aims to inform prospective and newlywed couples on the values of a healthy conjugal relationship and child upbringing. As such, by the end of the first quarter of 2019, the program had reached around 35,000 male and female beneficiaries.

• The Tamkeen program aims to tap into the potential of individuals and families, involve them in the development process, and transform households living off social security into productive ones that contribute to the growth of national economy. It is worth noting that Oman's political leadership and government have fostered the participation of women on all levels. Many policies and programs were aimed at promoting Omani women's participation in social, economic, and political life and empowering them to build their leadership and decision-making skills. As a result, Omani women

were able to access employment across all spheres.

Omani women contribute to all aspects of social, economic, and political life through the following:

- In line with the provisions of Basic Statute of the State, the Shura Council Elections Law does not discriminate between men and women in its terms of candidature. Women have thus the right to vote and run as candidates for the Shura Council on an equal footing with men.
- Women's representation in diplomatic circles also witnessed significant growth over the past few years. In fact, Omani women were appointed to key diplomatic positions, including ambassadors and representatives of the Sultanate at UN agencies, among others.

The Sultanate's policies paid special attention to family development programs, in addition to programs seeking to empower women and develop their capacities by supporting and promoting the role of families and providing them with training across different fields. The programs also sought to promote and empower the role of women and integrate them in development activities and projects while taking into consideration their family circumstances.

- The executive plan of the Social Action Strategy (2016 – 2025) aspires to empower women and allow them more participation in social, economic, and political life. It also seeks to build women's leadership and decision-making skills, as well as their ability to take part, inter alia, in Municipal and Shura Council elections, in partnership with CSOs.
- The number of women entrepreneurs committees at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the governorate level amounted to 8 committees with 98 female business owners. All committees are chaired by women, including three members of the Chamber's boards of directors.
- In 2017, the percentage of female Omani employees in the civil service sector reached 48.1 percent while the percentage of female employees working in the private sector was estimated at 24.4 percent of total employees.
- Omani women occupy leadership positions across all fields of work. As a matter of fact, out of the overall number of employees in high-level, medium-level, and direct administrative jobs in the civil service sector, the percentage of women at high-level administrative positions rose from 10 percent in 2012 to 21 percent in 2017. Data also points out that women take part in all occupational groups in the private sector, with 25.7 percent of public directors and business managers in 2017 being females.
- The healthcare system in the Sultanate of Oman will encompass until the year 2040 a plethora of programs and projects focusing on lifetime health of women, with three main objectives: eradicating maternal and infant mortality, improving the quality of healthcare services and creating a favorable environment for mother and child health.
- The Omani Child Law stipulates the need for all government bodies to take all necessary preventive and therapeutic measures and procedures to provide adequate prenatal and postnatal healthcare services for mothers.
- The Sultanate also implemented the national program for the provision of healthcare services to women in post-reproductive

age at primary healthcare centers and hospitals.

- The MoH provides services in early detection of breast cancer for women who are at risk of developing it.
- Birth spacing methods are also provided in specialized clinics across all governorates in the Sultanate.

Omani laws and legislations do not discriminate between men and women in terms of the economic rights granted to citizens.

In fact, women enjoy the same rights as men in terms of access to economic resources and ownership of agricultural lands. A number of accomplishments achieved on this front can be highlighted as follows:

- The Personal Status Law preserves women's rights to inheritance, will, and alimony. It also prohibits any attempts to exploit their personal funds and grants them the liberty to use the said funds as they deem fit.
- The Code of Civil Procedure states that men and women are equally eligible to carry out all civilian transactions, including the right to access bank loans and mortgages.
- The Commercial Law regulates the right of persons to conduct business activities without any discrimination on the basis of gender.
- The percentage of female owners of agricultural lands amounted to 10 percent of the total number of agricultural landowners in 2017, in addition to cases of joint ownership where agricultural lands are shared by co-owners from both genders.

The Public Authority for Craft Industries contributes to achieving comprehensive development across the Sultanate, by developing and growing the craft industry sector for those who work in it and seeking to provide all available resources and capacities needed to support these industries on marketing, financial, and administrative levels. As a result, the percentage of craftswomen increased to 88 percent of the total number of artisans in 2017.

The Public Authority for SME Development (Riyada) was established with the aim of supporting entrepreneurship and reinforcing the role of SMEs in providing diversified and renewable job opportunities for both genders



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

Despite Oman's principal interest in promoting and boosting the active participation of women in the development and progress of society, their rate of participation in political life still requires more support.

Similarly, the absence of legal awareness among women regarding their rights as guaranteed by national laws and legislations represents a key challenge in this regard, which prompted the Sultanate to adopt several measures to raise awareness among women about these rights. Women's participation in the labor market also remains weak, particularly in the private sector, given the lack of facilitations that would help women strike a balance between their job and their role towards their children and family. This includes the scarcity of nurseries and daycare centers for children of working mothers in the workplace.

Future Plans:

The Sultanate of Oman has a number of national plans and strategies for development, including Oman 2040 Vision which strives, among other things, to empower women and promote their role by creating a favorable environment for them in the economic and social spheres, fostering their participation in decision-making positions, and bolstering gender-based institutional capacities.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG5

1-Omani Women's Associations:

Given the relative recency of the concept of women's participation in the Sultanate of Oman following the blessed Renaissance, which had hitherto been limited to conventional involvement in some family-related issues, it was of paramount importance to come up with organized forms of women's participation in social and volunteering actions. This gave way to the idea of establishing Omani women associations across Oman's governorates as a means to achieve social development. As a result, the Sultanate witnessed quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement in the provision of social, rehabilitative, and welfare services, which put the country on the right track to achieve sustainable development. Civil society organizations and associations, particularly those targeting Omani women, received Oman's focus and support. Hence, they were able to use schools to carry out their activities, which consisted at first of literacy campaigns for Omani women before moving into permanent quarters and securing yearly financial support from the Government. As a matter of fact, the MoSD provides CSOs with financial, technical, and capacity-building support.

Promulgated in 1996, the Basic Statute of the State is considered the basis of all legislations in the Sultanate. In particular, it consecrates under Article 33 the freedom of forming societies as a constitutional right for all.

Moreover, the Civil Associations Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. 14/2000 and the civil association formation system promulgated by Ministerial Decree No. 150/2000 have regulated the process of notification as well as supervision of the work

of associations. On an official level, CSOs in the Sultanate saw the light in the early 1970s with the establishment of women's associations in 1972, in particularly the founding of the Omani Woman's Association in Muscat.

Women's associations have brought together some of the deepest and most renowned success stories ever to be witnessed in the history of the modern Omani woman. In fact, these associations have marked the starting point for many distinguished female figures fronting both the private and public sectors. Volunteers also play a crucial role in empowering women by taking part in various trainings designed to facilitate women's access to job opportunities and raise awareness among women and society as a whole through the implementation of a host of projects on health, education, society, and self-empowerment.

Omani women's associations are considered civil society organizations of a voluntary nature and independent administration managed by civil society itself. They strive to empower women, build their capacities and skills across various fields, and provide them with opportunities to exchange information, particularly in topics of interest. Omani women's associations are spread across all governorates and provinces in the Sultanate and have witnessed an increase from 56 associations in 2012 to 65 by the end of 2018.

Omani women's associations have contributed to raising women's awareness regarding their participation in parliamentary and municipal elections and their access to decision-making positions.



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG5

2- Community Knowledge Centers for Women

This project comes in line with the royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said who ordered to hold the Omani Woman's Symposium and underlined the critical role that Omani women have in building civilizations and contributing to sustainable development.

In the context of this royal approach, the Information Technology Authority (ITA) strived to cooperate with all concerned institutions for the purpose of establishing Community Knowledge Centers for Women across all governorates to train women in the area of information technology (IT) and enable them to participate actively in Oman's digital society. These Centers are considered a fundamental cornerstone on which the Community IT Training Program is built. The Program contributes to developing and promoting the capacities and skills of Omani citizens to use digital transactions and interact with government e-services, as well as creating opportunities for citizens to reach more substantial prospects in the IT area.

This direction falls under the efforts exerted by ITA, in partnership with different governmental, private, and civil entities, to train all groups of society in the IT area. This, in turn, provides training opportunities for citizens and enables them to learn about the IT sector, familiarize themselves with computers, and use the Internet for information, as well as utilize and benefit from government e-services.

Community Knowledge Centers provide Internet services that grant women access to the Internet as well as a number of educational programs. They also allow women to benefit from continuous training programs tailored to different levels and age groups. In

this regard, and with the intention to achieve digital literacy, the ITA implemented several training programs of which 70 percent were destined for women.

Also, more than 6,200 specialized training opportunities have been provided across different IT areas, including programs for children and homemakers, workshops on information security, and awareness-raising activities concerning digital citizenship.

A total of 20 Community Knowledge Centers are now spread across a number of Omani governorates and regions, including 10 that are dedicated to women.



3- Volunteering: Individual Initiative by the Honorable Ms. Zahra Al-Aufia:

While education is considered a collective responsibility shared by society organizations and the government, volunteering is a central pillar of social solidarity in the Omani society where CSOs, individuals, the Government, and the private sector come together to build an integrated and cooperative society in order to promote and develop rural communities in need of further efforts for advancement. As such, the Sultan Qaboos Award for Volunteering comes as an encouragement for organizations and individuals to make serious contributions in this area.

After her children reached adulthood, homemaker Zahra Al-Aufia found herself having too much spare time on her hands that could be spent in giving and serving her community. She had realized that her countryside community needed support in the areas of education and that women, girls, and children needed assistance, particularly in writing and reading. Therefore, she started teaching 20 children living nearby how to read and write as well as the Holy Quran. She provided for them by allocating a part of her household expenses for their needs. As the number of beneficiaries increased, Zahra had to look for another place to accommodate the growing number of children. She needed help to follow-up on them and their mothers who wished to participate in the learning process; but where would she get the money to open a school and pay the salaries of the girls helping her? So, Zahra started a cooking project, selling Omani meals to students and teachers in neighboring public schools, then investing the earnings into opening new schools where she would teach children the Holy Quran, writing, and reading and pay the

salaries of the women assisting her. Zahra carried on with work, trying to strike a balance between preparing and selling meals and teaching children and their mothers until she was able, with the help of Allah, to open one school and then another. She ended up establishing 22 schools in 22 countryside villages and deservedly winning the Sultan Qaboos Award for Volunteering.

Volunteering capitalizes on the efforts of CSOs as critical partners to contribute to the development process and achieve the SDGs, especially in rural and mountainous areas.



Sustainable Development Goals

06

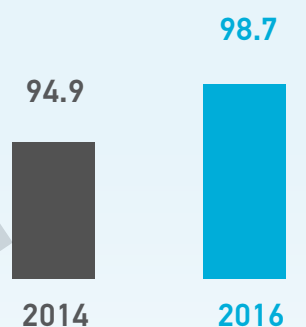


Clean
Water and
Sanitation

Key Messages:

SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

- Water resources are an issue of major importance in the Sultanate, with 98.7 percent of the population benefiting from safe drinking water services.
- Sanitation and hygiene services cover over 98 percent of the population in cities and 97 percent in rural areas, as of 2018.
- Water management and increased water use efficiency are among the priorities of Oman 2040. The Sultanate also aims through the National Tertiary-treated Wastewater Reuse Strategy 2040 to expand the development of wastewater treatment plants and extend sewage network lines at a cost of up to US\$7 billion, averaging US\$381 million per year.
- Oman joined the Ramsar Convention in 2012, and through its implementation mechanisms, it seeks to promote the application of best practices in the conservation of wetlands, rational use, prevention or reduction of wetlands degradation, and restoration of degraded wetlands; the use of effective and sustainable means to increase groundwater and surface water storage; and the implementation of programs to improve water quality, preserve agriculture and fishing, and protect biodiversity.



Proportion of the population benefiting from safe drinking water services between 2014 and 2016



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG6

Great attention was devoted to water resources in the Sultanate since the start of the modern Renaissance in the early 1970s, considering the country's dependence on groundwater and rain, mainly due to its geographical location and climate. Oman has made significant progress in this regard, with 98.7 percent of the population benefiting from safe drinking water services in 2016. Desalinated water accounts for over 86 percent of the total drinking water needs and is considered one of the strategic options to meet drinking water requirements. Desalinated water production increased from 196 million cubic meters in 2011 to 311 million cubic meters by the end of 2018. Other sources of drinking water, such as wells, contribute by approximately 14 percent.

Sanitation and hygiene services cover more than 98 percent of the population in urban areas and 97 percent in rural areas, and as of 2018, 68 wastewater treatment plants were established, producing around 94 million m³/year of tertiary-treated wastewater, about 61 percent of which is being used in agriculture, aesthetic afforestation, refrigeration, and injection of coastal aquifers. Through the National Strategy for the Use of Tertiary-treated Wastewater 2040, Oman seeks to expand the construction of sewage treatment plants and extend sewage network lines at a cost of US\$7 billion, averaging US\$381 million per year.

Since 2014, wastewater has been collected and treated, which contributes significantly to reducing groundwater pollution and increasing the level of recycling and reuse as a growing non-traditional water source potentially totaling more than 1 million m³/day, which can be used to address water scarcity by 2040. Water quality monitoring programs constitute a principal cornerstone of water resources assessment and management, and the Sultanate has come a long way in this regard. It has implemented water basins monitoring programs at a coverage rate of 75 percent through periodical measurements of monitoring points and the storage of results in a core database.

In view of the current water shortage pressure estimated at about 128 percent, the Sultanate seeks to ensure sustainable freshwater availability and supply by 2030 by balancing supply and demand and expanding the use of non-conventional water resources (treated wastewater) currently used to replenish some coastal aquifers. Furthermore, by implementing water demand management (WDM) policies and changing cropping patterns and traditional irrigation systems, Oman aims to increase current water use efficiency, estimated at around US\$47/m³ in 2018, with a focus on the agriculture sector, which is the largest water-consumer, accounting for 83 percent of total uses.

The Sultanate seeks to ensure sustainable freshwater availability and supply by 2030

According to the United Nations questionnaire on integrated water resources management (IWRM) implementation, the indicator placed the current degree of IWRM implementation in Oman at 38 percent. The Sultanate has made great progress in terms of enabling the institutional environment, national policies, legislation, and regulations, as well as national monitoring systems and funding. It joined the Ramsar Convention in 2012, and through its implementation mechanisms, it seeks to develop a common vision between government bodies and civil society for wetland preservation and management, and strives to promote the application of best practices in the conservation of wetlands, rational use, prevention or reduction of wetlands degradation, and restoration of degraded wetlands; the use of effective and sustainable means to increase groundwater and surface water storage; and the implementation of programs to improve water quality, preserve agriculture and fishing, and protect biodiversity.

Oman has also put into effect specific outreach, education, and public awareness programs to involve main stakeholder groups, and adopt strategic and operational tools to fully implement the Ramsar Convention through actions taken at local and national levels, as well as continued international cooperation in this field.

Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The water sector faces many challenges, foremost among which are limited natural water resources, due to the country's location in the zone of arid and semi-arid lands and its reliance on annual rainfall for the replenishment of its limited water resources. This represents a challenge in terms of balancing water uses, renewable resources, and the preservation of water resources from depletion and pollution, in addition to the salinity and degradation of groundwater quality in coastal areas (Al Batinah and Salalah coastal areas).

Future Plans:

To address these challenges, the Sultanate adopted **water management and enhanced water use efficiency among the priorities of Oman 2040** to achieve national priorities and the SDGs.

According to the **2040 Water Sector Master Plan**, the Public Authority for Water is working in coordination with the Oman Power and Water Procurement Company (OPWP) to advance the implementation of desalination projects by developing plans to expand existing desalination plants and establish new plants, through private sector involvement in investment, in order to meet the growing demand for water. Seawater desalination plants are large-scale projects which contribute significantly to enhancing Oman's water security.

The Sultanate seeks to improve its various systems and activities; increase water supply reliability; boost operational efficiency; further upgrade services; and implement strategies to develop and enhance human resources, subscriber services, health, safety and the environment, information technology, water quality, and project management. Moreover, a **strategy was prepared to manage water loss**, which brought losses down from 43.4 percent in 2010 to 23 percent in 2018. Contingency strategy and plans were also elaborated in collaboration with other stakeholders in the country.

It is hoped that the total quantity of treated water utilized will amount to around 244 million m³ and 338 million m³ by 2030 and 2040 respectively. The **National Wastewater Reuse Strategy** also encompasses mechanisms and programs related to the utilization of this renewable resource in the replenishment of underground reservoirs, and for industrial and agricultural uses in order to increase water use efficiency in the Sultanate.





Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG6

1-The Wadi Dayqah Dam Project:

Despite all its efforts, the Sultanate, just as all arid and semi-arid lands, suffers from a shortage of water resources, especially during drought years. In this context, the Wadi Dayqah Dam project was planned to alleviate water scarcity and protect the largest possible number of villages and cities from the dangers posed by floodwaters, hence ensuring sustainability in the provision of significant quantities of water, and encouraging investment in development projects safe from extreme climatic conditions. In pursuit of these aims, the first phase of the Wadi Dayqah Dam project was implemented.

This project benefits residents in areas downstream from the dam in the villages of Dagmar and Hail Al Ghaf, as well as development projects supplied with water provided by the dam (35 million cubic meters) in the agricultural and tourism sectors, and the drinking water supply in the Muscat Governorate.

Since its construction, the dam provided a constant supply of irrigation water to the aflaj (water channels) of Al Mazare village. It also contributed to the replenishment of downstream

groundwater reserves as needed. The Wadi Dayqah Dam has become a tourist destination attracting hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. In 2017, it received around 150,578 visitors, averaging 12,548 visitors per month.

The dam's water is used for agriculture and tourism purposes, as well as for public supply, and it feeds limited conventional water resources. The dam will contribute to the development of agriculture in the wilaya of Qurayyat due to the availability of a cost-effective, sustainable, and quality water supply, which will increase agricultural economic return, thus leading to the development of this sector in the Sultanate. The development of agriculture will lead to agricultural products diversification and build a new generation of farmers who use modern irrigation techniques, turning agriculture into a stable and profitable source of income. The dam will also reduce the impact of droughts.

The Wadi Dayqah Dam will sustainably supply water for drinking (desalinated water being too costly) as well as for domestic use in sufficient quantities and of guaranteed quality to some of the wilayats and villages of Muscat Governorate. This will help meet the growing demand for potable water owing to steady population growth, in addition to improving living conditions and eliminating diseases related to water quality, as well as easing pressure on desalination plants and coastal aquifers, thus alleviating the problem of seawater intrusion threatening coastal farmlands.

Another advantage of this dam lies in flood-risk reduction and the preservation of citizens' properties and existing infrastructure, in addition to encouraging investment in the region through the execution of residential and industrial development projects in downstream areas.



2-The Cloud Seeding Project:

Cloud seeding is a sustainable method that provides freshwater in certain geographical and climatic conditions. And since Oman seeks to develop its water resources and enhance its water security to address the problems of drought and water scarcity, it has started, over the course of the past five years, to implement the Cloud Seeding Project through a one-of-a-kind ionization technology in the Gulf Region. The Project team installed 12 cloud seeding stations equipped with ion emitters on the tops of mountains in the Western and Eastern Hajar ranges and in Dhofar Governorate, in addition to 221 rain gauges installed in various regions impacted by the process.

The ion emission technology is based on the use of the ionization property to increase rainfall through the process of coalescence of negatively charged ions, released by ion emitters and carried by rising air currents to the location of formation of middle-altitude altocumulus with airborne dust and moisture particles.

The Project team faced great difficulties during the establishment of stations and installation of ion emitters on mountaintops. The lack of infrastructure in station locations, characterized by rough mountain terrain, required the use of helicopters for field surveys and then for the transfer of equipment and devices to the selected locations. In cases where helicopters were not available, the technical team proceeded on foot, particularly when performing the regular systems maintenance and when performing monthly reading and maintenance of the 221 rain gauges deployed in the various impact areas.

The Project's final results over the past five years were evaluated by Australia's Wollongong University, based on rainfall data in impact areas, as well as morning and evening weather balloon data supplied by the Public Authority for Civil Aviation and the Project's weather stations. According to the evaluation, the average rainfall increase rate was estimated at 18.8 percent with a degree of accuracy exceeding 99.99 percent.



Sustainable Development Goals

07



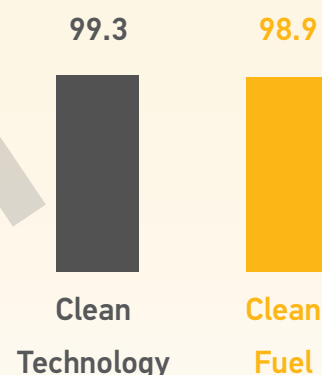
**Affordable
and Clean
Energy**

Key Messages:

SDG7: Ensuring Affordable Access to Modern, Reliable and Sustainable Energy Services for All.

- The Sultanate is working on developing strategies and ambitious plans to research and find alternative sources of energy, without however compromising the provision of energy for all residents, or compromising the various aspects of life and the economy, be it institutions, factories, etc.
- The National Energy Strategy outlines a clear roadmap for dealing with the challenges, in line with the objectives of SDG7, which calls for the rapid and low-cost expansion of renewable energy use, raising its efficiency in the future, while keeping pace with the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- The Sultanate plans to replace (50%) of the amount of gas used to produce steam in the oil industry with locally developed concentrated solar energy systems, and to provide support in the initial stages by the end of 2025.

The proportion of population that relies mainly on fuel and clean technology in 2014:





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG7

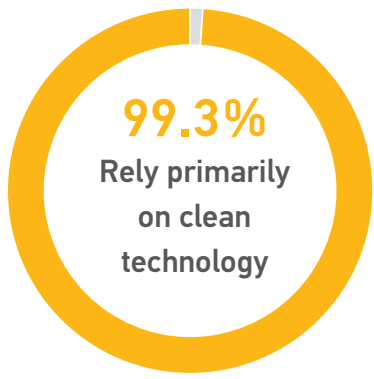
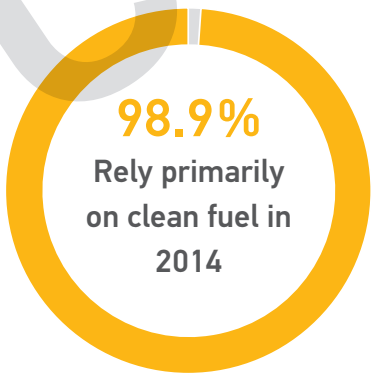
As the Sultanate moves to reduce dependence on oil and gas as the main energy sources, as they have been for the past five decades, and with the increase of population and economic growth, the Sultanate is working on developing strategies and ambitious plans to research and find alternative sources of energy, without however compromising the provision of energy for all residents, or compromising the various aspects of life and the economy, be it institutions, factories, etc.

The National Energy Strategy issued a number of resolutions related to renewable energy, in line with the objectives of the SDG7, which calls for the rapid and low-cost expansion of renewable energy use, raising its efficiency in the future, while keeping pace with the requirements of

the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The Sultanate plans to replace (50%) of the amount of gas used to produce steam in the oil industry with locally developed concentrated solar energy systems, and to provide support in the initial stages by the end of 2025.

The percentage of the population benefiting from electricity services in the Sultanate of Oman in 2017 was (100%), and the proportion of the population who relied primarily on clean fuel was (98.9%) in 2014, while the percentage of the population who relied primarily on clean technology was (99.3%) in the same year. Oman's production of renewable energy for electricity generation was estimated at 8 Megawatts by the end of 2018.

All residents in the Sultanate benefit from electricity services



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The energy sector faces several challenges, foremost of which are the sustainability of government subsidies, the long-term availability of gas, increased demand in energy due to growth in manufacturing, the increase in population and urbanization year after year. In the field of renewable energy, the high costs of this emerging technology, and the expertise and skills it requires, are not quick matters to manifest.



Future Plans:

The **National Energy Strategy** outlines a clear roadmap for dealing with the challenges, in line with the objectives of SDG7, which calls for the rapid and low-cost expansion of renewable energy use, raising its efficiency in the future, while keeping pace with the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG7

“Miraah” and the Renewable Energy Project:

The “Miraah” project located in the “Amal” oilfield to generate solar steam in the “Marmul” region of “Dhofar” governorate is harnessing sunlight to generate steam, which is used in the thermal methods to extract heavy oil from the oilfield. This project is considered the largest solar project in the world, with a production of 1,021 Megawatts of peak heat power, enough to generate 6,000 tons of steam per day. The project provides 5.6

trillion BTU of liquefied natural gas per year.

The Omani company Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) has entered the Guinness Book of World Records for installing the largest number of solar photovoltaic reflectors on a road.

The company has installed 43,550 sun-powered “Cat’s Eye” units along a 650 km route from “Haima” to “Salalah”.

The previous record was set in Japan at a distance of 220 kilometers.



Sustainable Development Goals

08



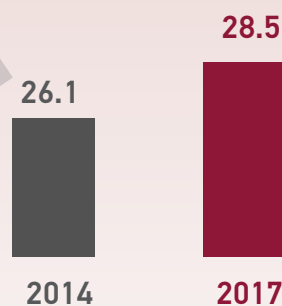
**Decent Work
and Economic
Growth**

Key Messages:

SDG8: Promoting Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All.

- The Omani economy aims to found a strong base, which relies on diversification built on knowledge and innovation. It is constructed on strengthening the forward and backward linkages between economic sectors in order to expand the production and export base, diversify business partners, deepen investment in high value-added sectors, and enhance the contribution of non-oil sectors to GDP.
- Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; a strategic objective for all of Oman's development plans and strategies. This has been reflected in several orientations and objectives in Oman Vision 2040.
- A legislative system that guarantees the rights of workers regardless of their gender and nationality, in accordance with International Labor Standards. The Sultanate is making great efforts in combating the crime of human trafficking in all its forms.
- Providing decent work opportunities for all, by qualifying the Omani workforce to work in the private sector, so that the share of Omani labor force in the total number of jobs created in this sector **increases to 42% in 2040, from 11.6% in 2016.**

Gross domestic product at constant prices for the base year 2010 (RO billion)





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG8

The promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all constitute a strategic objective of all development plans and strategies in the Sultanate since the 1970s, especially after the adoption of the SDGs in 2015. The 9th Five-Year Development Plan (2016-2020) aimed to achieve a real growth rate of the GDP at constant prices of no less than 3% during the plan period, thus positively affecting the citizens' living standards, creating productive and decent employment opportunities, and thus maintaining the level of Real Income of the Omani citizens.

This objective and the ten goals included in the main objectives of the 9th Five-Year Development Plan have been reflected as follows:

- Maintaining the growth rate of GDP by an average of 3% during the plan period, in order to maintain the living standard of citizens.
- Opting for economic diversification as a strategic option for the plan by reducing the dependence on oil and developing the five promising sectors (namely Manufacturing, Transportation and Logistics, Tourism, Fisheries, and Mining). The contribution of oil sectors will fall from

40.5% of the GDP in 2016, to 35.6% by the end of the plan in 2020.

- Providing productive and rewarding employment opportunities for citizens, especially young people, by training the national workforce to work in the private sector, away from civil service. The aim of the plan is to increase the percentage of citizens working in the private sector from the current 12%, through training, and changing education, so that education and training outputs are aligned with the expected demand structure, especially in promising sectors and large projects.

The National Program for the Promotion of Economic Diversification “Tanfeedh” is a result of the 9th Five-Year Development Plan (2016-2020), which aims to contribute to implementing the Sultanate’s vision for economic diversification, and to drive growth under the circumstances surrounding global oil markets, which necessitate the transition from a Commodity-Based Economy (Oil) to the development of other sectors, in order to stimulate the wheel of Comprehensive Development. The policy of economic diversification aims to focus on the promising sectors in which the Sultanate has a clear relative advantage, which requires the optimal utilization of available natural resources, strategic location of the



Sultanate and the promotion of a sustainable and diversified economy through the contribution of non-oil exports to total exports. Five promising sectors with added value have been identified as follows: Manufacturing, Transport and Logistics, Tourism, Fisheries and Mining. The Sultanate has made considerable improvements in economic diversification, whereas the share of oil activities declined from 66.7% of the GDP in 2000, to 40.8% in 2017.

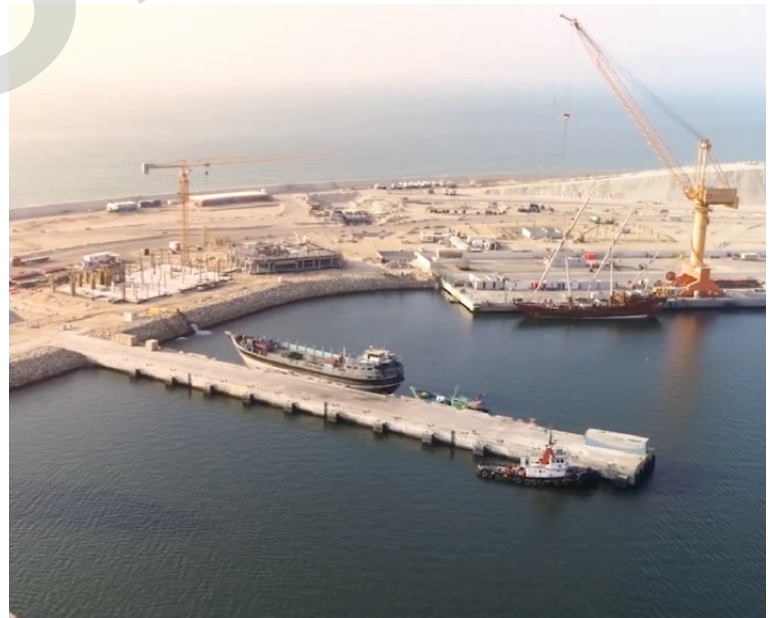
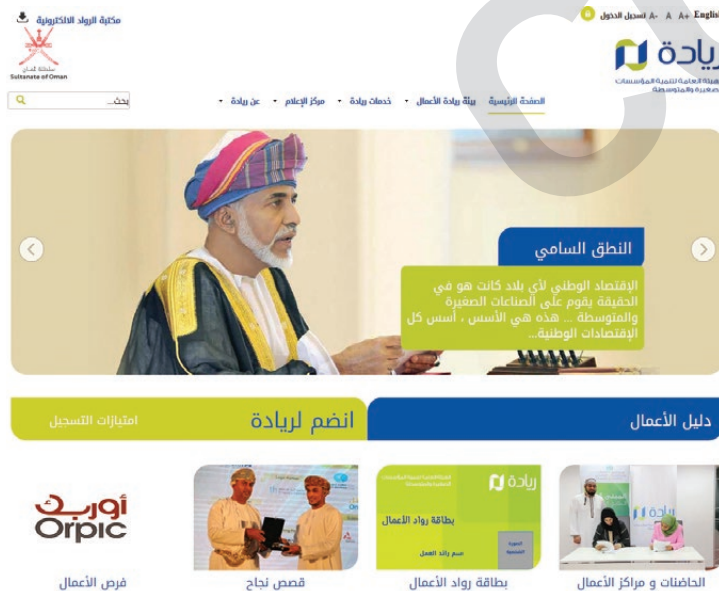
Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) play an increasing role by contributing to job creation, adding value to the local economy and contributing to GDP. The importance of this significant role has been translated through the issuance of the Supreme Directives, Royal Decrees and relevant resolutions since 1970, which envisages the development of the public-private partnership to develop these institutions.

In 2013, a Royal Decree was issued to **establish the Public Authority of**

Small and Medium Enterprise Development in order to empower these institutions and enhance their role as a fundamental pillar in the creation of job opportunities, and to achieve In-Country Value through the work of the Authority to provide effective and integrated technical support to these institutions for their development, as well as creating an innovative environment conducive to entrepreneurship, and instilling entrepreneurship as part of public culture among citizens, especially young people.

These efforts led to the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises, of which more than thirty-five thousand enterprises were officially registered in the Public Authority of Small and Medium Enterprise Development by the end of 2018, compared to about three thousand registered institutions only in 2014. The Omani Government seeks to enhance the contributions of these institutions by supporting four phases of services adequate with their life cycle, as follows:

**More than 35%
SMEs by the
end of 2018**





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG8

- Services related to instilling a culture of entrepreneurship, such as awareness, education, training and pre-incubation programs and relevant competitions.
- Establishment-related services, such as registration and specialized training programs and funding.
- Services related to marketing and promotional programs, business development and bold investment.
- Services related to expansion, export and investment.
- To enhance the integration of these services, the Sultanate offers eight types of support to the SME system:
- Incubation and acceleration programs and joint workspaces.
- Funding programs.
- Programs supporting the dissemination of entrepreneurial culture.
- In-Country Value development programs and SMEs supported by large companies.
- Innovation and R&D programs.
- Talent development and skill development programs.
- Awards programs and Entrepreneurship events.
- Empowering programs related to legislation and decisions to enhance the contribution of SMEs to job creation and the national economy.

**11% increase in the
National Workforce Index
(among the people with
disabilities) in Private
Sector facilities in 2018.**

In addition, the Sultanate attached great importance to the establishment of a legislative system that guarantees the rights of workers irrespective of their gender and nationality, in accordance with International Labor Standards. The Omani Labor Law and its executive decrees stipulate the most basic rights of workers without regard to their nationality, and most importantly:

Encouraging workers to form trade unions aimed at protecting their interests, defending their rights, improving their financial and social status, and representing them in all matters related to their affairs. The number of trade unions until the end of 2018 reached (261) trade unions and (5) trade syndicates, and the General Union of Workers of the Sultanate.

- Enhancing the dialogue between workers and employers. Accordingly,

legislative provisions have been issued to regulate collective bargaining with a view to resolving collective labor disputes, improving working terms and conditions, raising productive efficiency, and organizing peaceful strikes and shut downs.

- A regulation on occupational safety and health measures in facilities was issued subject to Omani Labor Law in order to ensure a safe, healthy and secure work environment.
- Developing the labor inspection system, where enough qualified inspectors work to monitor the application of labor legislation, detect violations and take the necessary action.

The Sultanate is making great and serious efforts in combating the crime of human trafficking in all its forms by joining agreements, ratifying protocols, issuing effective national legislations, and establishing procedures and methods to implement these laws. Among the most important conventions ratified by the Sultanate in this context are: Convention No.

(105) of 1957 on the Abolition of Forced Labor; ILO Convention No. (29) On Forced or Compulsory Labor; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (2002). In compliance with these agreements, the Sultanate issued in 2008 the Anti-Human Trafficking Act and established the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking.

In order to increase the protection of children and to ensure that they are not subjected to abuse and exploitation, the Sultanate's government has adhered to a number of conventions and passed several laws, including the Convention on Children's Rights in 1996, Convention No. (182) and the Recommendation No. (190) on the prohibition of the worst forms of Child Labor.

The Sultanate also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which affirms the need for all persons with disabilities (PWD) of all kinds to enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to have access to employment opportunities in the various sectors of employment that are suitable for them. The number of disabled persons registered with a disability is 34,365 of which 22,432 (71.5%) are

males, and 11,933 (28.5%) are females according to 2018 data.

In the public sector, the Civil Service Council approved in 2009 that the percentage of persons with disabilities should not be less than (1%) of the declared vacancies. The order shall be re-evaluated within a period of (3) years, after which the percentage shall be increased to (2%). Any person with a disability may apply for any advertised job, and whoever is appointed in accordance with the provisions of the law shall enjoy the privileges and rights granted to other citizens. The data indicates that the National Labor Force Index (PWD) increased by the end of 2018 at a growth rate of (11%) since 2015. In 2008, it reached 1,697 male and female workers.

The Sultanate has also adopted several training systems for the rehabilitation and operation of the national workforce, which aims to rehabilitate and train job seekers who are not qualified in advance for the purpose of getting them to work in the private sector.

In the promising Omani tourism sector, the Sultanate has embarked on activating the Oman 2040 Tourism Strategy, which aims at increasing the contribution of tourism to GDP from 6% to 10% by 2040. The themes include: social and environmental responsibility, launching an exceptional tourism experience, attracting more high-spending tourists, developing human capital, developing competitiveness systems, and governance and systems management.

Oman also places great importance on building and developing “financial institutions that are empowering and supportive to obtain the best banking services”, ensuring financial inclusion and enabling low-income people to benefit from high quality financial services at acceptable costs, and protecting the rights of the consumers of these services, encouraging them to manage their funds and savings properly, in order to avoid resorting to some channels and informal means that are not subject to the control and supervision and often rely on unstudied prices. There is no doubt that financial services play an important role in promoting development by facilitating and stimulating investment in various economic sectors and business activities. Therefore, the expansion of the beneficiaries of financial and banking services will contribute to the financial empowerment of society as a whole by enhancing the financial independence of individuals and encouraging savings, in addition to supporting the banking sector and institutions providing financial services and enhancing their contribution

to the prosperity of the local economy, as well as their contribution to job creation.

The Sultanate has paid great attention to building a real partnership between the public and private sectors (PPP) to integrate efforts and create a healthy environment for decision-making. Among the constructive efforts to serve this partnership are the following:

- **Social Dialogue Committees:** Includes representatives of the three parties of production (Government, Employers and Workers) with a view to considering and studying proposals that will contribute to regulating the labor market and strengthening labor relations between the parties of production. As well as the study of developments in labor standards to benefit from the promotion of social dialogue to serve the labor relations between the parties of production.
- **Sectorial Committees:** Headed by the private sector, the membership of governmental and private bodies concerned with tackling developments and identifying the needs of each sector according to its specificity, and creating a sustainable organization representing each sector through the establishment of specialized associations concerned with organizing the sector internally and studying its needs and expected growth opportunities.
- **Education Council Membership:** Effective partnership with other governmental or private entities, local and international, to plan economic growth of the education sector, meet its current and future needs, and ensure interaction in the development of education and training policies through partnership in the Council of Education to develop the general framework for school education strategies and higher education in various academic, technical and professional styles.
- **Partnership in the Boards of Trustees for Colleges and Universities:** The private sector institutions represent 50%, with an equal share with the government sector. This partnership aims to guide the policies and programs of these institutions to meet the needs of the private sector and to provide qualified outputs that meet the requirements of the labor market. This was one of the main initiatives of the outputs of the economic diversification program (Tanfeedh).



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

One of the main challenges facing the national economy is the reliance on oil, whether in revenues or exports, which has always made it vulnerable to external shocks resulting from fluctuating oil prices in the global market. This requires reconsidering and modifying previous economic diversification policies and shifting the focus from traditional sectors (Construction and Services) to investing in promising economic sectors, and efforts to rehabilitate the national workforce which continue to face many challenges, including:

- Incompatibility between the outputs of higher education institutions in the Sultanate and the actual needs of the labor market.
- The preference of job seekers to work in the public sector, rather than the private.

Future Plans:

The Omani economy aims to build a solid base based on knowledge-based diversification and is based on strengthening the forward and backward linkages between economic sectors in order to expand the productive and export base, diversify trading partners, deepen investment in high value-added sectors, and enhancing the contribution of non-oil sectors to GDP. In accordance with the vision of **Oman 2040**, which aims to:

- Create a diverse, integrated, forward-looking, innovative and entrepreneurial competitive economy, with the contribution of oil sectors falling from 39% of GDP in 2017 to 7% at the end of the Vision in 2040.
- Ensure exports and imports of various commodities covering large geographical areas, which increase the ability to utilize Oman's international position and geographical location.
- Provide dynamic economic leadership with innovative competencies operating within an integrated institutional framework.
- Provide a regulatory and legislative environment characterized by innovation, flexibility, keeping abreast of developments and ensuring equal opportunities.
- Increase the Gross Domestic Product to 6% on average during the period of the Vision, so as to improve citizens' living standards.
- Provide decent work opportunities for all by qualifying the Omani workforce to work in the private sector. The share of the Omani labor force in the total number of jobs created in the private sector will increase to 42% in 2040, in comparison to 11.6% in 2016.
- Achieve a sustainable use and investment of resources and natural resources to ensure high added value.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG8

1-National Program for the Promotion of Economic Diversification “Tanfeedh”:

It is an executive program that stems from the 9th Five-Year Development Plan 2016-2020, which aims at contributing to the realization of the Sultanate's Vision towards economic diversification, by identifying the challenges and difficulties faced by government, private and civil authorities in achieving the objectives of the 9th Five-Year Development Plan.

“Tanfeedh” mechanisms include defining responsibilities, resources and timetables for implementation, developing clear criteria and indicators for measuring performance, producing periodic reports on the implementation of initiatives and projects, while ensuring that all segments of society are aware of the various steps of the program.

The program adopts a systematic work plan that collects and analyzes data and information, categorizes the challenges and constraints of sector growth, develops solutions to address them, identifies who is responsible for implementation and project management, and monitors and evaluates key performance indicators.

The first phase of the program encompassed three sectors of economic diversification included in the 9th Five-Year Development Plan (Tourism, Transformative Industries and Logistics), as well as two empowering support sectors (Labor Market and Employment, Finance and Innovative Finance). This phase included the holding of intensive labs (workshops), with the participation

of government and private sectors concerned with economic diversification, as well as institutions, academic bodies, civil society organizations and youth.

The “Tanfeedh” program aims at contributing to the advancement of economic growth through economic diversification, enhancing the growth of non-oil sectors in GDP and increasing the chances of employment of the national workforce. This intersects with the SDG8.

The program was implemented through holding “labs” over several stages, all of which were implemented in Muscat Governorate. However, the outputs of these workshops, which included a range of initiatives and development projects, will cover all the administrative governorates of the Sultanate through the regional distribution of these initiatives and projects. Citizens and residents will benefit from the results of the implementation of these projects.

The principle of community engagement has also enabled the participation of all sectors of society from various governmental bodies, the private sector, civil society organizations and academic institutions from different governorates of the Sultanate, as well as local and international experts in the 6-day extended discussions; an open exhibition of the national community was held, in which the outputs and results of the “labs” were presented.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG8

2-National Youth Commission:

Young people in the (18-29) age group represent 46% of the total population, and despite the efforts made by young people of both genders to contribute to the process of comprehensive economic and social development from the premise that young people are the nation's pillar and promising future, the efforts were not sufficiently pronounced, they were not unified and were not official. Also, they did not focus on the primary and secondary issues of Omani youth, which are intended to be delivered to government agencies.

The establishment of the National Youth Commission under Royal Decree No. (17/2011) to create an entity that embraces

these efforts and initiatives for the comprehensive development of Omani youth, that would ensure the achievement of effective results that create constructive transformations in personalities, abilities and values and ensure access to Omani youth of both genders, covering all the Sultanate's governorates.

The Commission contributed to the development of strategic programs, including programs and activities based on the philosophy of sustainability by providing youth with skills and expertise and mobilizing youth awareness to contribute to building their capacities and communities, as reflected at the national level.

Examples of Sustainable Projects of the National Committee for Youth:

Name of Project	Sustainability Mechanism
Training of Youth Initiatives (Capacity Building)	Qualifying a national team to train the youth initiatives and build a pilot guide for initiatives, establishing initiatives and preparing them for more sustainable community activities.
Training Job Seekers	Giving job seekers experiences that prepare them for the job market later, and push institutions to employ them through the marketing of their expertise and skills.
Youth and Healthy Life	To create a base of peer education teams to raise awareness on health issues.
The Young Researcher ('Istiktab')	The production of scientific studies in the youth sector, which is one of the basic references of Omani youth studies, and the formation of a base of young researchers.
Industry Readers / Support for Youth Publications (Young Author)	Supporting young people in writing, publishing their works in bookstores in the Sultanate, establishing and supporting libraries, rehabilitating library workers, and starting book clubs in universities and colleges.
Documentation of Oral History ('Yash'hadoon' i.e. They Witness)	To create a base of young researchers in oral history and intangible cultural heritage.

3-Decent Work Country Program

To achieve the aspirations of citizens and residents to obtain jobs, fair wages, and enjoy all rights and privileges, freedom of expression, family stability, personal development, social justice, gender equality, and the commitment of the Sultanate to international labor standards and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization 2008.

The Sultanate, represented by the three production parties (Ministry of Manpower, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Oman Workers Trade Unions) signed the memorandum of understanding with the International Labor Organization

(ILO) in 2011 to implement the Decent Work Country Program, and was renewed respectively in 2014 and 2017 for two years. The program has three priorities: to promote the integration of national forces into the economy, to ensure the effectiveness of social dialogue in accordance with international labor standards, and to uphold social protection.

The number of beneficiaries of the Decent Work Program of all social groups reached 930 participants, through the implementation of 27 programs in the period between 2011 and 2018. Two studies were carried out in the same area.

Objectives of the Decent Work Program



Sustainable Development Goals

09



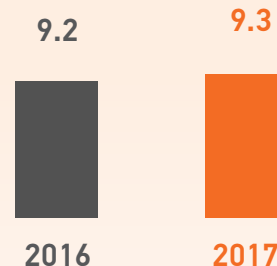
Industry,
Innovation
and
Infrastructure

Key Messages:

SDG9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

- Establishing an integrated national innovation system in which national policies are interlinked with other components of the system, from infrastructure, research and development, technology transfer, manufacturing, production, to digital and information readiness.
- The availability of a strong global quality and trust infrastructure that has achieved a high level of regional and international competitiveness in the field of land, sea and air transportation, logistics, communications, the introduction of modern technology, and the development of scientific research and innovation in transportation and logistics.
- Transformative Industries is one of the most promising sectors in the Sultanate. It has been included in the implementation program of Oman's integrated economy, which aims at diversifying sources of income. This sector has the potential to develop the national economy.

The added value of the transformative industry as a percentage of GDP at fixed prices in 2016 and 2017:



The Sultanate in the field of cyber security readiness





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG9

The Sultanate has translated the SDG9 through the establishment of an integrated national innovation system in which national policies are interlinked with other components of infrastructure, research and development, technology transfer, manufacturing, production, and digital and cyber readiness. The Sultanate has taken strong steps in this regard. It has established a strong infrastructure of global quality and confidence which has in turn achieved a high level of regional and international competitiveness in the field of land, sea and air transport, logistics, communications, the introduction of modern technology and the development of scientific research and innovation in transport and logistics. In terms of mass manufacturing, the manufacturing sector is one of the most promising sectors in the Sultanate. The sector is part of Oman's integrated economy program, which aims to diversify sources of income. This sector has potential for the development of the national economy.

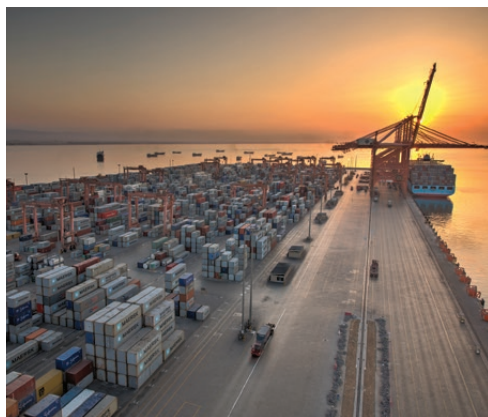
Digital readiness and the telecommunications sector in the Sultanate have achieved remarkable achievements at national, regional and international levels through several initiatives, such as the Government Cloud, the Unified Government Network, the National Data Center, the National Center for Electronic Certification, the SAS Virtual Reality Center, the SAS Business Center, the SAS Smart Phone Application Development Center, the National Initiative for Free and Open Source Software, the National Computer

Initiative, and the National Center for Information Safety. As a result of these efforts, the Sultanate has been able to win many regional and international awards in the field of e-government specifically, and in various fields of ICT in general.

The road network in the Sultanate has witnessed continuous growth through the implementation of its main and secondary roads and its efficiency through double roads and the construction of overpasses; Traffic Safety is of great importance during road design and implementation. Rural areas are also linked to urban centers by expanding the network of dirt roads and paved roads, which achieves the social objectives of these roads i.e. connecting villages with towns and cities. The ports of Oman (Sohar, Duqm and Salalah) registered a clear growth in the volume of general cargo and the number of handling containers. These ports were equipped with the latest technologies in structure and infrastructure, including remote controlled giant cranes that have the ability to handle the largest container ships, all of which will increase the competitiveness of Oman's ports and attract international shipping traffic.

The Sultanate is also very proud of the inauguration of Muscat International Airport in November 2018, which is a quality addition to the civil aviation sector. It is considered one of the most advanced airports in the world. It will accommodate 20 million passengers at the opening, bringing this figure to

Oman, a regional logistics hub



56 million passengers in the later stages; In addition to Salalah International Airport which is considered the second largest airport in the Sultanate, followed by Duqm Airport, which contributes to the promotion of the free economic zone of Duqm by facilitating the movement of investors.

As for the logistics sector, through the ASYAD holding group, the Sultanate was able to become a regional logistics hub. The Oman Logistics Center has been able to make a qualitative leap in completion of applications systems that govern the inspection and financing of the trans-border shipping market, ports, airports and the entire supply chain, analysis, identification and monitoring of investment opportunities by sector or where the logistics sector in the Sultanate can attract them, use of the best technologies as a competitive tool, and enhance transport technology and logistics. In addition to working to provide the national cadres and build the capacities required by the logistics sector by stages of growth, which in turn led to the selection of the Sultanate to host the IRU (International Road Transport Union) World Congress 2018.

The National Industrial Strategy 2040 (Industry for Community Welfare) is consistent with the Oman 2040 Vision, which focuses on the skills of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and its inclusion in various industrial sectors in the Sultanate, including automation to achieve economic diversification. The National Industrial Strategy is integrated with the integrated infrastructure to take advantage of the logistics potential in attracting foreign direct investment in promising economic sectors, in addition to empowering small and medium enterprises and encouraging entrepreneurship among Omani youth.

The Sultanate has implemented **the one-stop system, "Invest Easy"**, as well as the "Bayan" (Customs Single Window) system, which links all concerned parties with customs procedures, all to encourage local, regional and international investments. The Sultanate also reviewed the foreign direct investment law, provisions of credits, loans and tax incentives to encourage investments within the Sultanate.

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said has established an inspiring vision to build an integrated national system of scientific research and innovation to support development and progress and to ensure the continued welfare and prosperity of the Omani people for present and future generations in Oman through the Scientific Research Council established in 2005.

Since its inception in 2005, the Scientific Research Council has contributed to building and developing an integrated system of innovation that responds to local requirements and international trends, promotes harmony and social peace, leads to greater innovation and excellence, and enhances the Sultanate's ability to innovate and create new products, processes and services that support the development

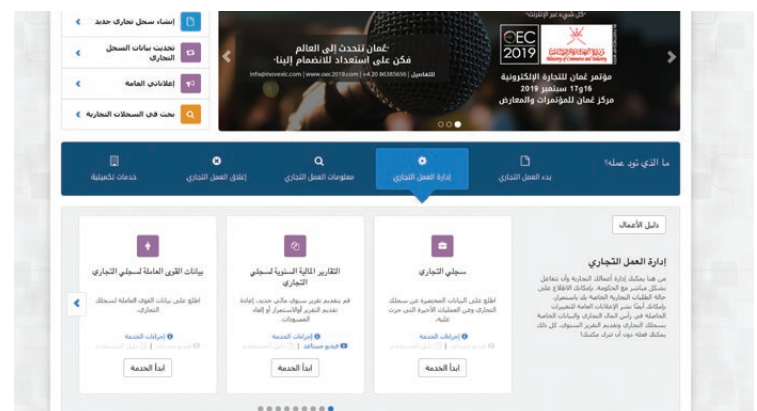
of the economy, and contribute to the building of social well-being and prosperity across the various lifestyles of today and future generations. This system is an active network of programs and initiatives supported by a solid framework of facilities and infrastructure designed to the highest and most modern standards, as well as a coherent package of academic, social and industrial Public and Private Partnerships. In addition to efforts to support the national strategy for scientific research, capacity-building and creating an attractive environment to open wider horizons of knowledge, the Sultanate has employed technology to achieve sustainable development and has implemented many projects, initiatives, plans, and legislation.

1-Oman Digital Strategy:

This strategy is one of the most important steps to transform the Sultanate of Oman into a sustainable knowledge society by activating ICTs to enhance e-government services, enrich the business sector, and empower individuals to digitize. The strategy focused on six main axes that are integrated to implement Oman's Digital Vision through a set of key objectives including initiatives and projects to support the country's drive towards a knowledge-based economy.

As part of the implementation of the Digital Oman Strategy, several projects and initiatives have been implemented, including:

- **Community Development and Empowerment:** Through the implementation of several basic and specialized training programs, in addition to the computer distribution initiative, with an Internet modem.
- **The infrastructure of the new generation:** through the provision of infrastructure in information technology to help government and private institutions to provide high quality services in line with global development, through a number of projects and achievements,





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG9

including; the establishment of e-payment gateway, the national data center, the Oman Governmental Network, the Innovation and Support Center, the provision of electronic certification, the electronic submission of tenders (e-Tendering), and everything related to confidence-building and information security.

- **E-government and smart services:** through the implementation of the digital transformation plan, which included provision of specialized consultancy in the field of documentation and development of services, re-engineering processes and simplified procedures.
- **Development of ICT industry:** The following projects and initiatives were implemented:
 1. SAS Business Center: It aims at incubating emerging Omani institutions in the IT sector. Since its establishment, SAS has supported 58 companies and provided 350 jobs to Omanis.
 2. SAS Center for Virtual Reality, launched in 2014, is a regional center that provides infrastructure for the development of virtual reality projects and multimedia content for the local and regional market, as well as its role in the rehabilitation of Omani youth in the field of entrepreneurship. Its achievements include: providing 758 training opportunities, and the implementation of 10 projects specializing in Virtual Reality.
 3. The SAS Center for Mobile Applications Development, which was inaugurated in 2016, and contributed to the provision of more than 900 training opportunities for Omanis, and the development of more than 210 applications for smart phones.
 4. The National Initiative for Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), launched in March 2010, helped train 2,700 trainees, in collaboration with 6 educational institutions, organized more than 100 workshops and 3 specialized FOSS conferences for educational subjects.
- **Governance and the development of standards and policies:** through the development and standardization of standards and technical infrastructure and unification in government institutions. In addition to issuing the necessary laws to support a knowledgeable society.

Information Security and Cyber Security: through the establishment of the National Center for Cyber Security (CERT), which contributed to securing more than 400 government networks, addressing more than 800 million cyber-attacks on government networks, the discovery of more than 2 million viruses and malicious software, more than 32 thousand spywares, and address more than 730 million cyber-attacks online.

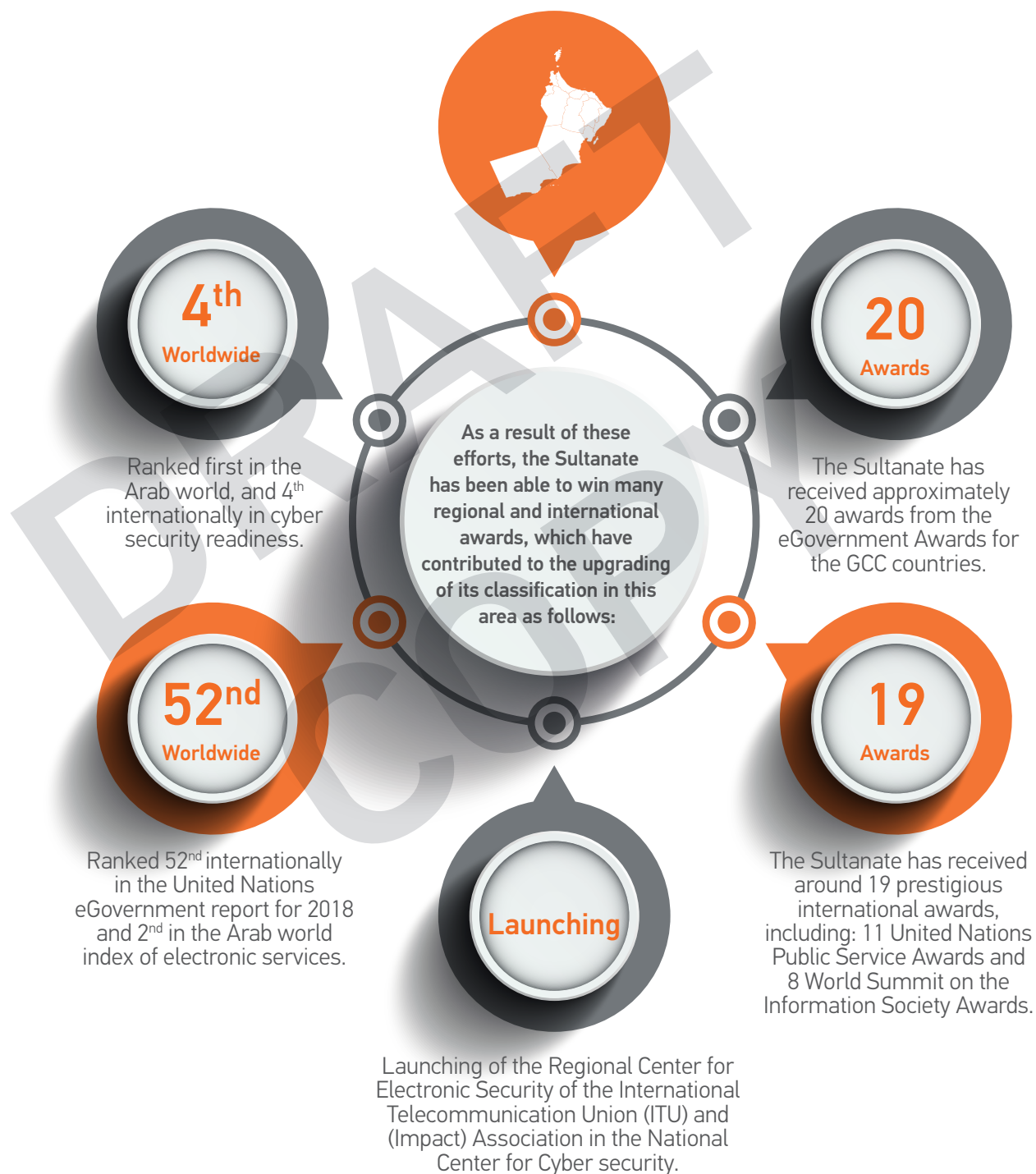
The Sultanate is ranked as one of the top ten countries in the world and the first in the Middle East and North Africa region of the G3ict's Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index (DARE Index), a global ICT initiative aimed at measuring the digital accessibility of people with disabilities.

- **The National Digital Certification Center** was established in 2013 with the aim of providing confidence in e-transactions, providing unified access to all e-government services and providing an electronic signature service. It achieved the following until February 2019: Issuing more than 15.7 million electronic certificates on ID cards, issuing 110,822 certificates for mobile electronic services, 14.2 million electronic transactions using electronic authentication on ID cards, 1.7 million electronic transactions using electronic certification in mobile phones, and 65 electronicsystems for various electronic authentication services in 36 governmental and private institutions. In addition, 4 licenses were issued to the authorities for registering electronic certificates.

• **The e-payment gateway:** This was launched in 2008 to enable public and private sector institutions to collect fees and payments electronically and to help citizens to make payments easily and safely, benefiting from the electronic payment service through this portal are 104 institutions, during which have completed more than 450 million application.

2-National Broadband Strategy:

The Cabinet approved this strategy recently to provide high-speed Internet access; it is an ambitious yet balanced strategy. The Sultanate has been able to keep abreast of global developments in the provision and use of broadband on the one hand and support market forces and investments by broadband operators and not replace them on the other.





Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The most important challenges facing the Sultanate in its pursuit of the SDG9 in the effects of the Fourth Industrial Revolution are the rapid changes in the employment system and the structure of the labor market. The geographical environment of Oman is vast and the terrain poses a challenge for the easy access of digital services. Research and Development (R&D) expenditure in the Sultanate is still modest, representing only 0.24% of the GDP, and the research capacity is modest as well. The total number of full-time researchers is 1,131 researchers in 2017.

Future Plans:

In response to previous challenges, the Sultanate's government adopted an **ambitious national vision** (i.e. Oman 2040), which was built in accordance with a broad societal consensus, accompanied by a coherent national system of innovation, a solid and integrated infrastructure, political and security stability to attract foreign direct investments (FDIs), and internationally reliable to save the huge data that passes through the territory of the Sultanate.

The Government is also working on establishing a research and development fund in partnership between the government and the private sector to invest in R&D and short- and long-term innovation. The Scientific Research Council launched the National Prize for Scientific Research to enhance research and build capacity.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG9

1-Oman Technology Fund

The fund aims to place Oman on the map of economy knowledge pioneers in the Middle East by investing in emerging technology institutions in the Sultanate and the region. The nature of the work of the Oman Technology Fund focuses on the identification of pioneering ideas in the technical and technological sector and entrepreneurs who have ideas or projects with high potential for growth in this sector, and in line with the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the Fund has three investment programs. Investment in the early stage of ideas under the name of “Takween IT”, the acceleration phase “Wadi Accelerator”, and the growth phase called “Jusoor”. The fund aims to become a center of technological innovation in the region and make Oman the preferred destination for local entrepreneurs and international organizations.

With Oman Technology Fund and its programs, the Sultanate has jumped to the 10th place in the ArabNet index report, the region's leading technology investment index, among 14 Arab countries in 2016-2017, reaching unprecedented growth by 1,400%.

The report attributed this leap to investments in emerging technology companies in Oman and the Middle East. The Fund invested in 15 companies and technical projects in 2017.

For 2018, the total number of companies invested through the three funds was 53 companies (31 companies belonging to the “Takween” program, 17 from the “Wadi Accelerator” program and 5 from the “Jusoor” program).

2-institute of Advanced Technology Integration

It is one of the programs and initiatives of the Research Council in the Sultanate to build and develop an integrated system of innovation that responds to local requirements and global trends, promotes harmony and social peace, leads to greater innovation and excellence and enhances the Sultanate's ability to innovate and create new products, processes and services that support the development of the local economy, economic diversity and contribute to building social well-being and prosperity across

the various lifestyles of today and future generations. The Institute of Advanced Technology Integration was established as a platform to deepen cooperation and partnership in the areas of sustainable research and development at various levels through the implementation of three research projects, several operational experiments of the self-driving water probes in cooperation with the German Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research.



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG9

3-Ejad e-platform

The Sultanate launched the “Ejad” project as a “National Platform” which seeks to integrate the three sectors of society (Government, Industry and Academia) in the fields of research and development, innovation and knowledge and technology outputs, with the aim of achieving economic diversification and the desired transformation towards a knowledge-based economy with the Oman 2040 Vision.

The “Ejad” platform aims to be the link between cooperation in R&D, innovation, knowledge and technology outcomes, and even more, to lead change to achieve real partnership between the relevant sectors of government, private sector institutions operating in diverse industrial and economic sectors, in addition

to the academic sectors, researchers and innovators - to achieve economic diversification and the desired transformation towards a knowledge-based economy.

In order to exploit the capacities and experience gained in the energy sector, it was decided to choose the energy sector as the starting point for this activity and build on it to reach out to the other sectors of national importance. The most prominent feature of the “Ejad” is the cooperative leadership of the project by a joint team that includes the private sector. The project is witnessing a positive interaction from various stakeholders to make it one of the pillars that can be relied upon to achieve the plans and sustainable development goals of the Sultanate.

4-Innovation Park Muscat

The Scientific Research Council has established the Innovation Park Muscat to provide an ideal environment for researchers, scientists, startups, small and medium-sized enterprises and multinational companies, and to support Oman’s economic and knowledge efforts in areas including energy, health services, water, environment, food products and biotechnology.

The Modeling Center of the Innovation Park helps to use the fruits of science and knowledge in the production of preliminary models of research and innovation ideas. These workshops form an integral part of the scientific regions for their role in the development and promotion of ideas until they reach their final

form in line with local and global market needs. In addition, the Innovation Park provides a range of land for the establishment of R&D centers and training for local and international invested companies. The Park recently signed a contract with “instOG” (a partnership between Schlumberger and Takatuf Oman) to establish a training and capacity building institute over 12,000 square meters, with a long-term contract of up to 25 years, renewable for a new or similar period. A contract was signed for the establishment of a research and development center in the field of heavy oil extraction, with Enhanced Oil Recovery LLC, covering an area of 3,000 square meters and using the latest technologies and advanced devices, in order to meet the needs of the oil and gas sectors.

5 - OLiban Company:



In 2013, the Oliban story began with the vision of two Omani doctors and their mission to find a national project based on the exploitation of natural resources in the Sultanate

and to maximize the added value of these resources by localizing production processes and producing a high-quality product with an Omani identity, yet with an international flair. The brand Oliban, the ancient name of previous civilizations, was chosen to employ frankincense for various health and cosmetic purposes.

We show a model of perseverance and earnestness for innovation based on national heritage, where the link between originality and modernity through scientific thinking resulting in research and exploration on the production of Omani frankincense from the frankincense tree, which has historically acquired great importance, equaling gold and silver, even to this day. This tree, widespread in Dhofar governorate, went from being just a beautiful tree producing aromatic frankincense, to having much higher abilities and benefits that make this product into a precious pharmaceutical and medical artifact, as proven by many studies in multiple research centers in the Sultanate and abroad. Thus, the company was able to benefit from the results of this research regarding the health effects of frankincense and was able to manufacture today's national luxury products. This achievement was made possible by the contribution of the Al-Raffd fund.

In 2016, a national institution established a partnership with the founders of the company after believing in their abilities to diversify the national economy and the economy based on innovation,

knowledge and support for Omani entrepreneurs. The company was established in partnership with the founders, which contributed to the acceleration of the development of about 21 products.

The company faces a number of challenges including:

- Research & Development Funding: the company is considered to be the first Omani company based on knowledge and research. The scientific research policies have not been clear on how to promote this company since its establishment, thus losing its competitive advantage and bearing the burden of commercial loans from the start.
- The absence of sustainable and non-traditional financing forced the founders to relinquish the majority stake in the company and lost the advantage in guiding the company in accordance with the vision and mission that was set to improve the industry based on natural raw materials and maximize the added value of industries based on local natural raw materials.



Sustainable Development Goals

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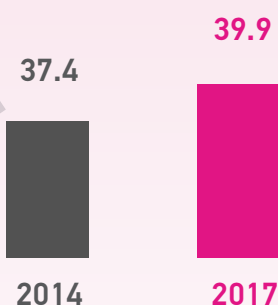
Reducing
Inequalities

Key Messages:

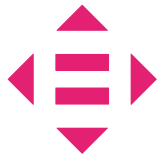
SDG10: Reducing Inequality Within and Between Countries

- Article 17 of the Statute of the State (Constitution) specifies that “all citizens are equal in public rights and duties, and shall not be discriminated against by reason of race, origin, color, language, religion, creed, domicile or social status”.
- The government is working to provide basic services for all and promote equality and non-discrimination, and to provide free health and education services to all citizens at the level of the governorates and provinces of the Sultanate.
- The Sultanate has linked SDG10 to the Strategic Directions of the Oman 2040 Vision, where the Strategic Direction of “A Decent and Sustainable Life for All” under the national priority “Well-Being and Social Protection” emphasized that social justice is a precursor to having cohesive, strong and peaceful societies. It is attained by providing decent livelihood, sustaining the quality of social welfare services such as health and education, and the provision of social safety nets to ensure a viable living for present and future generations.

Share of Labor in the Gross Product, including wages and social protection payments between 2014 and 2017.



SDG10: Reducing Inequalities



Oman on the way to achieve the Goal's Targets

Since the beginning of the blessed Renaissance in 1970, the Sultanate has endeavored to bring about developmental, economic and social changes in order to improve the status and standard of living of the people in Oman. The political will, and those involved in the process of economic and social development, have been complemented by efforts to promote the social integration of all segments of society.

Therefore, the Sultanate's efforts have been directed towards the adoption of economic, health, educational, social, cultural and other policies, measures, and services to achieve social justice, equality among the different sectors of society and respect for the rights of individuals regardless of age, gender, race or creed.

With the transition to a developmental and rights approach, the Sultanate adopted the Statute of the State (Constitution) in 1996, which stipulates in article 17 that "all citizens are equal in public rights and duties, and not discriminated against by reason of race, color, language, religion, sect, origin or social status".

The Sultanate also acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1996 and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2005 and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008.

National legislations, laws, regulations, strategies and programs have been harmonized in line with the spirit of international conventions that the Sultanate has signed and ratified, such as the Children's Act of 2013 and the Disabled Persons Welfare and Rehabilitation Act of 2008. The categories of women, children, the elderly, persons with limited income and persons with disabilities received equal rights with the rest of society and, possibly, positive discrimination, to achieve equity by taking account of the case data when targeting. The adoption of this approach has helped to achieve the social integration in the development process.

Children First

As a result of the Sultanate's keenness to involve Omani children in building and defining their future for sustainable development and thus living in a sustainable world, the Children's Association, in collaboration with UNICEF, works to achieve the children's aspirations to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This

The Statute of the State recognizes that "all citizens are equal and equal in public rights and duties, and shall not be discriminated against by reason of race, color, language, religion, sect, origin or social status".



was done through taking into consideration the visions, ambitions and dreams of children, which focused on: linking children to decision makers, integrating SDGs into school curricula, enhancing the contribution of CSIs and CSOs in raising awareness of the objectives of the SDG 2030 among children, and to strengthen the partnership between the companies and the private sector through community responsibility to support the role of children's initiatives relative to SDG 2030.

Thus, the Sultanate is committed to ensuring that all sectors of society enjoy equality by empowering and promoting social and economic integration, and by making equality a principle for the establishment of social peace, as well as the promotion and dissemination of the values of peace. This is an essential goal of the Sultanate not only at the local level, but also at regional and international levels.

The Government has also worked, through its development plans, to promote equality and non-discrimination and to provide basic health and education services free of charge to all citizens, and for token charge for residents at the level of various governorates and provinces of the Sultanate. Efforts in the first three decades of the Renaissance (1970-2000) focused on the provision of basic infrastructure, with the education sector receiving the highest priority, since it is considered the basis of community development and its very engine. The establishment of schools and technical institutes in different governorates, together with the promotion of literacy programs, helped rehabilitate many national cadres that contributed to the building of society.

The umbrella of social protection undoubtedly plays a key role in achieving social integration. The combination of economic growth and social integration is largely the responsibility of social sectors, such as education and health, for social protection to be the link between these sectors and the services they provide.

The Sultanate also works diligently and continuously to develop the components of the social protection system, namely public services, education services, health, housing, social security, pension funds and social safety net programs; cash and in-kind assistance and empowerment programs; training, support and establishment of small enterprises and government support programs for basic food commodities, support for medicines, public and basic services,

protection programs against abuse, as well as trafficking and violence against women and children, etc.

Social protection programs seek to achieve the principles of inclusion, equity, empowerment and protection in the society, which include various categories such as widows, orphans, divorcees, abandoned families, families of prisoners and the elderly (including persons with disabilities).

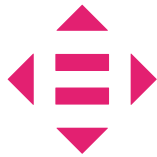
Safety nets provide monthly pensions under the Social Security Act, along with a wide range of assistance under the Social Assistance Regulations, and Social Housing Programs that include housing construction, housing assistance and loans, and special support programs, such as fuel cards or "fuel subsidies".

The Sultanate Provides Equality between Citizens and Expatriates

The laws and regulations of the Sultanate do not discriminate between citizens and expatriates, whereas everyone has access to basic public services, the right to education and access to health services, and the right to educate their children in their own language.

The regulation on the conditions and procedures for the establishment of nursery schools regulates the right of communities in the Sultanate to establish nurseries to serve the children of Arab and foreign communities. This is the case with kindergartens and elementary and secondary education. The law and administrative procedures guarantee the right of the expatriate to practice his religious rites and to build places of worship. The Civil Associations Law issued by the Royal Decree (14/2000) guaranteed the right of communities and expatriates to establish their own social and cultural clubs.

Technology is considered a major tool of human development. The survey "measuring access and use of ICT" implemented in 2019 (for individuals of 15 years of age and older) indicates that Internet use is at 90.9% (91.3% for Omanis and 90.4% for expatriates). This technology is available to both women and men, and there are no gender restrictions on the right to own technology in the Sultanate. Oman has also established the Oman Technology Fund and the SAS Business Center for Oman's emerging IT businesses.



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The main challenges in this area are the poor coordination and lack of real partnership between government agencies, the private sector and NGOs in services related to persons with disabilities. Financial resources are challenged to meet the growing needs of people with disabilities in the future, in addition to the inadequacy of qualified human resources in various areas of rehabilitation.

Future Plans:

The Omani Government has focused on linking SDG10 with the Strategic Directions of the Oman 2040 Vision. The strategic direction of “A Decent and Sustainable Life for All” under the national priority “Well-Being and Social Protection” focused on the cohesion and strength of societies and achieving social peace, (2016-2025), in which the principle of social integration was one of the fundamental pillars of the strategy.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG10

1-The Mawrid Program, for Those Under the Social Security Law:

In order to enable young men and women to establish and develop small and medium enterprises.

Al-Raffd Fund was established in 2013, as the provider of the first package of financing programs. Four financing programs (Mawrid, Taassees, Riyada and Taaziz) were first developed, taking into account the needs of the target groups of the Fund, i.e. job seekers, graduates of academic and vocational institutions, entrepreneurs of the sector, business men and women, those under the Social Security Law, rural women, artisans and professionals.

These programs included flexible procedures and conditions that were carefully studied in accordance with IFRS.

The “Mawrid” project is aimed at encouraging those under the Social Security Law to establish or support their own projects. Through the provision of loans up to OMR 10,000 without administrative and technical fees, with a grace period of 12 months and a repayment period of 7 years, after the grace period.

The number of projects financed amounted to 23 projects at a cost of OMR 165,516.

2-Mobile Unit for Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Disabilities:

The Ministry of Social Development, through the Social Development Department, surveyed the situation of persons with disabilities. The survey showed that there is a large number of cases that require rehabilitation services and do not receive them, as a result of the absence of a public center for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in the governorate of Duqm, and given the long distance from the Al-Wafa Center for the rehabilitation of disabled children in Mahout. Based on the principle of community partnership and in support

of persons with disabilities, the Duqm Refinery Company, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, provided and equipped a mobile unit in the Duqm and Mahout governorates to provide rehabilitation services for 80 cases of persons with disabilities.

The location of the unit was chosen to be in the health centers in the governorates of Duqm and Mahout to alleviate the financial and psychological burden on families living in places far from rehabilitation centers.

Sustainable Development Goals

11



Sustainable Cities and Communities

Key Messages:

SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

- The boom in the housing sector has been one of the most important features of the Sultanate's development over the last four decades. The government has played a key role in providing necessary land for the housing of its citizens. A significant part of public expenditure has been allocated to the development of facilities throughout the Sultanate aiming to provide the citizens with the necessary funding that would enable them to build their places of residence.
- The National Strategy for Urban Development defines the objectives of urban development as follows: economic growth and diversification, cities and livable communities that preserve Omani identity, sustainable use of resources, food security and water resources, environmental protection and adaptation to climate change impacts, a transportation system and sustainable infrastructure.



SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG11

Despite many planning challenges, well-managed cities and other human settlements can be incubators of innovation and creativity and are key drivers of sustainable development.

SDG11 calls for ensuring universal access to safe and affordable basic housing and services, slum upgrading and sustainable transport systems, as well as green and public spaces for all.

As population growth expands at the expense of available land, cities expand beyond their formal administrative boundaries, and unplanned urbanization undermines other elements of sustainable development. In addition, solid waste management and air pollution are often problematic in densely populated areas.

One of the most important features of the Sultanate's development over the past four decades has been the prosperous housing sector as an important sector not only in the course of economic development, but also as a cornerstone of social development.

Hence, the housing policy came to reflect the importance of this sector. The Sultanate has made every effort to provide the necessary land for the housing of citizens. A significant part of the public expenditure has been allocated to the development of public facilities throughout the country and the necessary funding to enable citizens to build their homes.

The long-term development strategy (Oman Economic Vision 2020) has resulted in the emergence of new economic centers in the Sultanate outside Muscat, i.e. Salalah, Sohar, and Duqm. They work together to achieve balanced regional development in the country, to represent urban centers working to spread development in the surrounding areas.

The law guarantees every citizen the right to own a piece of residential land

The Sultanate has made many achievements in the provision of housing services. Under the law, every citizen has the right to own a residential plot of land under specific conditions. The government also builds housing units for low-income residents, and provides housing assistance and housing loans.

The Sultanate has reached a new stage in housing services, namely with the project "Integrated Residential Neighborhoods", which supports existing housing policies in the Sultanate, such as the search for suitable alternatives to provide adequate housing for citizens eligible for residential land allocations. Thus, this project is considered a first-of-its-kind, as it is based on PPP, and was assigned to a real estate company for development according to the best standards. It will be surrounded by an integrated system of infrastructure services as well as social and services facilities available for citizens.

The project aims at promoting the ownership of homes in the Sultanate by developing quality housing in integrated neighborhoods at reasonable prices, providing new alternatives to reduce the volume of applications of citizens entitled to residential lands under the Land Law and its annexes, and stimulating the economy through the involvement of the private sector.

Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The rapid pace of economic and social development, the increase in population growth, and the increasing demand for land in Oman have led to many urban challenges. These include unregulated urbanization and too little importance to “locally made” products. Furthermore, the rare use of High Occupancy Vehicles led to traffic jams, and increased the need for more road networks.

Future Plans:

National Strategy for Urban Development:

This is a key tool for achieving many of the SDGs. It aims mainly to develop a general framework for guiding the long-term urban development (20 years) in various governorates of the Sultanate, and the preparation of integrated areas of land use at national and governorate levels to meet the requirements of comprehensive and sustainable development, and all economic and social sectors, and integrates the strategy with the objectives of Oman's Future Vision 2040. According to this strategy, the strategic objectives of urban development have been defined as follows: Economic growth and diversification, viable cities and communities that preserve Omani identity, sustainable use of resources, food security and water resources, environmental protection and adaptation to the impacts of climate change, intelligent transportation and sustainable infrastructure.

SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG11

1-Smart City Platform:

The Smart City Platform was established in early 2017 as the first strategic city initiative for Smart Cities in the Research Council. The project was initiated in partnership with the Supreme Council for Planning, Muscat Municipality and the Information Technology Authority, with funding from Oman Telecommunications Company (Omantel), Omani Tourism Development Company (Omran) and Nama Group. The platform's work is focused on three main tasks in smart city solutions. The first task is awareness-raising and capacity-building. The second task focuses on research and innovation in smart city projects. And the third task is to engage stakeholders to provide smart solutions.

In a short amount of time, the platform was able to achieve many goals and projects and provide scientific and practical advice to governmental and private bodies in the Sultanate. In the awareness and capacity-

building sector, the executive team of the platform has presented many awareness lectures and workshops at many local and international events and conferences, most important of which was the participation in the "Smart Asia" conference and exhibition in the Republic of China (Taiwan), Smart Cities Summit at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Center and COMEX 2018.

The platform also launched the "Platform Ambassadors" initiative to create knowledge communities around the Sultanate's governorates and provinces to spread knowledge and awareness on various aspects of the Smart Cities sector and its various solutions, attracting more than 300 ambassadors from various governorates.

In the research and innovation sector, the platform invited researchers and innovators to present research and innovation proposals for the





Technology ... Development ... Sustainability

Smart City Platform

most important challenges of the cities in the Sultanate, and was able to attract more than 150 research proposals divided into two parts, namely proposals aimed at coming up with concrete innovations, and others aimed at producing research results all in the area of smart cities and solutions. All these proposals were sorted out and six were selected, 4 of them in innovation and 2 in theoretical research with a total value of over OMR 30,000. The platform also collaborated with private entities to organize and manage Hackathon activities in Muttrah and Sohar which aimed to invite various innovators, programmers and those interested in smart solutions to reflect on the challenges of these debtors and to attempt to come up with smart ideas and solutions and implement them in a period not exceeding 3 days. These activities attracted more than 1,500 participants through more than 500 selected teams. Only 20 teams at each event were able to offer smart solutions in sectors such as tourism, heritage, environment, weather, logistics and transportation.

In the Stakeholder Engagement Sector, the Executive Platform Team provided professional and scientific advice to the Ministry of Environment, Climate Affairs and Al-Mouj Muscat. Consultations were provided to these entities after sitting with the parties and officials in the region and trying to link their projects, their work, their challenges with relevant parties and the desire to provide smart solutions. For example, integrated proposals have been made in the renewable energy sector of Al-Mouj Muscat, which includes residential owners, Omani companies operating in this sector, and other companies that employ modern technologies such as the Internet-of-things and the analysis of large data to reach solutions that serve all parties at the lowest possible cost. Environmental proposals were also presented to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs after a brainstorming workshop on the "Knowledge Café" methodology and the integration of the outputs of the workshop with the Sohar Hackaton outputs to provide easy and effective solutions.



Sustainable Development Goals

12



Responsible
Consumption
and
Production

Key Messages:

SDG12: Ensure Sustainable Patterns of Consumption and Production

- The Sultanate has adopted the goal of achieving a sustainable production pattern through the growing trend towards economic diversification as a strategic course. The 9th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) has incorporated sustainable consumption and production plans and targets into national policy priorities.
- Operational plans and programs to expand the use of renewable energy, introduce efficiency standards in new facilities and devices, generate energy through alternative sources of energy (clean coal, biofuels) and expand new desalination plants to increase the amount of desalinated water.
- The vision of Oman 2040 has given special priority to ensuring sustainable production and consumption patterns through the sustainable use and investment of natural resources and wealth to ensure high added value, providing infrastructure and advanced technology that is possible for all sectors and able to absorb new developments, achieving food and water security based on renewable resources and developing technologies, optimizing the utilization of the strategic location and biodiversity of the Sultanate, as well as providing an environmental awareness of the effective application of sustainable consumption and production rules.





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG12

Sustainable consumption and production patterns relate to the promotion of resource and energy efficiency, sustainability of infrastructure, access to basic services, decent and environmentally friendly jobs and improved quality of life for all. Sustainable production means value-added production with fewer resources, while sustainable consumption means greater efficiency and less waste of resources. This objective includes achieving sustainable management, efficient use of natural resources and reducing waste per capita.

The Diversification of the Economy is a Strategic Direction for the Sultanate

As mentioned in more than one article in this report, Oman adopts the goal of achieving a sustainable production pattern through the increasing trend towards economic diversification as a strategic direction. This means transforming the Omani economy from a single-based commodity to an economy that relies on different sources. The economic diversification policy of the Sultanate - like countries dependent on non-renewable resources, such as oil - is linked to wide positive changes in the structure of the national economy through the development of non-oil activities. To this end, the Omani economy is distinguished by its diverse natural resources.

The diversification policy, in addition to focusing on traditional sources of income, aims to focus on promising sectors in which the Sultanate has a clear comparative advantage. The diversification plan seeks to eliminate obstacles that limit the potential of promising sectors to diversify sources of growth. In order to achieve this strategic objective, the Sultanate's government is working to optimize the available natural resources and strategic location of the Sultanate near centers of growth in the global economy, while

recycling oil surpluses to finance infrastructure projects from ports, airports and major roads that enhance the Sultanate's logistical status.

The 9th Development Plan (2016-2020) has clearly incorporated sustainable consumption and production plans and targets into national policy priorities. In this context, the Government is promoting the principles of sustainability by reviewing, updating and implementing existing plans and programs such as biodiversity, marine life protection, protection of arable lands and the National Strategy for the Conservation of the Environment in coordination with relevant stakeholders. It also develops and implements plans and strategies in other areas that have not been developed, such as the National Strategy for the Management and Improvement of Protected Areas, the Energy and Water Efficiency Strategy, the upgrading of energy efficiency and facilities in industry in particular and the implementation of awareness programs focusing on energy and water efficiency in society in general.

The Sultanate has specific operational plans and programs to expand the use of renewable energy, introduce efficiency standards in new facilities and devices, and generate energy through alternative sources of energy.

The Sultanate is also launching various environmental awareness campaigns targeting all segments of society and decision-makers, supporting and developing incentives for clean production to reduce emissions, developing national policies and protocols for responding to emergencies and crises, with priority given to projects aimed at reducing the impacts of climatic conditions and floods, and to develop plans for the implementation of these projects by the competent authorities.

Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The continued dependence of the Omani economy on the oil sector is one of the main challenges to the sustainability of the pattern of production and economic growth in the Sultanate. Population growth, the multiplicity of waste and inefficiency in the management of available natural resources and the increasing urbanization are putting pressure on the levels of production and sustainable consumption in Oman. Waste management is another challenge because of its negative effects on the environment and public health.

Future Plans:

The Oman 2040 Vision attaches particular importance to ensuring sustainable production and consumption patterns, whereas it emphasized on the sustainable use and exploitation of natural resources and wealth to ensure high added value, as well as the provision of advanced infrastructure and technology for all sectors and to be able to absorb new developments, as well as food and water security based on renewable resources, advanced technologies, optimal utilization of the strategic location and biodiversity of the Sultanate, and the provision of environmental awareness for the effective application of sustainable consumption and production rules. The future plans of the Sultanate included the development of systems for sustainable waste management and the efficient and effective use of natural resources, affordable availability, community involvement in the application of waste minimization, recycling practices, and the revival of the Omani economy through improved resource productivity and damage reduction, in addition to protecting the Omani environment for present and future generations.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG12

Investment in Waste and Recycling it into an Economic Return:

Al-Amerat Landfill is the first sanitary, engineered landfill in Oman, which started in early 2011 and extends over an area of 9.6 ha. It consists of 5 cells with a total capacity of 10 million cubic meters of solid waste. Each cell has 16 columns to manage the leachate. All columns are connected to each other in order to facilitate the movement of the leachate into the pump. This project is part of the Government's initiatives to treat solid waste in a scientific and environmentally friendly manner. Being the first of its kind, Al-Amerat Lanfill is expected to be an example for future solid waste management projects in the country.

The "Waste to Energy to Water" plant was designed to treat approximately 2,200 tons of municipal solid waste per day from the waste collected in Muscat and the southern Batinah areas. The electricity generated from the plant was used to operate a

desalination plant, which generates about 75 million cubic meters of potable water from waste annually. Gas is the traditional fuel used to operate a desalination plant in the Sultanate of Oman. Thus, the production of water resulting from thermal treatment of waste helps reduce the Sultanate's dependence on gas for water production.

Biochemical treatment is intended to treat the remaining waste, which includes both mechanical and biological treatment, with the aim of reducing the environmental impact of the disposal of the remaining waste. This treatment combines the sorting facility and the biological treatment model, such as the process of composting or anaerobic digestion. It also fixates and separates unsuitable waste for recycling, extracts non-recyclable materials and produces waste-derived fuel for use in industrial applications.

Sustainable Development Goals

13



Climate
Action

Key Messages:

SDG13: Taking Urgent Action to Address Climate Change and its Impacts

- The Sultanate of Oman is one of the leading countries in dealing with all issues related to the environment and climate, and it is keen on supporting international solidarity to address the problem of climate change and its negative effects. In fact, the Sultanate has ratified the international conventions related to climate issues (the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendments).
- The Sultanate, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), has prepared the National Strategy for Adaptation and Mitigation of the Effects of Climate Change.
- The Sultanate, through the issuance of the regulations on ozone layer protection in November 2013 and its updates in December 2015, and other various measures, has managed to reduce the consumption rates of the most important ozone-depleting substances to zero, or to levels lower than those required in the Montreal Protocol in a short period.
- The Sultanate of Oman, like other countries in the world, faces many challenges related to climate change. To meet these challenges, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs was established and all international conventions related to climate issues were ratified.





Oman on the Road to Achieve the Goal's Targets

Oman is one of the first countries to make great efforts in all issues related to the environment and climate, and is keen on supporting international solidarity to address the problem of climate change and its negative effects. The Sultanate has contributed effectively to reducing the risks of global warming and the adverse effects of climate change. The Sultanate of Oman is not considered safe from global climate change, as its geographical location near the sea and oceans make it clearly vulnerable than any other country in the region. The Sultanate has ratified the international conventions on climate issues (the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendments) and actively participated in relevant meetings, studies and projects. It served on several international positions in the international environmental conventions mentioned, in addition to signing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in April 2016.

In addition to the national efforts to address the negative impacts of global warming and the challenges of climate change, the Sultanate, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), has implemented a project to prepare the National Strategy for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change in the Sultanate to achieve the following objectives: Development of an institutional and legislative framework; identification of programs, plans and actions for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts and risks of climate change; as well as training and capacity-building.

The first national communication was prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and Sultan Qaboos University. It is an important report containing data on vulnerability, risk, climate modeling and future climate predictions, Greenhouse gases and ways to mitigate their emissions. The Sultanate is currently preparing the second national communication of the Sultanate and the biennial update report, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and Sultan Qaboos University.

The Sultanate Encourages the Use of Renewable Energy Sources and Low-Carbon Technologies

This will contribute to the diversification of energy sources and the achievement of benefits for environmental, climatic and biogenic systems by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Legislative regulations and laws such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project approval list were issued in 2010 and amended in 2013 to encourage government agencies and private sector companies to benefit from the facilities available for the implementation of CDM projects under the umbrella of the Kyoto Protocol.

As part of the efforts of the Sultanate in this regard, the Sultanate organized the Renewable Energy Environment Forum in 2017, which aimed at: spreading the applications of renewable energies among different institutions, civil society organizations and individuals; spreading awareness of the importance and feasibility of renewable energy applications in mitigating the effects of climate change on institutions and organizations of civil society and individuals; identifying the Sultanate's efforts to meet the challenges of climate change and its effects; and finding the most important researches and studies in the field of renewable energies in the Sultanate.

The Sultanate is making efforts to adapt in many different areas, such as tropical cyclones, coastal erosion, rising sea levels, the fisheries , the marine environment, water scarcity and desertification, flood protection, energy security, and food security.

In order to strengthen the role of the Sultanate in the control of ozone-depleting substances and meet the requirements of compliance with the Montreal Protocol, the ozone layer protection regulation was issued in November 2013 and updated in December 2015. Through various measures, the Sultanate has managed to reduce the consumption rates of the most important ozone-depleting substances to levels lower than those required in the Montreal Protocol within a short period of time.

On the other hand, the Sultanate makes sure to participate, alongside countries from around the world, in the yearly observance

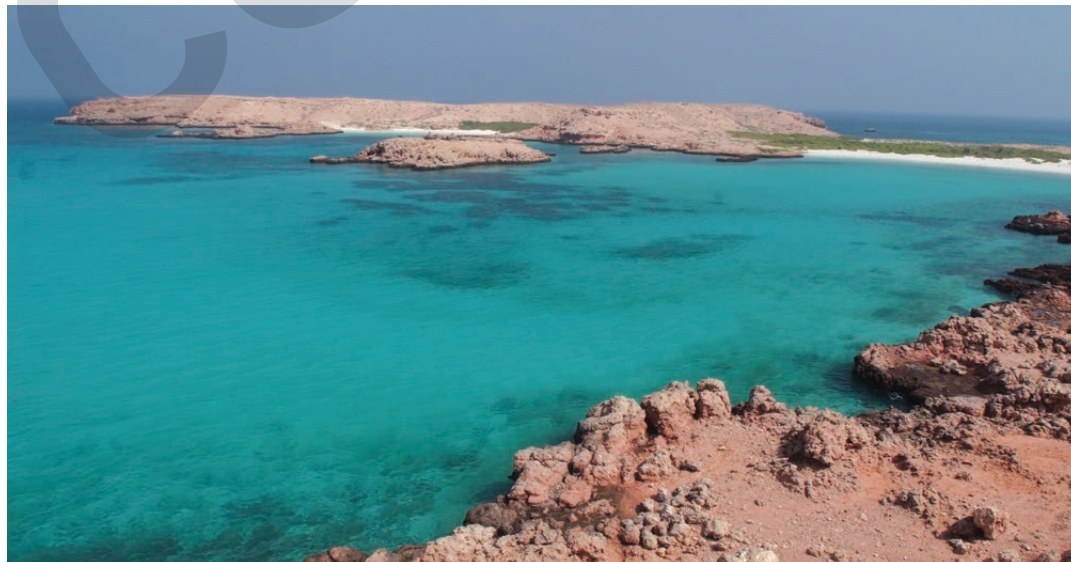
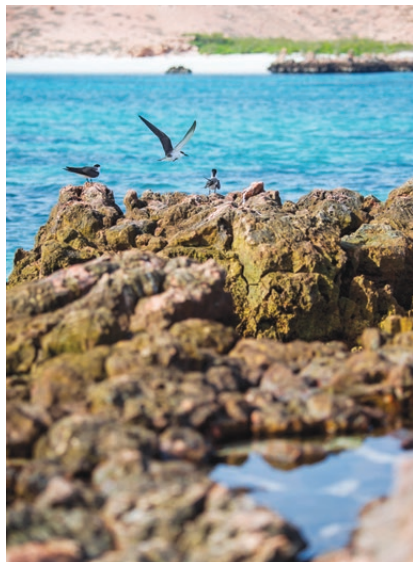
of Earth Hour, which plays an important role in instilling a culture of rationalization in the use of various energy sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs and all departments in the provinces and some government agencies and private sector companies, universities and colleges, civil society organizations and sports teams in the Sultanate.

The Sultanate is also keen on preparing legal regulations in the field of climate affairs. The most important of which are: The regulations of the Department of Climate Affairs under the Ministerial Decision No. 20/2016 issued on 29 March 2016; and the Regulations for the Approval of the CDM Project under the umbrella of the Kyoto Protocol (CDM- Projects) issued by Ministerial Decision No. 30/2010 on 21 August 2010 and updated by Ministerial Decision No. 53/2013, issued by Ministerial Resolution No. 107/2013 of 11 November 2013 and updated by Ministerial Resolution No. 67/2015 of 13 December 2015.

The Sultanate is also keen on cooperating with several regional and international environmental organizations in the field of climate affairs, including, but not limited to; the Intergovernmental Panel

on Climate Change (IPCC), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), League of Arab States (LAS), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Sultanate also worked to form specialized committees in the field of climate affairs.

The most important of which is the National Committee for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, which was set up by Ministerial Decision No. 121/2012 on 12 December 2012 with a view to reviewing and proposing national policies and strategies for the protection of the ozone layer to enable the Sultanate to meet its obligations to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The National Committee for Climate Change was established by Ministerial Decision No. (23/2016) of 14 April 2016 with the aim of contributing to the proposal and implementation of national policies and action plans to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change and those related to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.





Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

The Sultanate is affected by various climatic changes:

As its geographical location near the sea and the ocean makes it clearly more vulnerable than other countries in the region; the Sultanate is located within the high temperature zone, which is characterized by great variation between the upper and lower temperatures, especially during the summer, and the negative effects on various ecosystems, such as vegetation and biodiversity. The Sultanate suffers from low rainfall, drought and desertification, resulting in a reduction in agricultural production.

Future Plans:

The Sultanate continues to implement the **National Strategy for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change** to address the negative effects of global warming. The Sultanate is currently preparing the Sultanate's second national communication on vulnerability, risks, climate modeling, future climate outlooks and ways to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

The Sultanate has started implementation of the second phase of the **National Strategy for the Phase-Out of Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)** from 2016 to 2020, which aims to complement the efforts and procedures in place to meet the compliance requirements of the Montreal Protocol and to achieve the reduction in the consumption of HCFCs of 35% by January 2020 through the enforcement of legislation, training of technicians in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector, processing of vocational training centers, follow-up of the refrigerant recovery and recycling center, and awareness and extension campaigns as well as capacity-building.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG13

Conservation of the Ozone Layer:

As part of the Sultanate's interest in environmental issues and climate affairs and its continued support for these efforts, and its contribution with the international community in the protection of the ozone layer, the Sultanate acceded to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol in London and Copenhagen on 28 September 1998 under Royal Decree 73/98. It also ratified the Amendments of Montreal (1997) and of Beijing (1999) on 10/10/2004 under Royal Decree No. 106/2004. The Sultanate has been keen on playing its role in the protection of the ozone layer and on meeting the requirements of abiding by the Protocol for the phase-out of

ozone-depleting substances permanently, while avoiding the impact on economic development by allowing companies to encourage alternatives to ozone-depleting substances in their various projects.

The Sultanate has been successful in the protection of the ozone layer as it has pioneered the reduction of the consumption of the most important ozone-depleting substances, such as CFCs, halons and methyl bromide, where consumption rates have been reduced to zero or below the levels required by the Montreal Protocol in a short time.

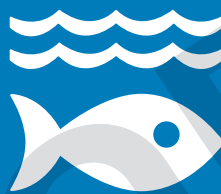


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Sustainable Development Goals

14



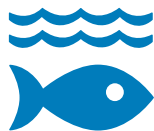
Life
Below
Water

Key Messages:

SDG14: Life Below Water

- The Sultanate shall protect the marine environment and prevent marine pollution of all kinds through the implementation of studies, the establishment of marine conservation areas, the enactment of legislations, the implementation of coastal zone management plans, the rehabilitation of degraded areas and the cultivation of mangroves in various coastal governorates of the Sultanate; in addition to campaigns to clean their environments, and the monitoring of turtles and marine mammals given their importance to the sustainability and balance of the marine environment.
- Oman is continuing its efforts to review and update environmental laws, legislations, and coastal zone management plans.
- An assessment of marine resources and the addition of new marine natural reserves are under way as well as the continued rehabilitation of the affected areas. The Sultanate will ensure further development of plans and requirements related to the marine environment and will implement proposed projects on the coast.
- The Government of the Sultanate is working on continuous coordination with all sides, bodies, sectors and environmental associations related to the marine environment to cooperate in order to preserve the marine environment, its resources and its vital diversity.





Oman on the Road to Achieve the Goal's Targets

The sustainable use and conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems and their biodiversity are essential to achieving the 2030 plan, particularly for Small Island Developing States. In Oman, the marine environment, with its beautiful coastline extending over 3165 km, is one of the most important economic, social and environmental factors of the Sultanate, with natural resources and aesthetic views overlooking three seas (Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman, Arabian Gulf).

In order to achieve the objectives of protecting the marine environment and the conservation of marine biological resources, the Sultanate has given special importance to the implementation of studies, the establishment of marine conservation zones, the promulgation of legislations, the implementation of coastal zone management plans, the rehabilitation of degraded areas and the cultivation of mangroves in its various governorates, in addition to campaigns to clean the environment and control turtles and marine mammals, as they are important for the sustainability and balance of the marine environment.

The main priorities for action in the area of marine environment protection and coastal zone management in Oman can be summarized as follows: prevention of further degradation of the coastal environment and restoration of degraded areas; studies and research on potential impacts on coastal areas and their natural resources, continuous monitoring of the coastal environment to ensure its conservation, planning of coastal land use, public awareness and citizen involvement in the protection of coastal resources.

The Sultanate has also made great efforts to prevent marine pollution in all forms. Royal Decree No. 34/1974 on the Maritime Pollution Law was issued as the first law in the environmental field. The National Pollution Control Plan was completed in 1985 and is continuously updated to suit the changes taking place in the Sultanate, such as the increase of coastal installations that may lead to oil spill in the coastal environment, especially ports and industrial free zones, as well as oil tankers that cross the territorial waters of the Sultanate in order to obtain international approval to extend the limits of its continental shelf.

The Sultanate has also realized the importance of environmental permits and their regulatory role. Waste disposal regulations have been issued in the marine environment and dumping and discharge permits in the marine environment, in accordance with regulations, as used as a control mechanism for activities and projects on the coastal environment, as well as the dumping of solids into the marine environment. The licensing process requires companies to submit periodic monitoring reports on the quality of discharged liquid waste and laboratory reports including chemical analyses of solid materials that are dumped to ensure that they are free of contaminants and in compliance with the conditions set forth in the regulations governing these licenses.

Coordination with the competent authorities in the Sultanate and the regional organization is also carried out through a comprehensive national plan to follow up the red tide phenomenon and limit its impact. The Maritime Security Center was established in 2013, and it is concerned with the management and command of maritime security operations carried out in ports, installations and coasts against maritime security threats, monitoring and control of marine pollution, climate change and protection of fisheries.

In the sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems, the Sultanate has given attention to marine ecosystems (coral reefs and mangroves) through the implementation of the Coral Reef Management Plan of the Sultanate. Coral reefs are located in five major sites in the Sultanate. These sites receive special attention, which is reflected in the implementation of coral reef clean-up campaigns as a result of the increasing number of nets and fishing equipment in these environments and their adverse effects. Since 2002, coral reef clean-up campaigns have been initiated at various coral reef sites, with a focus on sites most affected by the intensity of their fishing activity. In cooperation with various stakeholders, campaigns are being conducted to sensitize the local population on the importance of these biological resources, information collection campaigns and follow-up on the status of natural coral reefs. These campaigns are carried out with the participation of various stakeholders such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth, Ministry of Tourism, Royal

Oman Police (Coast Guard Command - Civil Defense), Sultan Qaboos University, Environment Society of Oman, diving companies and clubs, and volunteer individuals from citizens and residents.

The Sultanate Participates in Global Efforts to Protect the Environment

As part of the Sultanate's participation in the Clean Seas Campaign of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), an integrated program to clean coral reef environments was implemented in 2018. As the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve is one of the most important sites containing coral reef colonies in the Sultanate, due to the proliferation of the mitral starfish, whose impact has been clearly demonstrated by the bleaching of many corals due to the increasing numbers of this creature; nearly 600 mitral starfish were removed through the implementation of four cleaning campaigns in the reserve, with the participation of volunteer Omani divers and diving clubs.

Consistent with biodiversity development approaches, coral reefs are facing threats to their growth, with the degradation of some areas, the use of coral reefs has been successful in finding alternative ecosystems for lost coral and complex food chains and the Sultanate of Oman has sought to spread many artificial structures in both Al-Fahal Island, Damaniyat Island and Musandam Governorate. The project has been a success; nearly 500 industrial molds have been produced so far. The experiment has been evaluated and proven completely successful. The Sultanate also dropped a number of floating wharves in Bandar Al Khairan and Bandar Al Jissah, as well as the Damaniyat Islands Nature Reserve, with the aim of protecting coral reefs from the damage of boat anchors as they land on the seafloor.

Mangroves are one of the main components of the Omani marine environment. There is one species in the Sultanate of Oman, *Avicenna Marina*, able to adapt to the nature of the Omani environment, and is distributed in several coastal areas. The total area covered by the *Avicenna* trees in the Sultanate of about 1,030 hectares, and in order to preserve those trees, the cultivation project of the *Avicenna* was launched in April 2000, through the establishment of 4 plant nurseries in different provinces, and the cultivation of more than 600 thousand seedlings until the end of 2018. Several field surveys were conducted to determine the success of the aquaculture project, noting that there is an increase in the green areas of the mangrove and biodiversity. These trees are highly efficient for storing carbon, and are a habitat that attracts large numbers of endemic and migratory birds.

Oman has 21 species of large whales and dolphins, of which 17 are small to large dolphins, 3 species of baleen whales and toothed whales (sperm whales). Studies and research have shown, by satellite tracking, that the

Omani humpback whale is a resident whale and remains in its habitats near the coast of Oman due to the seasonal climatic conditions that occur in the area south of Oman, where they provide various sources of food for whales throughout the year, instead of migrating to the South Pole in search of food, unlike other species of whales living in the South of the globe, making it a very rare species, as the numbers seen for this type did not exceed 100 whales.

There are also several species of marine turtles including the Loggerhead Turtle (the second largest population of Loggerhead Turtles in the world is located by the Sultanate), the Hawksbill Turtle, the Green Turtle, the Olive Ridley Turtle, and the Leatherback Turtle. A national task force has been formed to study the causes of mortality and the trends of mammals and turtles, which is one of the indicators of the health of the marine environment and one of the essential elements of the marine ecosystem, especially given the fact that some of them are threatened species, in order to reduce them in the future, and ensure the sustainability of these creatures. In some cases, these studies may reveal marine animals unknown or previously undetected.

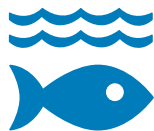
The Sultanate is monitoring the marine environment in coordination with the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME).

In order to achieve Target 3 of SDG14, "Reduce ocean acidification to a minimum and address its effects, inter alia, by promoting scientific cooperation at all levels", the state of the marine environment is monitored in an annual program in coordination with the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME). The development projects are being evaluated and monitored to ensure their environmental suitability and the requirements to limit their impact on the marine environment and the nature of the Omani coast.

The Sultanate Participates in the "Clean Seas" Campaign

To achieve Target 5 of SDG14, "At least 10% of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best scientific information available, by 2020", 14 marine and sub-marine protected areas were formed, out of 20 protected areas in the Sultanate.

In the area of increasing scientific knowledge, the Marine Science and Fisheries Center and the Fish Quality Control Center, all concerned with the development of fisheries, and the control of water quality for the protection of fisheries have been established. To facilitate the access of small artisanal fishermen to marine resources and markets, fishing ports have been established in most coastal states and fish landing centers to facilitate fishers.



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

In view of the economic and environmental importance of the marine environment, this requires a very effective management, as well as human and material potential to preserve this rich marine environment. The Sultanate faces a severe shortage of technical personnel despite harnessing the potential to reduce impacts on the marine environment; However, it is important to support these efforts with greater human and material potential due to the impact of the coastal region as a result of accelerated development programs, whether through the establishment of free industrial zones, commercial ports, seaports, marinas and tourist resorts or through the extension of urban development and the large depletion of biological resources, especially fish and coral reefs affected by the wrong methods of fishing, the throwing of nets and their adherence to coral reefs, and damage caused by recreational diving. The lack of reception facilities for ballast water in the Sultanate is one of the major challenges facing the marine environment due to the oil pollution caused by the dumping of this water in the territorial waters of the Sultanate or adjacent waters.

Future Plans:

To overcome these challenges, the Sultanate continues its efforts to **review and modernize environmental laws and legislation**, update studies and plans for coastal zone management, prepare a **national strategy for the protection of the marine environment**, assess marine resources, establish natural reserves, continue rehabilitation of affected areas and develop plans and requirements related to the marine environment of the proposed projects on the coast, in addition to the continuous coordination with all bodies, committees, sectors and associations concerned with the marine environment to cooperate for the preservation of resources and biodiversity.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG14

Coral Reefs Cleaning Campaigns:

Coral reefs are one of the most important marine resources and ecosystems. They are located in five major regions in the Sultanate's governorates and constitute an integrated ecosystem. In fact, the Damaniyat Islands Nature Reserve was declared one of the sites where coral reefs are one of the most important environmental components. A national plan has been implemented to manage them and a plan for periodic coral reef cleaning campaigns has been set.

In view of the increasing number of nets and fishing equipment in the coral reef sites, and their effects on them, continuous campaigns have been launched to clean the coral reefs since 2002 at different coral reef sites, with a focus on the sites most affected by intense fishing activity. This is a joint effort among the various stakeholders, in order to clean the coral reefs from all waste, especially fishing nets, as well as to

educate the local population about the importance of these biological resources and collect information and to determine the status of natural coral reefs concerned with the public and private sectors.

Additionally, an integrated annual program was carried out to implement campaigns for all coral reef sites, for sites with large coral reefs and those that are most affected by fishing operations. Furthermore, monitoring and follow-up programs are carried out by specialists from the competent Ministry, and reports from diving clubs are being issued to observe the weather conditions. Moreover, since coral reefs are highly sensitive, vulnerable and fragile, qualified divers are chosen as they are directed in the best manner, which should be followed especially in the process of using the drawers and lifting bags, and when pulling the nets using boats so there is no impact on the coral.

Sustainable Development Goals

15



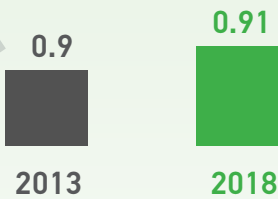
Life on
Land

Key Messages:

SDG15: Life on Land

- The natural habitats and fungal species in the Sultanate vary by geographic location, thus the Sultanate is taking several measures to preserve this national wealth by enacting laws and regulations that protect natural habitats and wildlife and to guarantee the right of all generations to benefit from diverse natural resources in a balanced and fair manner. The Sultanate takes several measures to preserve this national wealth by enacting laws and regulations that protect natural habitats and wildlife and guarantee the right of all generations to benefit from diverse natural resources in a balanced and fair manner.
- The Sultanate has been keen to declare nature reserves and sites stipulated by royal decrees and high orders. A number of projects have been implemented to mitigate land degradation and combat desertification, involving a number of scientific and research institutions.
- Development of the Omani National Program to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation, with the implementation of the project on the Use of Models and Remote Sensing to Monitor the State of Vegetation, Agricultural Land and Water.
- The Sultanate is strengthening the laws and regulations for the protection of wildlife and endangered species, and developing national strategies and plans for the protection of these species, such as the National Strategy, the Biodiversity Action Plan, the National Strategy for Plant Species, and the National Red List of Threatened Species. The Sultanate has also established governmental authorities and research centers to implement strategies and projects concerned with the conservation of threatened species.

Red List Index between 2013 and 2018





Oman is on its Way to Achieve the Objectives of the Goal

This objective focuses on sustainable forest management, restoration of degraded lands, successful desertification control, reduction of degraded natural habitats and elimination of biodiversity loss. Due to its geographical location in the northeast of the Arabian Peninsula, the natural habitats and fungal species in the Sultanate represent an important economic resource for the services of various ecosystems, in view of the multiple risks facing these resources, the most important of which are: The lack of water resources, land degradation and desertification, climate change and other environmental problems in line with the economic development path. The Sultanate has taken several measures to preserve this national wealth by enacting laws and regulations that protect natural habitats and wildlife and guarantee the right of all generations to benefit from Natural resources in a balanced and equitable manner, where forests and fields are particularly located on the coasts (the Crimean trees) and in the mountains of the Al-Alanan fields in the Al-Hajar Al-Gharbi mountains and the Al-Sughut forests in the south. Forests cover about 20 square kilometers and fields 13,000 square kilometers.

The Sultanate has been keen to announce the nature reserves and sites declared by royal decrees and orders. These protected areas include desert reserves, some of them freely and others in mountainous areas with difficult geological terrain, representing 3.77% of the total area of the Sultanate. The Qurum Nature Reserve, located in the heart of Muscat Governorate, was declared the first protected site for Ramsar in the Sultanate, with a total area of 80 hectares of Avicennia Marina forests, the only existing species that can adapt to the climate of the Omani environment, while the total area covered by the Crimean trees in the Sultanate is about 1030 hectares. The Wetlands Reserve in the Mahut province of the Al-Wusta governorate is one of the top 25 sites of international importance to migratory birds during the winter in the Middle East, within the migration path of Asia and East Africa, with an estimated area of 2,621 square kilometers, and is in the process of being announced as a second Ramsar site in the Sultanate.

The Sultanate is implementing several projects to alleviate land degradation and combat desertification with the participation of

international scientific and research institutions.

The Sultanate has developed the Omani Action Plan to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation, which included the development of a natural resource registry for the Sultanate containing water sources, vegetation cover and soil. As well as the reasons for the status of desertification, the potential for its future deployment and the strategy for its control with the implementation of the project on the use of models and remote sensing to monitor the status of vegetation, agricultural land and water.

The Sultanate also implemented several projects to alleviate land degradation and combat desertification, in which many scientific and research institutions participated in order to ensure quality of implementation and access to reference information at the national level. The most important projects implemented are the fog harvesting project in Dhofar Governorate, the draft land degradation map, and the land rehabilitation of areas affected by desertification factors. These projects identified degraded areas and lands prone to degradation, the development of a spatial database and a monitoring system based on high-resolution satellite data.

Mountains form a large proportion of the Omani geographical environment, and plant and animal environments vary in these mountains; The Hajar Mountains located in northern Oman, extend from the Musandam peninsula in the north to Ras Al-Hadd in the south-eastern province, they are considered the highest mountains, rising about 3,000 meters above sea level. In the south, the Dhofar Mountains range from east to west. Samhan Mountain which includes the Jabal Samhan and Jabal Al-Qamr Nature Reserves is the most important mountain in the region. The maximum height of this range is 2.5 thousand meters.

Omani's inhabited environment is varies in the mountains. Therefore, the Sultanate's government sought to create all the conditions under which Omani people can integrate the life around them, especially in the light of modern development. This has contributed to varying degrees in changing the customs and practices of the Sultanate. But the life of people in the mountains of Oman is based on traditions

and practices throughout the history of Oman, and this mountain environment still retains its beauty and characteristics, despite the features of change, comprehensive development, progress and modernization witnessed by Oman in all regions of the Sultanate. The cultivation and harvesting of wheat is a season associated with many inherited customs that can be seen today in mountain villages. The temperature and availability of water are main characteristics of the diversity of agricultural crops and fruit trees in the few areas scattered among the mountains. Rare pastoralism in the mountains is an important source for cattle breeders, producers of popular medicines and highly skilled beekeepers. Over the centuries, mountaineering skills have been developed in the breeding of honey bees.

The Government of the Sultanate seeks through social development institutions, such as Omani women's associations and agricultural development centers, to support traditional professions and practices in the mountain environment in order to improve the quality of life of the population. The Government has also opened schools in these communities to promote education among the population in the mountains in accordance with the reality of the environment and society. In addition to formal education in the mountains, literacy and adult education centers have been opened to those who have missed the opportunity of education, especially women, so that women may participate in their community and are provided with the necessary knowledge and professional experience.

The plant group comprises more than 1,407 documented plant species, of which 110 species have been assessed as endangered species within the national red list, 509 marine plant species, 766 invertebrate and 988 vertebrates marine species, including 13 species threatened with extinction at a global level, and 93 species of mammals, and includes 20 species threatened with extinction at a global level, most notably the Arabian Tiger, Arabian Oryx, and Arabian Tahr. It is expected that the lists of species will increase with more surveys and studies carried out by various scientific and research institutions in the Sultanate.

The sultanate is enforcing the laws and regulations related to the protection of wildlife and endangered species

The Sultanate has sought to enforce more strict rules and regulations for the protection of wildlife and endangered species and prepared national protection strategies and plans, such as the

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, the National Strategy for Economic Botany species. It also issued the national Red Lists for endangered species, and established several governmental authorities and research centers for the implementation of strategies and projects related to the continuous preservation of endangered species.

The Sultanate deployed many efforts for the protection of threatened fauna, as it implemented protection programs and declared many sites as reserves for the abovementioned species. In the early seventies, the Sultanate has launched the Arabian Oryx preservation project, through which it was able to reintroduce the Arabian Oryx species into the Omani environment following the extinction of the wild Oryx at that time. A natural reserve currently known as the Wildlife Reserve was specifically established for this purpose. Another reserve protecting living creatures and wildlife is Al Wusta Wetlands Reserve. In 1997, the first project for the protection of the Arabian Leopard was established, the first effective protection measures took place with the declaration of these animals' living area, known as Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve as a natural reserve. Since 2007, the Sultanate launched the Sooty Falcon study project and installed satellite tracking devices on the chicks of these predatory vultures with the support of local institutions and in international cooperation with Austria's BirdLife International and The Peregrine Fund in the Republic of Madagascar. The sooty falcon migration route that starts in Oman and ends in the African Island of Madagascar was tracked. This was the first-ever practical study for tracking juvenile sooty falcons, take stock of their migration route and the most prominent obstacles and challenges these vultures face. From 2013 to 2016, the Sultanate implemented a systemic biological and geographical study project related to the Sultanate's reptiles. The study revealed an unprecedented diversity in Oman's terrestrial reptiles. Twenty-four new reptile species were discovered, out of which 14 are currently populating the Sultanate. The study project resulted in the documentation of more than 101 terrestrial reptiles in Oman, representing 50% of the total reptile species population in the Arabian Peninsula.

A number of sea turtles also nest on Omani shores, including the loggerhead turtle, the green sea turtle, the hawksbill turtle and the Olive Ridley Turtle, all of which are endangered species. Therefore, the responsibility to preserve those turtles and nesting areas was a priority in the governmental programs conducted with the participation of different researches and education, in addition to civil society and private sector institutions. A sea turtle nature



Oman is on its Way to Achieve the Objectives of the Goal

reserve was established, with the nesting area management being the responsibility of well trained, well equipped monitors. The sea turtle remote satellite observation project was launched in 2006, aimed at studying and safeguarding the species living in the Sultanate. A general management plan was also suggested for the turtles nesting and feeding areas.

Enhancing sustainable use of genetic diversity

In order to enhance the sustainable use of the genetic diversity enshrined in the fauna and flora and the micro-organisms, and to achieve Target 6 of SDG15, the sultanate adhered to many regional and international conventions that reinforce cooperation, the exchange of plant genetic resources while sharing the benefits of their use. The Sultanate is thus party to the Convention on Biodiversity and seeks to achieve the convention's SDG3 related to the sharing of benefits through seeking to join the related protocol. The Sultanate is also party to the Arab Convention on the exchange of plant genetic resources and heritage knowhow and sharing the benefits of their use, adopted on 15 April 2018 by the Council of the Arab League.

At the national level, the Oman Animal & Plant Genetic Resources Center was established in 2012 seeking to create a laboratory for the implementation of scientific and laboratory experiments and research. In addition, the center seeks to establish a gene bank for the preservation of genetic resources, encourage the sustainable use of knowledge through the economic and social sectors, and find added-value, high-level research and scientific innovations. The center also sponsors many genetic resources preservation initiatives that target the youth and young researchers.

The Sultanate has also taken urgent measures to put an end to the illegal hunting and trafficking of protected fauna and flora. Therefore, it issued many related Royal Decrees, on top of which is Royal Decree (114/2001), issuing the Law on Conservation of the Environment and Prevention of Pollution, and the Royal Decree (6/2003) and The Law On Nature Reserves And Wildlife Conservation. The deployment of the wildlife monitors units has contributed in

improving the protection of these species' habitats and wildlife. The Country firmly believes in the important and effective role of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in the protection of wildlife from the danger of extinction, its sustainable use and the regulation of its international importation and exportation. Therefore, it joined the Convention in 2007, and deployed large efforts to implement its obligations under the Convention through cooperation and coordination of international efforts in monitoring and ensuring that international wildlife trade will not harm their chance of survival in the nature. This is also possible through the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Convention's Conference of the Parties.

The Sultanate has also established an integrated e-customs system entitled "BAYAN". The system encompasses all custom related procedures and transactions, and enables the completion of all customs operations electronically. A one-stop station for inspection within the Risk Management System in complementarity with BAYAN at all the sea, air and land outlets has been established. This helps fostering the security, health and environmental censorship on imports, exports, goods in transit and re-exported goods.

In addition, the Sultanate has also taken measures to prevent the introduction of invasive species to the Omani environment. In so doing, it issued regulatory laws for the use of non-local species, in addition to a fostered censorship and the application of veterinary and plant quarantine for shipments coming to the Sultanate. An environmental impact assessment is conducted in the event of use of non-local species for agricultural applications or ecosystem reclamation. On the field, the Sultanate launched many campaigns for the management of intrusive species that harm human beings and the Omani environment including: The Sea Mesquite Tree Removal Campaign that called for the cooperation of all to remove Mesquite Trees, which harm agriculture and the environment. These trees entered the country for plantation and shade purposes. In the seventies, they were planted on the road sides before turning into a problem to address.

The enshrinement of ecosystem value and the safeguarding of wildlife is the driving force in sector-specific programs and policies and the work of multiple relevant sectors and social action. In order to align development and environment, previous environmental studies are conducted in a way that includes potential negative environmental impacts, and measures to be taken for limitation or mitigation. The assessment takes place following different stages. Projects' environmental impacts are studied through follow-up and inspection programs targeting all pollutants and different industrial facilities in order to ensure compliance with legal environmental conditions.

All phases of educational programs convey messages on the preservation of biodiversity. Many schools participate in different governmental environment related awareness programs. At different classroom levels, students are taught the basics of environment and biodiversity appreciation. At post school level, official courses take place in the framework of the Bachelor of Science in Bio-ecology at Sultan Qaboos University. A Master's degree in Science in Bio-ecology is also granted at the same university for students with high environmental expertise. A Diploma/Baccalaureate in Ecology is currently in preparation at the Higher College of Technology operated by the Ministry of Higher Education.

The social action efforts include a strategy for the improvement of women's capacities in environmental affairs, with a firm belief in the important role women should play in society, especially in terms of environmental affairs. Awareness programs conducted for the society support the efforts deployed for the preservation of the environment and its biodiversity. They come as a top priority for different media and awareness activities and include different aspects related to the dissemination of knowledge and information for the enshrinement of values and positive behaviors among all the social components.

In order to mobilize financial resources, the economic growth the Sultanate is witnessing alongside with the exacerbating impact of different environmental issues creates an urgent need for sustainable financial resources to achieve environmental goals. The Sultanate seeks to provide financial budgets for the implementation of projects in different sectors, with priority given to economically and environmentally rentable projects while improving the society's livelihood. On another hand, the sultanate adopts a policy for an efficient use of financial resources and spending rationalization through seeking opportunities to decrease costs, based on the use of the most environment-friendly and least energy consuming

techniques for the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems.

The Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation

In order to mobilize resources and motivate countries for sustainable management, the Sultanate declared in 1989 the organization of the First Arab Prize awarded worldwide in the field of environmental preservation. The prize is granted for individuals and governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions that deploy distinctive efforts in environmental and preservation actions. The prize is entitled: "Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation", and its idea stems from the awareness related to the importance of environmental protection, its safeguarding and from the universal aspect the environment preservation has as an ongoing cross-border process. The humankind development and impact on the environment deserves a universal participation for the preservation of its safety. The Prize consists of a Certificate of Appreciation with a financial grant and is awarded each two years in a celebration held by UNESCO, on the sidelines of the Organization's General Conference.

The sultanate supports cooperation with the UN environment regional offices

Through joint action and cooperation in conducting regional meetings, forums and projects, including the participation of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) West Asia regional office in 2018, to the "Oman Environment Forum" in its second session entitled: "Towards Systematic Consolidation of Environmental Citizenship". During the forum, the inauguration of the "Oman Environmental Forum Award" was set to be an honoring platform accompanying the forum in its next session. The award aims to support environmental working categories according to conditions elaborated in coordination with a high-level, highly experienced and competent committee, to motivate for better knowhow in the national action path towards a sustainable environment.

In order to increase the capacities of the local communities to access sustainable opportunities to make a living, the new job opportunities slowly increase, not only in agriculture and fishing, but also in different fields such as environmental tourism. Therefore, the future tendency followed by the Sultanate is to increase economic benefits for the people through opening investment opportunities in natural reserves, while stressing in particular the importance of employing locals in environmental tourism related projects, which is considered in itself one of the key measures that supports environmental tourism within and/or outside natural reserves.



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

Due to its geographical location, the Sultanate is prone to many dangers, particularly land degradation, the disintegration of traditional land management practices, including livestock management, the lack of reserve lands and of different ecosystems representation, in addition to the proliferation of invasive species, the lack of management plans for species and for monitoring endangered ones.

Future Plans:

Facing these challenges, the Sultanate is seeking to **protect natural and productive habitats in addition to renewable resources** for a rational and sustainable use, and preserve of fauna and flora biodiversity, particularly rare and specifically important species. It also seeks to **improve knowledge on ecological systems**, and raise awareness on the importance to preserve biodiversity and sustainably use biological resources.

In order to preserve biodiversity, the Sultanate passed **a legislation guaranteeing the preservation of biodiversity**, the sustainable use of biological resources, building an incentive system to encourage biodiversity preservation activities, finding job opportunities for locals, in addition to encouraging regional and international cooperation in the preservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources.



Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG15

1- Life on Land :

The sultanate has always excelled in pioneering initiatives in the field of environmental work that accompanies accelerating economic and social growth, and in its high responsiveness with the world environmental awakening at regional and international levels. Different governmental institutions cooperate with the private sector and civil society organizations to implement educational and awareness programs that enshrine the values of preserving biodiversity among the youth and within the society in general. Oman seeks to increase its green spaces through establishing tree belts, public gardens and parks and green landscapes whilst preserving agricultural areas and implementing planting and agricultural programs in different natural sites such as valleys and grazing areas. Many initiatives were launched in this regard including “ASHJAR” for planting wild trees and plants. The idea came to complement efforts deployed by the Sultanate to raise society's awareness and knowledge related to the preservation of wild flora and participation in increasing green spaces. Through

the initiative, the sultanate also seeks to unify efforts and enlarge the public-private partnerships for the preservation of the natural environment and achievement of sustainable development. The logo reflects the initiative title with the addition of the frankincense tree as a symbol representing the civilizational heritage of Omani trees. Other initiatives include “Al Awdiya Khadraa” (Green Valleys) for the rehabilitation of damaged areas and the “Asdikaa Al Biaa” (Friends of the Environment) initiative for environmental education targeting the 8-13 years age category, etc...

In the field of preserving local flora, the Sultanate has launched a project establishing the largest plant garden in the Gulf named Oman Plant and Tree Garden. It encompasses the different natural and environmental life aspects in the Sultanate. The National Field Research Centre for Environmental Conservation that aims to regulate and encourage field research and develop research projects for environmental protection and sustainability in the Sultanate also saw the light.

2- Al Hajar Al Gharbi Star Lights Nature Reserve

Light pollution is one of the challenges humans currently face and is increasingly growing day by day due to urban, industrial and trade expansion. This negatively affects human health and ecological safety in addition to astronomical and space research. The situation will thus become more complicated in the future. For this reason, states and organizations working in the field set forth means and mechanisms for the mitigation and limitation of light pollution. Among the solutions adopted by states is to manage cities lighting systems in a way that is more conducive with human health and ecological systems' protection. Many developed countries also sought to create dark sky areas in order to reduce light pollution impact. Therefore, these areas become of international importance for world's dark skies and the viewing of space for research and for the people to enjoy watching the sky.

In this context, the Sultanate has chosen to work in the field, declaring the first dark sky reserve in the Sultanate and the Arab area. It declared the Al Hajar Al Gharbi Star Lights a Natural dark sky Reserve via Royal Decree no. (40/2019). The reserve is located in Hajjar al Gharbi mountain range with a surface of 386m². The largest part is located in Al Dakhiliyah governorate and the reserve spans over the tops of the Hajjar al Gharbi, including Jebel Shams and Al-Sarah Mountain. The highest mountaintop

in the reserve is more than 3009 m high at Jebel Shams tops.

The establishment of Hajjar al Gharbi star light reserve aims at protecting the sky from light pollution resulting from human activities and population expansion. The reserve was also created to preserve the ecological components at the heights of Hajjar Mountains, including the Juniper trees in Al Sarah Mountains.

The reserve also features the highest mountaintop in Oman, Jebel Shams, at an altitude of 3009m above sea level. It is the highest reserve in the Sultanate of Oman and includes Juniper tree forests located at 2000 m above sea level. It is considered as the area least affected by human activity. Juniper trees are among endangered species located within the reserve among other ones such as the Arabian Oryx that populates the Al Hajjar Mountains. The reserve is also one of the most important areas internationally for birds according to BirdLife International.

In the framework of the reserve management plan, specialists have elaborated in cooperation with different authorities a lighting management plan within the reserve and its neighboring areas in order to achieve the goal or objective behind the establishment of the reserve. People will also be able to enjoy the quality and beauty of the sky view when visiting the reserve.

Sustainable Development Goals

16



Peace,
Justice
and Strong
Institutions

Key Messages:

SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- The sultanate guarantees protection for its citizens and residents from all forms of violence through its regulations, legislations and laws. It has also set forth many programs and projects providing protection for individuals and the society and for reducing mortality.
- The Sultanate of Oman is member of many International Human Rights Conventions, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities etc... All Omani legislations assertively ban discrimination between individuals, and provide legal protection from all forms of violence to all social categories.
- The Sultanate also sets forth many mechanisms and institutions including: The National Commission for Family Affairs, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Committee for the Care and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, the Follow-up Committee on the Rights of the Child, the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and the CEDAW Committee.
- The Sultanate has achieved a 14-degree progress in the 2018 edition of the Global Competitiveness Report. It was ranked 47th globally, and 36th out of 140 in terms of the institutions pillar that comprise several sub-indexes: The independence of the judiciary (18 out of 140), efficiency of legal systems (19 out of 140) governmental future orientation (7 out of 140), and effectiveness of audit and reporting processes (37 out of 140).

SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG16

SDG16 seeks to encourage the establishment of peaceful societies with zero marginalization in order to achieve sustainable development, enable access for all to justice, and build effective, accountable and comprehensive institutions for everyone, at all levels.

Human Rights:

The Sultanate of Oman guarantees protection for its citizens and residents from all forms of violence through its regulations, legislations and laws. It has also set forth many programs and projects providing protection for individuals and the society and for reducing mortality.

In this regard, Article (25) of the Basic Statute of the State notes: "Litigation is a protected right and is guaranteed to all people. The Law shall prescribe the procedures and conditions necessary to exercise this right, and the State shall guarantee, as far as possible, the approximation of judicial authorities to litigants and the prompt settlement of cases". On another note, the Omani Penal Code issued under Royal Decree no. (7/2018) combats in its Part (nine), articles (301) to (321) crimes harmful to human life and safety such as voluntary and involuntary killing, inciting to commit suicide, beating to death, trivial and severe harm, brawls that result in harm or killing, and killing and harm by mistake.

Part (ten) of the abovementioned penal code also mentions in its articles (322) to (334) crimes against Human Liberty and Dignity, including arresting, kidnapping and detaining persons, threat, insult and defamation. In addition, the law also tackles other incriminating acts such as assaulting public officers, hacking and violence.

It is noteworthy that the Sultanate of Oman is member of many International Human Rights Conventions, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) under the provisions of Royal Decree no. (54/96), amended by Royal Decree no (96/99), the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) under the provisions of Royal Decree no. (42/2005), The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under the provisions of Royal Decree no. (121/2008) and the two Optional Protocols related to the CRC under the provisions of Royal Decree no. (41/2004).

The Omani legislations assertively ban discrimination against individuals

based on gender. Confirming the above, article (2) of the Child Law issued by Royal Decree no. (22/2014) states children's right to non-discrimination on grounds of gender as one of the most important rights guaranteed by the law. In its article (38), the law stresses the values the Sultanate seeks to enshrine, including equality of individuals, and non-discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion, race, social origin, disability or any other considerations.

The Sultanate provides legal protection against all forms of violence to all social categories.

The Omani Penal Code, issued under Royal Decree no. (7/2018) affirmed the necessity to provide protection against all forms of violence to all social categories including women, children and persons with disabilities, in a way that instead of excluding them from law, provides them with special attention and focus due to their particular circumstances that require and call for further care and protection.

In its articles (7) and (56), the Child Law also guarantees the right to protection from violence, exploitation, abuse, and calls to humane and decent treatment, that preserves the Child's dignity, reputation and honor. The State guarantees this right for children to enjoy in every possible means. The law also prohibits any act of kidnapping, rape and performance of any sexual or other activity.

Royal Decree 126/2008 Promulgating the Law Combating Trafficking in Persons prohibits the performance of any form of human trafficking according to article (2) of the law. This includes the use, transfer, shelter, or reception of a person by coercion, threat, trickery, exploitation of position of power, exploitation of weakness, use of authority over that person, or by any other illegal means whether directly or indirectly. The law has set forth a no less than three year's imprisonment penalty against the perpetrators and a no less than seven years imprisonment penalty in the cases mentioned by the law and that involve trafficking in children or persons with disabilities.

Royal Decree No (12/2011), issuing the Cyber Crime Law punishes acts of Information Technology abuse, using IT as means for abuse against children and women such as seduction or incitement to lechery or prostitution, blackmailing, and trespassing on families and individuals'

private life. The Sultanate also set forth many mechanisms for the protection of (women and children) including:

- The National Commission for Family Affairs;
- The National Human Rights Commission of Oman;
- The National Committee for the Care and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities;
- The follow-up committee on the rights of the child;
- The National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking;
- The CEDAW Committee;
- The follow-up committees The Convention Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) implementation;

Through the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking, the Sultanate of Oman sets forth an annual plan for raising the awareness of all social categories, and takes all the necessary measures to protect citizens and residents from human trafficking in addition to a hotline for reporting human trafficking cases.

The Sultanate has also defined institutional working mechanisms to address violence and abuse. The Child Law has commissioned the State to create "Child Protection Committees", pursuant to Ministerial Decision no. (168/2015). These committees shall receive reports on any violations against the rights of male and female children, in addition to the cases of violence, exploitation, harm and any other violation. The Committee members shall enjoy judicial enforcement powers with regards to the implementation of the provisions of the law.

In implementation of the principles set forth in the Basic Statute of the State, article (12) related to social principles, "Justice, equality, and equal opportunities between Omanis are the pillars of the Society guaranteed by the State".

Based on these enshrined fundamental principles, the Public Prosecution shall conduct its duties to foster the rule of law with several specialists working in the public directorates, and the geographical and specialized public prosecution directorates disseminated across all the Sultanate's governorates and jurisdictions. The Public Prosecution provides litigants with the best services and guarantees, accepting their reports and claims, enabling them to assign a lawyer and take the necessary legal measures as soon as possible using modern technology in so doing. The Sultanate's Public Prosecution also conducts investigations in the importation, smuggling or possession of non-licensed weapons and ammunitions, pursuant to the Arms and Ammunition Law issued by Royal Decree no. (36/90). It refers the accused to specialized courts while claiming and confiscating seizures. In addition, the Public Prosecution provides legal assistance for requesting states according to laws and regulations applicable in the Sultanate, the treaties, conventions and Memoranda of Understanding concluded, in addition to the principle of reciprocity that links it with other states and the best cooperation practices thereof.

As per the limitation of illegal proliferation of weapons, the Royal Omani Police observes strictly all the Sultanate's legal outlets. It has indeed sought to provide all custom outlets and directorates with the newest technical mechanisms to support censorship and intercept contraband and the illegal smuggling of weapons and illicit materials.

The Oman Penal Code Part (Two), articles (143) to (153) stipulated the definition of Transnational Organized Crime and set forth penalties against crimes and organized criminal groups and migrant smugglers. It also defines the mechanism for crime benefit separation, and the implementation of Royal Decree no. (8/2007) issuing the Counter Terrorism Law to fight all forms of organized crime.

Fighting Corruption:

The Sultanate deploys tremendous efforts in fighting all forms of corruption and bribery. The Sultanate's competent authorities communicate and cooperate continuously with the society, through different communication means and social media, and conducting awareness and guiding lectures for the public, enabling an easier detection of corruption and bribery crimes.

In the light of the Sultanate's adherence to the UN Convention against Corruption, and pursuant to Royal Decree no (64/2013), the National Strategy on Increasing Transparency and Fighting Corruption was elaborated. Suggestions and recommendations have also been set forth in consistency with the UN Convention against Corruption, adhered to by the Sultanate in 2013.

The Sultanate of Oman has always been keen to share with the UN specialized fighting corruption team the assessment and review processes conducted in cooperation with the countries organizing the Convention.

A specialized directorate was created under the Public Prosecution to deal with cases related to public funds. It is specialized in investigating public fund crimes and all related issues, as well as money laundering, terrorism financing and tax evasion crimes. The Public Fund Cases Department under the Public Prosecution refers the accused to the court for the implementation of the laws stipulated and violated therein. This added quality and effectiveness in dealing with such proceedings.

Keen to share with the international community all the relentless efforts deployed for fighting corruption in all its aspects and forms and increasing transparency, the Sultanate has taken the following measures:

- Joining the UN Convention against Corruption under Royal Decree no (64/2013);
- Ratifying the Arab Convention against Corruption under Royal Decree no (28/2014);
- Joining the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions under Royal Decree no (41/2016);

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- Formed pursuant to the UN Convention against Corruption requirements a team of (15) experts out of the State Audit & Administrative Institution of Sultanate of Oman in order to follow up with and review the implementation of the aforementioned convention.

In this context, it is noteworthy that the Sultanate was able to achieve a tangible increase in the 24th version of the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), 2018 issued by Transparency International. The Sultanate was ranked 53rd out of 180 states internationally, and received a grade of 52 out of 100, climbing 15 places in the ranking and 8 degrees compared to 2017; a climb that is considered the highest worldwide in those two years.

The Sultanate has made a 14-degree progress in the Global Competitiveness Report and was ranked 47th globally.

In terms of the institutions pillar, the Sultanate was ranked 36th out of 140. Under this pillar, the Sultanate achieved great progress in many indexes such as:

- The independence of the judiciary (18 out of 140);
- The efficiency of legal systems (19 out of 140);
- The governmental future orientation (7 out of 140);
- The effectiveness of audit and reporting processes (37 out of 140);

The State Audit & Administrative Institution was ranked first in the United Nations Public Service Awards in the “Preventing and combating corruption in the public service in 2013.” category for Western Asia through the reporting portal. The award is one of the most prestigious and distinctive recognitions in the world.

National Centre of Financial Information (NCFI)

Oman seeks to fight all form of crimes in all its legal jurisdictions. In terms of curbing illicit flows of funds, the Sultanate developed its capacity to advance the Financial Investigation functioning system. It upgraded the Financial Challenges Unit so that it becomes the National Center of Financial Information NCFI. The Center exercises its jurisdictions pursuant to Royal Decree. No. (30/2016), Promulgating the Law on Combating

Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, and works in partnership with several financial operations related to audit and judicial institutions. The NCFI is specialized in receiving requests and analyzing reports and information with a suspected link to crime benefits, link, or relation to the crimes of money laundering and terrorism financing. It also receives other information related to cash transactions, electronic transfers, cross-border declarations, and other reports set forth by audit institutions.

Oman Center for Governance and Sustainability (OCGS)

Since its establishment pursuant to Royal Decree no (30/2015), the OCGS has been keen to enact its goals and jurisdictions defined by the Statute. Those goals include building partnerships and cooperation opportunities with regional and international institutions in the fields of governance and sustainability. This shall happen through either signing MoU and conventions, or cooperating in the organization of fora and events. The OCGS was also linked to international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), through its membership in the Governance Committee for the MENA region and its participation in many of the committee's meetings.

The OCGS organizes awareness gatherings to introduce the culture and principles of governance, and their importance in the world of finances and business. It stresses the importance to adopt these concepts due to the role they play in strengthening its business and increase customers and investors' trust, maintaining shareholders' rights and equal treatment through the principles of transparency and accountability. The Center also organizes different conferences and events within the Sultanate in cooperation with many international institutions such as Thompson Reuters, Hawkamah institute, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and other institutions, in order to tighten partnerships, cooperation, exchange expertise, and experiences. The OCGS has also links with the World Bank affiliated IFC, through a training program (enacting and training Boards of Directors). This is an international program defined by the IFC, adhered to until the date of submission of the report by more than 400 Board of Directors members, representing corporates in their different legal personalities. The OCGS has also represented the Sultanate in many regional and international conferences and presented many working papers that exhibited the Sultanate's expertise in the field of corporate and enterprise management.

The Electronic Civil Register:

The Sultanate has created an Electronic Civil Register system that registers all Omani citizens births within the Sultanate or abroad, or those of expatriates living within the Sultanate. The Law of civil Status issued by Royal Decree no (66/1999) stipulates that all births within the Sultanate and all Omani births abroad shall be reported, and that stakeholders must acquire relevant birth certificates within the deadline set forth in the law. As of 2017, the electronic link to the Ministry of Health improved the registration process for all births in the Sultanate, providing them with a legal identity.

Media:

The Sultanate has paid attention to media legislations. The Print and Publishing Law was issued in 1984, in a framework of a State of institutions and laws under construction. Amendments were also performed later to some articles of the aforementioned law in line with the upcoming era requirements. The Sultanate was also one of the first Arab countries to regulate the visual and audio media sector and allow the establishment of private Radio and TV stations, especially following the issuance of the Law on Private Radio and TV facilities in 2004.

The Sultanate has also kept up with the enormous development in new media. Therefore, it has created electronic information sites online in order to provide e-services through the e-government system. It has encouraged the creation of e-newspapers and electronic information sites as it realized the importance to keep abreast with these developments worldwide and the need to create new media landscapes. There was also need to develop the Media legislation system, while updating the existing media laws for consolidation under one law entitled "Oman Media Law". A new law upgraded and developed to meet the new developments of the era.



The "Media Draft Law" is now in its final stages and is based on the provisions of the Basic Statute. The statute stipulates especially in articles (29) and (31): "The freedom of opinion and expression thereof through speech, writing and other means of expression is guaranteed within the limits of the Law" ; "The freedom of the press, printing, and publishing is guaranteed according to the terms and conditions prescribed by the Law. Anything that leads to discord, affects the security of State, or prejudices human dignity or rights, is prohibited".

Culture

The tangible and non-tangible cultural heritage and cultural innovation constitute resources to be carefully protected and managed. They can each be able to drive the achievement and facilitation of the SDGs, as cultural innovation is essential to make SDG efforts successful. Therefore, the Sultanate was keen to join and commit to international cultural conventions especially with the many opportunities for the cultural sector, available at national, regional and international levels. This also comes with the possibility to grant culture a higher technical value, making it more effective and relevant to citizens in terms of livelihood advancement, and instilling it among the youth through educational institutions.

The national efforts within the Sultanate advise linking the handicraft industry to sustainable development, and invest in handicraft as products of creativity. The Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Science organized forums that play in favor of such a topic. For example, it organized a forum on cultural heritage in the sustainable development of World Heritage Sites related communities. It seeks to define the importance of local communities in sustainable development, raise local awareness on the importance of those communities' sustainable development, and exhibit local success stories in this regard.





Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

Preserving identity and fostering responsible citizenship starts from the integration of such concepts in educational curricula, and from bringing up the new generations based on the pillars of Omani identity and civilizational heritage. The community in general and civil society organizations play a pivotal role in maintaining cultural and historical heritage through different activities empowered and supported by the government and private sector. In fact, these activities aim at coordinating and developing national programs that consolidate social cohesion and encourage Omani national identity and civilization.

The Media plays a crucial role in shaping the culture of Omani youth, and finding a balance between the civilizational heritages coupled with the pillars of the national identity on one hand and the technical advancements to be optimized for building a society with a proud identity on the other hand. Educational curricula must also build the national capacities and raise awareness on the importance of the Omani identity, while building an Omani personality supportive of a sustainable national identity.

Achieving economic growth and social welfare for the community also comes with national, economic and judicial legislations that keep up with the growth journey. It is linked to the preparation of such legislations in a way that responds to the requirements of the era and the accelerating change in the world, the empowerment of qualified national competencies to increase confidence in the legislative system, and the balanced clear and transparent implementation of legislations. Separation of powers and community engagement are also required alongside building a judicial culture related to the rights and duties of all individuals in society.

Future Plans:

Walking towards the future, responding to its developments and maintaining the difference and tolerance of our cultural characteristics is the most coveted input for Oman Vision 2040. In fact, this vision is built on openness to the world with roots well enshrined and a well-built understanding of Omani identity components. The cultural activities held in the Sultanate and covering different aspects play an important role in enhancing citizenship and enshrine this concept among the Omani youth, building pride in their identity. The Sultanate is in fact holder of cultural, historical and touristic monuments, sites and components able to attract huge numbers of tourists while reflecting the Omani identity and civilization worldwide.

An effective and independent monitoring system is essential in Oman Vision 2040. The development of a transparent and integrated monitoring system will enable access to information and its use in improving the growth process. It is the foundation for a harmonized positive relation between the community and state institutions and enables the monitoring of the state's administrative authority performance and its commitment to implement national plans and strategies. It also enshrines the principle of responsibility and accountability against performance, leveraging the quality of the services provided and building trust among all economic parties and sectors. This also contributes to the protection of Omani national natural resources and capacities that are considered as property for all.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG16

Message of Peace Project:

In the efforts deployed by the Sultanate of Oman in disseminating the culture of peace, and its contribution to the dialogue of civilizations and seeking the convergence of views among people, the government launched the Message of Peace Project. The project focuses on fostering and disseminating common human values worldwide namely, dialogue, coexistence and mutual understanding, as a trilogy crucial for the instilment of peace, security, dialogue and stability based on the civilizational experience Oman has witnessed.

In order to translate this into reality, many programs seeking the dissemination of the common values culture take place in parallel. Among those different programs, the Message of Peace exhibition encompasses fifty expressive artworks on general life in the Sultanate, and "Al-Rasael Al Alamiyah (Universal Messages)" an international media campaign aiming at disseminating the culture of coexistence and peace via cards published on social media. Another event is the celebration of the International Day for Tolerance and the "Do one thing for Dialogue" campaign, where international delegations meet in celebration of media campaigns and mass events.

The "Message of Peace" exhibition project was launched in 2009 as a step

aiming at introducing the European community to the value of religious dialogue in Oman. The first exhibition was indeed held in 2010 in Germany and Austria. Starting with Germany, the exhibition was developed to encompass more than eight languages in 2012, and now speaks twenty-six languages around the world. Until December 2018, the exhibition landed in more than 121 stations worldwide in over 37 countries, while visiting most of the World's continents and addressing over 11 million visitors. In a few years, the Message of Peace project was able to build international partnerships with scientific and academic institutions, universities, colleges and museums in many countries around the world. They resulted in several exchange programs in the fields of religious studies, Arabic Language teaching and other research fields. The main partners involved were the United Nations and UNESCO. The project was also nominated for the Global Peace award twice in a row at UNESCO and the Republic of Korea.

In appreciation of Oman's civilizational role, the exhibition increased in significance. In fact, several international bodies expressed their desire to enter into partnerships and hold the exhibition in their quarters and institutions, namely, UNESCO, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, in addition to organizations, universities and cultural and religious centers all over the world.



Sustainable Development Goals

17



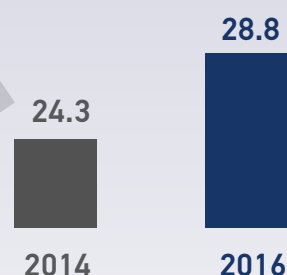
**Partnerships
for the Goals**

Key Messages:

SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals

- The Sultanate of Oman is always keen to fulfill all its international and regional obligations towards different organizations. It recognizes its international responsibility in different causes that aim to serve humankind in several fields. It also plays an important role in the convergence of views among neighboring and friend countries, and has always sought to assist belligerent states in conflict resolution. This important role has been welcomed internationally.
- Proud of its history, culture, language, and heritage, and recognizing its responsibility as a member in the international community, the Sultanate seeks to find a mutual understanding between cultures, which, in turn, disseminates the culture of peace and cooperation among states. The Sultanate also supports and encourages scientific studies and research. Therefore, it has created chairs and scientific fellowships holding the name of His Majesty the Sultan – May God Protect Him – in the greatest universities worldwide specialized in specific academic disciplines, namely, in the political, religious, cultural, economic and artistic fields. The main aim of such chairs is to encourage reaching a contemporary international community that lives in peace, and fostering mutual understanding and tolerance in favor of a greater harmony in a globalized world.
- The Sultanate of Oman is one of the founding members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), an economic organization that encompasses many states located on the Indian Ocean Rim. The Association aims to foster sustainable growth and balanced development in the area, while focusing on economic cooperation that provide the optimum opportunities for development and mutual benefit.

Foreign Direct Investment ratio to GDP (%) in 2014 and 2016





Oman on the Road to Achieving the Targets of SDG17

The Sultanate has adopted the Culture of Peace as a pillar in its political practice since the beginning of the Omani Renaissance.

The Sultanate of Oman is always keen to fulfill all its international and regional obligations towards different organizations. It recognizes its international responsibility towards different causes that aim to serve humankind in several fields. It also plays an important role in the convergence of views among neighboring and friend countries, and has always sought to assist belligerent states in conflict resolution. This important role has been welcomed internationally. The Sultanate has adopted the Culture of Peace as a pillar in its political practice since the beginning of the modern Omani Renaissance. It is based on the firm belief that building processes and national growth and building a modern state all require the provision of necessary components, mainly the right climate on local, regional and international levels. Since peace is indeed indivisible, and constitutes a highly important value for His Majesty, peace has been the central topic of Omani policies at different levels, in the Gulf, regionally and internationally, without any compromise or overestimations. Thanks to the guidelines of His Majesty and his deep-rooted faith in peace, the Sultanate had the ability and the courage not only to clearly and honestly express its opinions and vision towards situations and developments occurring in the Gulf, the Arab world and internationally. It has also deployed relentless efforts in implementing its opinions in its relations with other states, whilst maintaining Oman's basic principles. His Majesty has asserted how essential this is in his Speech delivered on the glorious 28th National Day. "In our opinion, while at the gates of a new millenary, our most vital obligation is to work with states on fighting injustice and tyranny, curb ethnic cleansing and embrace human dignity, fight the occupation of other states' territories and denying their legitimate rights" he said. "We must create a justice system equitable for those suffering from injustice, in order to enshrine peace, security and welfare all over the globe" he added. This important endeavor is clearly reflected in Omani policies and positions, in a way that has increased the Sultanate's credibility and grown stronger with different conjunctures and developments in the region.

The Sultanate of Oman is an active member in different UN international organizations deliberation and debates and is keen to fulfill international and regional obligations towards different organizations.

The Sultanate recognizes its international responsibility towards different causes that aim to serve humankind in several fields, and its faith that it is a part of the world and a partner for humanity. Therefore, represented by the Oman Charitable Organization, the Sultanate has extended a helping hand at the service of humanity abroad. It seeks to mitigate the suffering and pain of the victims of natural disasters or political instability. Its activities include in addition to assistance, relief and reconstruction, conducting development programs and projects that aim to provide livelihoods and build the capacities in many developing countries. The Organization's activities covered many states during the last years. The scope of projects and programs implemented and adopted in 2017/2018 amounted to around 101.5 million USD.

The Sultanate supports the strengthening of regional and international cooperation

Keen to foster regional and international North-South, South-South, and tripartite cooperation in science, technology and innovation and improve knowledge exchange, the Office of Science, Knowledge & Technology Transfer was established within the Ministry Of Foreign Affairs MOFA. The MOFA has organized the Ocean Economy and Future Technology Conference in cooperation with the International Forum on Science and Technology Diplomacy. The conference was held for the first time in the region with the participation of different bodies from the governmental, industrial and academic sectors. The topic was linked to the international specialized sustainable development agenda. The Sultanate was nominated to lead international efforts for the achievement of SDG14, set forth by the United Nations and entitled: "Life Below Water". Many preliminary Memoranda of understanding were also set with international institutions to build the national capacities in the field of ocean economy. The Conference also recommended the deployment of relentless efforts for the achievement of economic diversity through focusing on the ocean economy sector, and the coordination with the GCC secretariat to foster Science and technology diplomacy in the area through the diplomatic training.

On another note, the Sultanate is considered one of the founding members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), an economic organization established in 1997 that encompasses many states located on the Indian Ocean Rim. The Association aims to foster sustainable

growth and balanced development in the area, while focusing on economic cooperation that provides the optimum opportunities for development and mutual benefit. The sultanate hosts the headquarters of the IORA Fisheries Support Unit, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishers. The Sultanate is also supposed to host the Tourism Resources Center and the Maritime Shipping Board, due to signing the related Headquarters Agreements. Both the Center and the Board will operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Transport & Communications respectively. It is noteworthy that the IORA Fisheries Support Unit was able during its course of work to conduct eight workshops within the Sultanate and abroad, attended by representatives from the rest of the member countries. All this confirms that international cooperation is crucial to achieve development targets.

The Sultan Qaboos scientific chairs and a leading role in developing human knowledge.

In the framework of exchanging knowledge and sciences, the Sultanate has established several scientific chairs holding the name of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos – May God Protect Him – in the greatest universities specialized in different academic disciplines worldwide; (16) Scientific chairs have been established in several famous universities around the world. A number of chairs are specialized in studies related to the Middle East and Arab and Islamic culture at the universities in (Tokyo, Beijing, Georgetown, Melbourne, Oxford, Cambridge, Laden University in the Netherlands, Al al-Bayt University in Jordan, and the College of William & Mary in the United States). Two IT specialized chairs were created in Lahore and Karachi Universities in Pakistan while other ones specialized in environmental issues were established in Utrecht University in the Netherlands and the Arabian Gulf University in Bahrain. His Majesty's Chair in US Harvard University is specialized in International Relations.

Regional and Global partnerships for achieving sustainable development.

In order to strengthen global partnerships to achieve sustainable development, the Sultanate has always sought to cooperate with its regional, Arab and global surroundings through regional, Arab and international organizations and bodies. On the regional level, the Sultanate cooperates with the Gulf Cooperation Council in exchanging experiences and knowledge and capacity building. It also hosts the GCC-STAT that issued its first report on the progress in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals within the GCC. The report includes data and information related to the seventeen SDGs.

In its Arab surroundings, the Sultanate participates in different gatherings, meetings and events organized by the League of Arab States in the SDGs 2030 follow-up and achievement scopes. It also hosted the

Eighteenth Annual Conference on “The Role of Arab Governments in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030” organized by the Ministry of Civil Service in cooperation with the Arab League's Arab Organization for Administrative Development ARADO in 2018.

At the international level, the Sultanate cooperates with UN organizations endeavoring for the achievement of the 2030 SDGs, namely the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia ESCWA that holds several events, particularly the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development AFSD in which the Sultanate participated twice in 2018 and 2019. In the framework of exchange of experience and capacity building, the Sultanate participated in many workshops related to the SDGs indicators, organized by the United Nations. It also attended the first and second UN World Data Forum in 2017 and 2018 respectively, while implementing several projects in cooperation with UNICEF and the UN Population Fund (UFP).

The Sultanate is also keen to encourage and foster public partnerships, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in addition to effective civil sector partnerships to benefit from the expertise acquired thereof, and the strategies for resource mobilization. The Oman Center for Governance and Sustainability OCGS, established in 2015, strengthens the partnership between the private sector and civil society organizations, through the Draft Sustainability Charter, a one of a kind project launched in the Sultanate. This project takes place in cooperation with an Omani specialized institution in the field of social responsibility and sustainability, and with the involvement of 34 public and private sector institutions and different associations. The society has also been involved through the questionnaire published on the OCGS's website.

Through its membership program, the OCGS provides a platform for the strengthening of the beneficiary's relations in terms of exchange of information and expertise revolving around all aspects of governance and sustainability. This is possible through an annual gathering of the members that opens the door for them to get introduced to the best local and international practices in both fields. The annual training programs the Center conducts in both fields form a melting pot for all government and private sectors. The OCGS has also contributed in the preparation of policies and guidelines for charitable associations, different state institutions, and the public and private sector businesses governance.

The OCGS has held its first annual conference on sustainability in December 2018. The conference was indeed dedicated to the definition of the concept of sustainability and the SDGs, and its importance in business environment in particular, and the economy in general. It is keen to shed the light on the Sustainability Charter and sustainable development priorities in different sectors within the sultanate. Therefore, the conference witnessed the presence of over 300 local and foreign attendees.



Challenges and Future Plans to Achieve the 2030 Agenda

Challenges:

A healthy regulatory framework for civil society institutions will foster their capacities in implementing programs effectively responding to the community's needs, in partnership with the public and private sectors. A firm and strict legal framework in privatization and partnership, especially the PPPs solid infrastructures are also crucial in this regard.

Future Plans:

Ensuring a sustainable institutional performance in the futuristic Oman 2040 vision, is founded on the establishment of a balanced and transparent partnership between public, private and civil society stakeholders, in addition to individuals. This will contribute to a better quality in economic development management, pushing it further forward. As a result, the Omani economy will become knowledge-based, able to keep pace with the latest industrial and technical advancements. This tendency accompanies a definition of the governmental sector role that must remain within the optimum amplitude, seeking to enable partnerships with other sectors and individuals, motivating them towards new economic and development roles.

Major Initiatives to Achieve SDG17

1- Sultan Qaboos Scientific Chairs:

Seeking to make the Sultanate's role in developing human knowledge more visible, (16) scientific chairs have been established in several famous universities around the world. A number of chairs are specialized in studies related to the Middle East and Arab and Islamic culture at the universities in (Tokyo, Beijing, Georgetown, Melbourne, Oxford, Cambridge, Laden University in the Netherlands, Al al-Bayt University in Jordan, and the College

of William & Mary in the United States). Two IT specialized chairs were created in Lahore and Karachi Universities in Pakistan while other ones specialized in environmental issues were established in Utrecht University in the Netherlands and the Arabian Gulf University in Bahrain. His Majesty's Chair in US Harvard University is also specialized in International Relations.

2- Sultan Qaboos college for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers:

The college was established based on the high command of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said – May God Protect Him – in order to strengthen the attention of HM towards Arabic, and in response to the contemporary requirements and those related to the global openness to the world's peoples.

The college provides quality Arabic language programs for non-native speakers in an authentic language and cultural environment. Thus, it aims to help learners acquire basic knowledge in Arabic listening, speaking, reading, writing and knowledge skills enabling them to communicate with the Arabic contemporary culture. The college also aims to provide an opportunity for non-native speakers to acquire the Arabic language skills and enable cultural communication with the society, while contributing in the dissemination of Arabic among peoples and introducing them to the Arab and Islamic nation civilization via its authentic heritage sources. These efforts will foster human links among Arab and foreign speakers. The college is located in Manah, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate.

The college provides short term Arabic Language courses divided

into six levels. Each course is 160 hours long presented over eight weeks, in addition to a complementary extra-curricular cultural program. The college also uses interactive software for teaching Arabic for continuous learning during extra-curricular hours, anywhere and anytime. Thus, students will be able to study the content and perform curricular exercises and accompanying tests, receiving results immediately.

Realizing that language learning is impossible without culture, the college provides an integrated cultural program for a maximized benefit in an authentic Arab environment. The program contains weekly outings to the most important historical and touristic natural and archeological sites and monuments in the Sultanate, and the hosting of speakers and specialists to deliver lectures on different historical, cultural, social and economic aspects.

The college welcomes yearly over 200 students from around the world. The number of the college's student nationalities reached over 45 in 2018. The college has celebrated the end of the course 33 in February 2019.



Conclusion

The Sustainable Development Goals in their three social, economic and environmental dimensions never missed the development plans and national strategies of Oman since the beginning of its renaissance. The government's political management was present, in a way that clearly reflects the sultanate's commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, incorporating the 17 goals into the Oman National Vision 2040.

The personality of Omani individuals fond of love, peace, and tolerance, rejecting all forms of discrimination and enshrining the principle of integration and the acceptance of others through communication and dialogue, reflects the authenticity and deep roots of the sustainable development goals and values. This is obvious through many examples and initiatives conducted by Oman, namely the "Message of Peace from Oman", through which Oman was able to disseminate the values of peace, tolerance and love in most countries in the world. Another project is the One Million Date Palm Trees, to achieve national food security, and the Road safety research program that significantly reduced traffic accidents. Other programs include MIRAAH for clean energy production, considered one of the largest projects in the Middle East, in addition to the National Youth Program for Skills Development in preparation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution Era.

The first Voluntary Report on the SDGs 2030 for the Sultanate of Oman tackles the economic, demographic and technological challenges burdening the entire world, including the Sultanate. The report also monitors the current situation namely regarding the alignment of the SDGs and the efforts deployed, challenges and plans. It monitors initiatives towards the SDGs achievement undertaken by the government and partners from the private sector, civil society institutions, in addition to the Council of Oman (consisting of State Council and the Shura Council) joining hands in a unified integrated system aiming to achieve a better future for Oman. Citizens and residents will thus enjoy social and economic welfare without harming the ecosystem, natural resources and the future generations.

The Sultanate of Oman has always been an active member in all United Nations deliberations and debates related to the former Millennium Development Goals or the SDGs agenda 2030. To name but a few examples, SDG4 (quality education and related targets) drafted in the World Conference on Education for All, held in May 2014 in the Sultanate, was named the "Muscat Declaration".

Through the tenth five-year plan (2021-2025), the first executive plan for the vision for the future (Oman 2040), the Sultanate will seek to intensify efforts in priority fields to integrate the UN Agenda. In so doing it will implement a set of initiatives and programs on the short and medium term as follows:

- Ensure the participation of the largest parts of the community, including different governorates and the youth, provide all forms of support for the community's communication lines in order to raise awareness, enlarge the scope of participation and disseminate the sustainable development culture especially at the local level.
- Build an integrated dashboards-based system to monitor progress indicators at the level of the SDG 2030 goals and targets, while aligning achievements with national targets periodically.
- Build partnerships and ensure effort complementarity and coordination, with priority setting based on a vision with clearly defined objectives and roles, that seeks to achieve the SDGs among key partners (the government – the private sector – civil society).
- Strengthen and support the role of the National Committee for the follow-up on the Sustainable Development Goals, and national working groups in ministries and authorities in a way that achieves their objectives. For instance, coordinating efforts and monitoring SDG 2030 achievement progress, involving stakeholders and submitting periodic reports regarding the levels of implementation of the SDGs.
- Support SDGs programs and initiatives for different governorates of the Sultanate; develop their local communities in terms of infrastructure, government services, public utilities, and an investment friendly regulatory environment, based on available resources. The new technologies will be encouraged in addition to the sustainable optimal use of available land and natural resources, in a way that entails excellence and effectiveness in investment.

The Sultanate of Oman is committed to achieving the SDGs in their three social, economic and environmental dimensions within set deadlines. Despite major challenges, the Sultanate is ever determined and confident in its journey towards achieving these SDGs. It benefits from a large span of credits based on its international relations with Arab, regional and international surroundings. It also benefits from the support of a widespread community engagement in the design, implementation and assessment of plans, policies and programs set forth to face such challenges. The Sultanate firmly believes that exchanging experiences and expertise of different states at such a high level will be pivotal in achieving these most coveted goals according to the Agenda agreed upon.



The Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals Indicators

The SDG Information Board Preparation Methodology

The Sustainable Development Goals Information Board monitors the progress in achieving the Sultanate's SDGs through comparing and measuring the development over time. It also represents a quantitative tool in identifying challenges to achieve these goals, helping to prioritize early intervention, and formulating potential strategies for achieving the SDGs by 2030. This Information Board is presented on two levels:

- **Level 1:** According to the results of the targets measured, the Central Information Board assesses the level of progress towards the SDGs.
- **Level 2:** Indicators and Information Board that reached (100) indicators which reflect (72) targets and cover the 17 SDGs have been audited according to international methodologies by the National Center for Statistics and Information. Additionally, further indicators are planned to be added in subsequent publications.

The signal and color system (green, yellow, and red) used by the boards indicate the extent to which the country is close to or away from achieving a particular goal. Furthermore, it helps in measuring the general trend of performance in the previous years, in which it is possible to infer whether it is on track to achieve a specific SDG by 2030. Through this assessment, areas that require faster progress can be identified. In order to measure the process of assessing progress in achieving the SDGs, we have relied on the following methodology:

1- SDGs Central Information Board:

It assesses the progress in the performance of the SDGs according to the targets that have been set forth for measuring the plates to the following levels:

	According to the goals	Positive results in target implementation
	Towards achieving the goals	Some positive results in target implementation
	Away from the goals	Negative results in target implementation

2- 2. Goals and Indicators Information Boards

It assesses the achievement of SDGs by measuring the overall trend of indicator value chains. The evaluation results are divided into the following levels:

	Achieved Goals	Indicators related to Goals and Targets achieved positive results before 2030
	Towards achieving the Goals	Indicators show a progress near to achieve the Goals and Targets in 2030
	Average achievement of the Goals	The Goals and Targets indicators reflect disparities in performance with the possibility of achievement by 2030
	Challenges to achieve the Goals	The indicators face challenges in pursuing the Goals and Targets achievement by the year 2030
	Goals have not been evaluated	The Goals are not evaluated for the lack .of time sequence for index values



Performance Evaluation in achieving the Sultanate's Sustainable Development Goals

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
SDG1: No Poverty			
1.1.1 The proportion of population living below the international poverty line (\$1.90)	0%	2015	
1.4.2 The proportion of citizens with a guaranteed right to own lands (as a percentage of the total number of adults) who have official documents and whose ownerships are guaranteed	100%	2015	
1.5.3 The number of countries with national and local strategies to mitigate disasters	The Sultanate has a Strategy	-	
1.5.4 The percentage of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with National Strategies for Disaster	The Sultanate has a Strategy	-	
1.A.2 The percentage of government expenditure on essential services (such as: education, health and social protection) of total government expenditure:			
- Education	15.0%	2017	
- Health	6.3%	2017	
- Social Security and Welfare	3.9%	2017	
- Total	25.1%	2017	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
SDG2: Zero Hunger			
1.2.2 Stunting prevalence rate (height for age under two standard deviations from the WHO child growth chart) among children under 5 years	11.4%	2017	
2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height under two or more standard deviations from WHO's child growth chart) among children under 5 classified by quality:			
- Wasting	9.3%	2017	
- Overweigh	3.1%	2017	
2.A.1 Agricultural Orientation Index of Government Expenditure: The percentage of government expenditure on agriculture out of total government expenditure	0.86%	2017	
2.C.1 Food price discrepancies index	103	2017	
SDG3: Health and Well-Being			
3.1.1 Maternal mortality rate (number of deaths per 100,000 live births)	15.2	2018	
3.1.2 The percentage of birth under the supervision of competent health specialists (%)	98.7%	2017	
3.2.1 Mortality rate for children under 5 (number of deaths per 1,000 live birth)	11.4	2017	
3.2.2 Newborns mortality rate (number of deaths for 1,000 live birth)	6.3	2017	
3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections (for Omanis) (per 1,000 uninfected people)	0.06	2017	
3.3.2 Tuberculosis prevalence rate (per 1,000 people)	0.06	2017	
3.3.3 Number of malaria cases (per 1,00 people)	0.002	2017	
3.3.4 Number of Hepatitis B infections (per 100,000 people)	0.72	2017	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
3.3.5 Number of people requiring interventions to control neglected tropical diseases	50	2017	
3.4.1 Mortality rate due to cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases (for Omanis) (per 100,000 citizens)	138.7	2017	
3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate (for Omanis) (per 100,000 citizens)	0.29	2017	
3.6.1 Death rate from road traffic injuries (per 100,000 population)	14.04	2017	
3.7.1 Percentage of women of childbearing age (15-49 years old) who have had access to modern family planning methods	62.5%	2014	
3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women in the same group age): - group age 15-19 years	12.5	2017	
3.8.1 Coverage of basic health services (defined as the average of basic services based on tracking interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious and non-communicable diseases, and the ability to provide and access services among the general population and the most disadvantaged).	75%	2017	
3.8.2 Percentage of population with high family expenditure on health as a proportion of total household expenditure or income.	2.3%	2008	
3.9.1 Mortality attributable to air pollution in the household and its environment (per 100,000 inhabitants).	11.2	2017	
3.9.2 Mortality attributable to unsafe water and sanitation and lack of cleaning materials (exposure to unsafe hygiene services), (per 100,000 inhabitants).	0.04	2017	
3.9.3 Mortality rates due to unintentional poisoning (for Omanis) (per 100,000 inhabitants).	0.0	2017	
3. A.1 Standardized prevalence rate for tobacco use by persons aged 15 and above.	6% (for Omanis) 8% (for total population)	2017	
3. B.1 The proportion of the population with permanent access to basic medicines and vaccines at affordable prices.	100%	2017	
3. B.3 Percentage of health institutions with a basic sustainable and affordable supply of medication.	100%	2017	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
3.C.1 Health professionals' rate (number of workers in the medical field per 10,000 persons)			
- Nurses	43.7	2017	↑
- Pharmacists	5.4	2017	↑
- Dentists	3.0	2017	↑
- General Doctors	20.1	2017	↑
3.D.1 The capacity to implement international health regulations and preparedness to address health emergencies	90%	2017	↑
SDG4: Quality Education			✓
4.1.1 The percentage of children / youth: (a) in second / third grade, (b) at the end of the primary level, (c) at the end of the first stage of secondary education who had achieved at least the minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics according to gender.			
- Reading (Fourth Grade)	59%	2016	●
- Mathematics (Fourth Grade)	60%	2015	●
- Mathematics (Eighth Grade)	52%	2015	●
4.2.1 The percentage of children below five enjoying a healthy growth, learning and psychological well-being by gender:	68%	2014	●
- Reading and Calculation	36.7%	2014	●
- Health Growth	92%	2014	●
- Psychological Well-Being	68.4%	2014	●
- Learning	83.8%	2014	●
4.2.2 The rate of participation in formal learning (one year before the official age of enrollment in primary education) for citizens based on gender:	68.2%	2016	●
- Male	67.3%	2016	●
- Female	69.2%	2016	●

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
4.5.1 Equality index (female / male) ratio enrolled in:			
- Primary Education	0.995	2016/2017	●
- Complementary Education	0.980	2016/2017	●
- Secondary Education	0.997	2016/2017	●
4.6.1 Reading and writing skills rate for the population aged 15 and above	96.3	2018	●
4.7.1 (a) The extent of global citizenship education, (b) education for sustainable development which includes gender equality and human rights at all levels (national policy level), (curriculum level), and (professor level)	Yes	-	👍
4.A.1 Percentage of schools with access to:			↑
- Electrical Power	100%	2010-2017	↑
- Internet for educational purposes	91%	2010-2017	↑
- Computers for educational reasons	100%	2010-2017	↑
- Infrastructures and materials suitable for students with disabilities	-	-	
- Basic health facilities for each gender	100%	2010-2017	↑
- Basic facilities for hand washing	100%	2010-2017	↑
4.C.1 The percentage of teachers who received a minimum of formal training (such as training in education) prior to or during their service in order to be able to teach at the appropriate level:			👍
- Pre-primary education	-		
- Primary Education	100%	2016	👍
- Intermediate Education	100%	2016	👍
- Secondary Education	100%	2016	👍

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
SDG5: Gender Equality			
5.1.1 The availability or lack of legislative frameworks to promote, enforce and monitor gender equality and non-discrimination	The Basic Statute of the State	1996	
5.3.1 The percentage of women between the ages of 20 and 24 who got married under the age of 15 and 18 years			
- Under 15	1.2%	2014	
- Under 18	4.0%	2014	
5.4.1 The percentage of time spent for unpaid domestic work and care (for citizens) based on gender:			
- Male	8.1%	2008	
- Female	19.2%	2008	
5.5.1 The percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments:			
- National Parliament (2015-2019)	9.0%	2015-2019	
- Municipalities and local councils	3.5%	2016-2020	
5.5.2 The percentage of women in managerial positions:			
- Undersecretary of Ministry (including the head of the authority)	5.8	2017	
- Ambassador	7.1	2017	
- General Manager and similar positions	7.5	2017	
- Consultant	5.6	2017	
- Director of Directorate	9.6	2017	
- Head of Section	13.8	2017	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
5.6.1 The percentage of women aged between 15 and 49 who make their own decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care			
- The proportion of married Omani women between the ages of 15-49 who use family planning	29.5%	2014	
- The percentage of women who received care during pregnancy	99.6%	2017	
5.6.2 The number of countries with laws and regulations ensuring that women aged between 15 and 49 receive sexual and reproductive health care, information and education:			
- Sexual health care services for women (yes/no)	Yes	-	
- Reproductive health services for women (yes/no)	Yes	-	
5. A.1. (a) The proportion of people who own or enjoy guaranteed rights in agricultural land (out of the total agricultural population) based on gender; (b) Share of women among owners or holders of rights in agricultural land, by type of tenure			
Number or plots of agricultural lands owned	101026	2017	
-Males	81125	2017	
-Females	8889	2017	
-Common	11012	2017	
5.A.2 The percentage of countries in which the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women rights equally in land ownership and / or control	Yes: The Basic Statute of the State and Royal Decree no. (125/2008)	2008	
- Official legal framework (yes/no)			
- Customary legal framework (yes/no)			
5.B.1 The percentage of individuals with mobile phones based on gender:	91%	2016	
- Males	94%	2016	
- Females	87%	2016	
- Number of mobile users (millions)	6.87	2016	
5.C.1 The percentage of countries with systems for allocating and tracking public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (yes/no)			
- A public budget allocation system for gender equality	Yes	-	
- A tracking system for public allocations for gender equality			
- A tracking system for public allocations for women's empowerment			

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
SDG6: Clean Water and Sanitation			
6.1.1 The percentage of population benefiting from safe drinking water services	98.7%	2016	
6.2.1 The percentage of population benefiting from the proper management of sanitation services, including hand washing facilities with soap and water	99%	2014	
6.3.1 The percentage of safe sewage treatment	100%	2018	
6.3.2 The percentage of water bodies coming from a good quality of surrounding water	75%	2018	
6.4.1 Change in water use efficiency over a period of time	47 دولار/م/3	2018	
6.4.2 The volume of water pressure: fresh water extracted as a proportion of available water resources	128%	2018	
6.5.1 The implementation extent of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)	38%	2018	
SDG7: Affordable and Clean Energy			
7.1.1 The percentage of population benefiting from electric power services	100%	2017	
7.1.2 The proportion of population relying mainly on clean fuels and technology			
• Clean fuel	98.9%	2014	
• Clean Technology	99.3%	2014	
SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth			
8.2.1 The annual growth rate per capita out of real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), (In USD)	-1.4%	2017	
8.5.1 Unemployment rate according to gender, group age and persons with disabilities			
- The rate of jobseekers (Omanis)	1.7%	2017	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
8.6.1 The percentage of Omani youth (aged between 15 and 24 years) outside education, employment and training	19.4%	2016-2017	●
8.9.1 The direct contribution of tourism to the GDP in percentage and growth rate - The direct contribution of tourism to the GDP in percentage	2.6%	2017	↑
8.10.1 The number of commercial banks branches and ATMs per 100,000 adults - The number of branches of commercial banks per 100,000 of the population	12.3	2017	→
SDG9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure			✓
9.1.1 The proportion of rural population living two kilometers away from a suitable road in all seasons - Relative distribution of families in villages according to the distance from asphalt roads:			↑
Less than 1 km	83.9%	2016	↑
Between 1 and 5 km	8.4%	2016	↑
More than 5 km	7.7%	2016	↑
9.1.2 The number of passengers (airfare) and volume of shipment, based on transportation means			
- Number of passengers on airplanes (per million)	11.3	2015	●
- Commodity volume (per million tons):			
Transported by sea	25.0	2015	●
Transported by land	10.5	2015	●
9.2.1 The added value of manufacturing as a share of GDP per capita			
- The added value of manufacturing as a share of GDP at constant prices	9.3%	2017	→
- Per capita added value for manufacturing (in OMR)	582.3	2017	→
- Per capita added value for manufacturing (in USD)	1584.9	2017	→
9.2.2 The manufacturing employment as a share of total manpower	11%	2017	→
9.5.1 Research and development expenditures as a share of the GNP	0.22	2017	↑
9.5.2 Research staff rate (full-time equivalent) per 1 million inhabitants	239	2017	↑

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
9.C.1 The share of the population covered by mobile phone networks in terms of technology:			
- 3G mobile network	99.04%	2017	
- LTE/WiMAX mobile network	92.13%	2017	
SDG10: Reduced Inequality			
10.1.1 The average growth rate of Omani households' share of expenditure	0.41%	2010-2011	
10.4.1 The share of labor in GDP, including wages and social protection payments	39.9%	2017	
SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities			
11. B.2 The percentage of local governments adopting and implementing local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the national ones.	The Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs has in place a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy		
SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production			
Number of countries that have national plans for sustainable consumption and production or have integrated them into national policies as a priority or objective Does the State have national action plans for sustainable consumption and production? (Yes/No) Is the State incorporating national plans into national policies as a priority? (Yes/No)	Yes, the Ninth Development Plan (2016-2020)	2016	
SDG13: Climate Action			
13.1.2 The number of countries adopting and implementing national strategies for disaster risk reduction in line with the SANDAI Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2015-2030	The Sultanate already has a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy at the national level		
13.1.3 The proportion of local governments adopting and implementing local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national framework	The Sultanate already has a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy at the local level		

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
SDG14: Life Below Water			
14.5.1 The coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas	65%	2019	
14.6.1 The progress by States in the implementation of international instruments to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing	The Sultanate strictly implements measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and has recorded a full point in this indicator, which has helped in achieving the highest performance in the index.	-	
14. B.1 Are there any legal, organizational, political or institutional frameworks for the protection of water resources? (Yes/No)	-There is an institutional framework in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and a legal framework via the Law on Fishing and the Protection of Water Resources. - The Sultanate is implementing strict procedures for access to resources and markets for small-scale fisheries.	-	
SDG15: Life on Land			
15-1-2 Surface of natural reserves compared to land surface	3.7%	2019	
15-1-2 Progress achieved in establishing sustainable forest management Percentage of forest lands within legally created reserve areas	22%	2017	
15.3.1 The percentage of degraded land to total land area	7.3%	2000-2015	
15.5.1 The coverage of reserve areas for important sites for mountain biodiversity	15%	2019	
15.4.2 The Green Hills List Index	49.9%	2017	
15.5.1 The Red List Index	0.91%	2018	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions			
16.1.1 The number of victims of deliberate murder per 100,000 inhabitants, according to their age and gender	0.5	2017	
16.2.1 The percentage of children who are aged between 1 and 17 years and have been subjected to any physical punishment and / or psychological abuse by caregivers in the previous month (citizens)			
• Physical punishment	0.0027	2015	
• Psychological abuse	0.0001	2015	
16.2.2 The number of human trafficking victims per 100,000 inhabitants according to their gender, group age and type of exploitation. - Number of cases of human trafficking (per 100,000 inhabitants)	2	2017	
16.A.1 The existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles - Are there independent national human rights institutions committed to the Paris Principles (Yes / No)	Yes, Omani Commission for Human Rights	-	
SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals			
17.3.1 Foreign Direct Investment, Official Development Assistance (ODA) and South-South Cooperation, as a share of the total domestic budget.			
• FDI (billion OMR)	7.4	2016	
• FDI ratio of GDP (%)	28.8%	2016	
17.3.2 The volume of remittances (in US dollars) as a share of GDP.			
• Volume of remittances (billion OMR)	3.775	2017	
• The volume of remittances as a percentage of the GDP (%)	13.9%	2017	

Indicator	Value	Period	Assessment
17.5.1 The number of countries adopting and implementing investment incentive systems for the least developed countries. • Does the State adopt and implement investment incentive systems for the least developed countries (Yes / No)	Yes, Foreign Capital Investment Law	-	
17.6.2 The number of broadband Internet subscriptions per 100 persons, according to speed:			
256 kbps to 2 Mbps	0.14	2017	
2 Mbps to 10 Mbps	6.39	2017	
above 10 Mbps	1.12	2017	
17.8.1 The percentage of individuals using Internet	77%	2016	
17.16.1 The number of countries reporting on progress made through the framework of an effective multi-stakeholder monitoring system that supports the achievement of sustainable development goals	The National Commission for the achievement of the SDGs, in cooperation with the National Center for Statistics and Information and the concerned parties, shall carry out follow-up reports and progress in achieving the goals.	-	
17.18.2 The number of countries with national statistical legislation that adhere to the basic principles of official statistics. - Is there any national statistical legislation that complies with the basic principles of official statistics? (Yes / No)	Yes, the Omani Statistical Code	-	
17.19.2 The percentage of countries that have (a) conducted a general population and housing census in the past 10 years; (b) registered 100 percent of births and 80 percent of deaths. A) Has the State implemented a population census over the past 10 years? (Yes / No)	Yes, the General Population Census for 2010	2010	







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