



MENA-OECD  
Governance Programme

# Activity Report 2021-2022

& Overview of the  
Programme of Work 2023-2024

policy intergenerational justice **anti-corruption**  
Open capacity **trust** building consultation **recommendations**  
Government **simplification** implementation  
**green governance** youth gender inclusiveness  
**Participation** Civil management Citizen **information** digital  
transparency **society** resilience  
**people-centered** efficiency accountability OECD  
**integrity** local **partnership** declaration **dialogue**  
Government **access to justice** asset recovery  
analysts innovative **impact**  
**budget** MENA projects

## **THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international body that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. It is made up of 38 member countries, a secretariat in Paris, and a committee, drawn from experts from government and other fields, for each work area covered by the organisation. The OECD provides a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. We collaborate with governments to understand what drives economic, social and environmental change. We measure productivity and global flows of trade and investment.

## **THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME**

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme is a strategic partnership between MENA and OECD countries to share knowledge and expertise, with a view of disseminating standards and principles of good governance that support the ongoing process of reform in the MENA region. The Programme strengthens collaboration with the most relevant multilateral initiatives currently underway in the region.

The Programme acts as a leading advocate of managing ongoing public governance reforms in the MENA region. It provides a sustainable structure for regional policy dialogue as well as for country-specific projects.

This Report provides an overview of activities and achievements under the MENA-OECD Governance Programme in 2021-2022, and highlights priorities and key objectives for 2023-2024.



# THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

## IN NUMBERS (2021-2022)

### 18 MENA participants



- Algeria ▪ Bahrain ▪ Djibouti ▪ Egypt ▪ Iraq ▪ Jordan ▪ Kuwait ▪ Lebanon ▪ Libya ▪ Mauritania ▪ Morocco ▪ Oman ▪ Palestinian Authority ▪ Qatar ▪ Saudi Arabia ▪ Tunisia ▪ United Arab Emirates ▪ Yemen ▪

### 7 MENA countries



*taking an active part as participants or invitees in OECD Committees on public governance and regulatory policies*

**5 MENA countries** are included as either **Participants** Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia or **Invitees** Jordan and the UAE **in the Public Governance Committee Participation Plan**

**7 MENA countries** are included in the **Regulatory Policies Committee Participation Plan as Invitees** Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE

Aligned with the work of

### 12 OECD public governance communities



- Public Governance Committee
- Regulatory Policy Committee
- Committee of Senior Budget Officials ▪ Working Party on Open Government ▪ Senior Public Integrity Officials ▪ Working Party on Performance and Results ▪ Working Party on Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership
- Public Employment and Management ▪ Senior Digital Government Officials ▪ OPSI
- Leading Public Procurement Practitioners ▪ Friends of Youth PLUS ▪ Access to Justice Roundtables ▪

### 3



### OECD Recommendations

*on Public Governance formally adopted by MENA countries*

- Governance of Critical Risks (Morocco and Tunisia) ▪ Digital Government strategies (Morocco and Egypt) ▪ Open Government (Morocco and Tunisia) ▪

### 1000+ Participants



from the public sector, the civil society and the private sector in trainings, workshops and conferences

# THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME IN NUMBERS (2021-2022)



## 100+

### Activities

*to strengthen public governance reform in the region including*

**60+** capacity-building activities to support public governance reform

**26** regional and country-specific high-level meetings to improve governance and share good practices

## 12 National public administration tools

*developed with 6 MENA governments in the areas of*



e.g. Toolkit to strengthen communication and citizen participation at the local level (Morocco), methodological guidebook on the elaboration of citizen charters for monitoring the quality of public services (Tunisia), interactive website page for the publication of new laws and regulations online (Palestinian Authority)

## 25K

**followers on the official @OECDgov Twitter account**



## 8

### MENA-OECD permanent working groups, network and focus group

to facilitate and guide strategic and policy dialogue and technical cooperation across all areas of public governance

- Working Group on Civil Service And Integrity
- Working Group On Open And Innovative Government
- Working Group On Regulatory Reform & Rule Of Law
- Youth Empowerment Network
- Network Of Public Procurement Practitioners
- MENA Senior Budget Officials Network
- Platform On Gender Mainstreaming Governance And Leadership
- Focus Group On Local Government

## 1

### Training centre



## SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

### OPEN & CLEAN GOVERNMENT



- In **Tunisia**, three citizen charters were adopted by three public enterprises and agencies, as well as 6 municipalities, to improve the quality, transparency and accountability in public service delivery for citizens.
- **Lebanon** adopted a National Action Plan on access to information.
- **Jordan** created an Open Government Unit at the Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation.

### RULE OF LAW



- The **Palestinian Authority's** Official Gazette Bureau (Diwan al-Fatwa) developed a more accessible and interactive website and social media page for the publication of new laws and regulations online. Jordan published draft laws online for public consultation.
- **Lebanon** established a National Anti-Corruption Commission.
- **Tunisia** developed a methodological guide and a Code of Ethics to bolster the work of its ministerial inspectors to improve integrity.

### LOCAL GOVERNANCE



- In **Tunisia**, local coordination mechanisms, or Conflict and Crisis Task Forces were created in six priority municipalities to improve the social protection response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- **Morocco's** General Directorate of Local Authorities developed a toolkit to strengthen communication and citizen participation at the local level.
- **Tunisia** developed its first ever epidemiological report to study the impact of COVID-19 on municipal waste collection to support the continuity of municipal waste collection services in crises. Eleven local service providers across the country have also piloted a participatory approach in drafting citizen charters and invited civil society to monitor their implementation. They led to concrete improvements in terms of local public service delivery.

### MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT



- **Lebanon** adopted a new Digital Transformation Strategy.
- **Morocco** strengthened its centre of government institutions to support the implementation of the Government Programme 2021-2026 and its new model of development.

### GENDER EQUALITY



- **UAE** adopted the first gender equal pay and wage legislation and created a Gender Balance Council and a Public Sector Innovation Centre.
- In order to improve the effective implementation of its GBV Law (58-2017), **Tunisia** strengthened coordination in the area of orientation and care for GBV victims, both within public agencies and with civil society.

### YOUTH EMPOWERMENT



- **Jordan's** Ministry of Youth developed more youth-sensitive policies in line with the recommendations of the OECD report (2021) "Empowering Youth and Building Trust in Jordan" through the creation of a programme for youth-led initiatives and the development of an Institutional Development and a National Youth Strategy.
- **Tunisia's** Ministry of Youth and Sports developed more youth-sensitive policies in line with the recommendations of the OECD report (2021) "Empowering Youth and Building Trust in Tunisia" through the creation of a youth-led Youth Advisory Council and the development of a regional youth action plan in the Nabeul governorate.



## KEY REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS

*Scan the QR code to read the reports*



### **Youth at the Centre of Government Action**

A review of the Middle East and North Africa



### **Institutions Guaranteeing Access to Information in OECD & MENA countries**

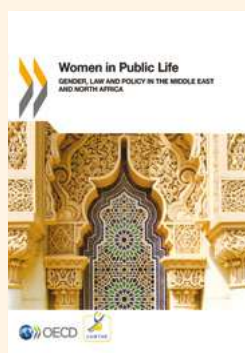
OECD and MENA Region



### **Internal Control and Risk Management for Public Sector Integrity in the Middle East and North Africa**

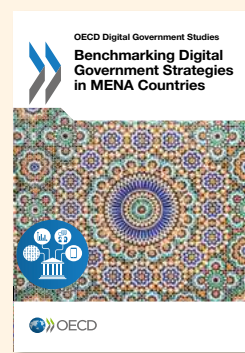


### **Stocktaking Report on MENA Public Procurement Systems**

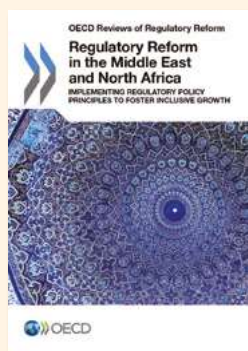


### **Women in Public Life**

Gender, Law and Policy in the Middle East and North Africa



### **Benchmarking Digital Government Strategies in MENA Countries**



### **Regulatory Reform in the Middle East and North Africa**

Implementing Regulatory Policy Principles to Foster Inclusive Growth

## KEY COUNTRY PUBLICATIONS

*Scan the QR code to read the reports*

### ALGERIA



**Guide des marchés publics**  
République algérienne démocratique  
et populaire

### EGYPT



**Integrated Governance for Coherent  
Implementation of the SDGs in Egypt**

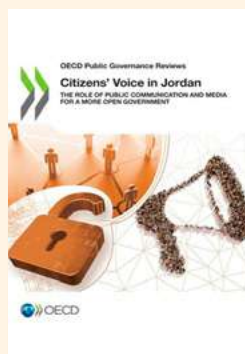


**Good Governance in Egypt**  
Legislative Drafting Manual for Better Policy

### JORDAN



**Empowering Youth and Building Trust  
in Jordan**



**Citizens' Voice in Jordan**  
The Role of Public Communication and Media  
for a More Open Government



**Women's Political Participation in Jordan**

### LEBANON



**Open Government Scan of Lebanon**



**Citizens' Voice in Lebanon**  
The Role of Public Communication and Media  
for a More Open Government



**Digital Government in Lebanon**  
Governance for Coherent and Sustainable  
Policy Implementation



## KEY COUNTRY PUBLICATIONS

*Scan the QR code to read the reports*

### MOROCCO



**Renforcer l'autonomie et la confiance des jeunes au Maroc**



**Voix Citoyenne au Maroc**  
Le rôle de la communication et des médias pour un gouvernement plus ouvert



**Digital Government Review of Morocco**  
Laying the Foundations for the Digital Transformation of the Public Sector in Morocco



**OECD Review of Risk Management Policies in Morocco**



**Diagnostic d'intégrité au Maroc**  
Mettre en œuvre des politiques d'intégrité pour renforcer la confiance



**Scan de l'espace civique en Tunisie**



**Renforcer l'autonomie et la confiance des jeunes en Tunisie**



**Voix Citoyenne en Tunisie**  
Le rôle de la communication et des médias pour un gouvernement plus ouvert



**Rule of Law and Governance in the Palestinian Authority**  
Delivering Better Policies and Legislation for Citizens

### TUNISIA

### PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY



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# 1

## The MENA-OECD Governance Programme

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## A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

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The MENA-OECD Governance Programme is a strategic partnership between MENA and OECD countries to share knowledge and expertise, with a view of disseminating standards and principles of good governance that support the ongoing process of reform in the MENA region.

The Programme strengthens collaboration with the most relevant multilateral initiatives currently underway in the region. In particular, the Programme assists governments in meeting the eligibility criteria to become a member of the Open Government Partnership.

Through these initiatives, the Programme acts as a leading advocate of managing ongoing public governance reforms in the MENA region. The Programme provides a sustainable structure for regional policy dialogue as well as for country specific projects. These projects correspond to the commitment of MENA governments to implement public sector reforms in view of unlocking social and economic development and of meeting citizens' growing expectations in terms of quality services, inclusive policy making and transparency.

By drawing on its network of peer experts and policy-makers, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme brings together high-level practitioners from MENA and OECD countries. Through constantly exchanging best practices, providing capacity-building seminars and implementation support, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme helps foster a more inclusive social and economic development in the region.

The OECD Training Centre on Public Governance, hosted in Caserta, Italy by the Italian National School of Administration (SNA), supports the Programme in developing and conducting capacity-building activities aimed at MENA public officials in order to pursue efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector and good governance.

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme cooperates closely with SIGMA. The SIGMA Programme, launched in 1992, is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union, principally financed by the EU. Since 2008, it has helped strengthen public governance systems and the capacities of public administration in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia.



## FOCUS ON SIX KEY AREAS

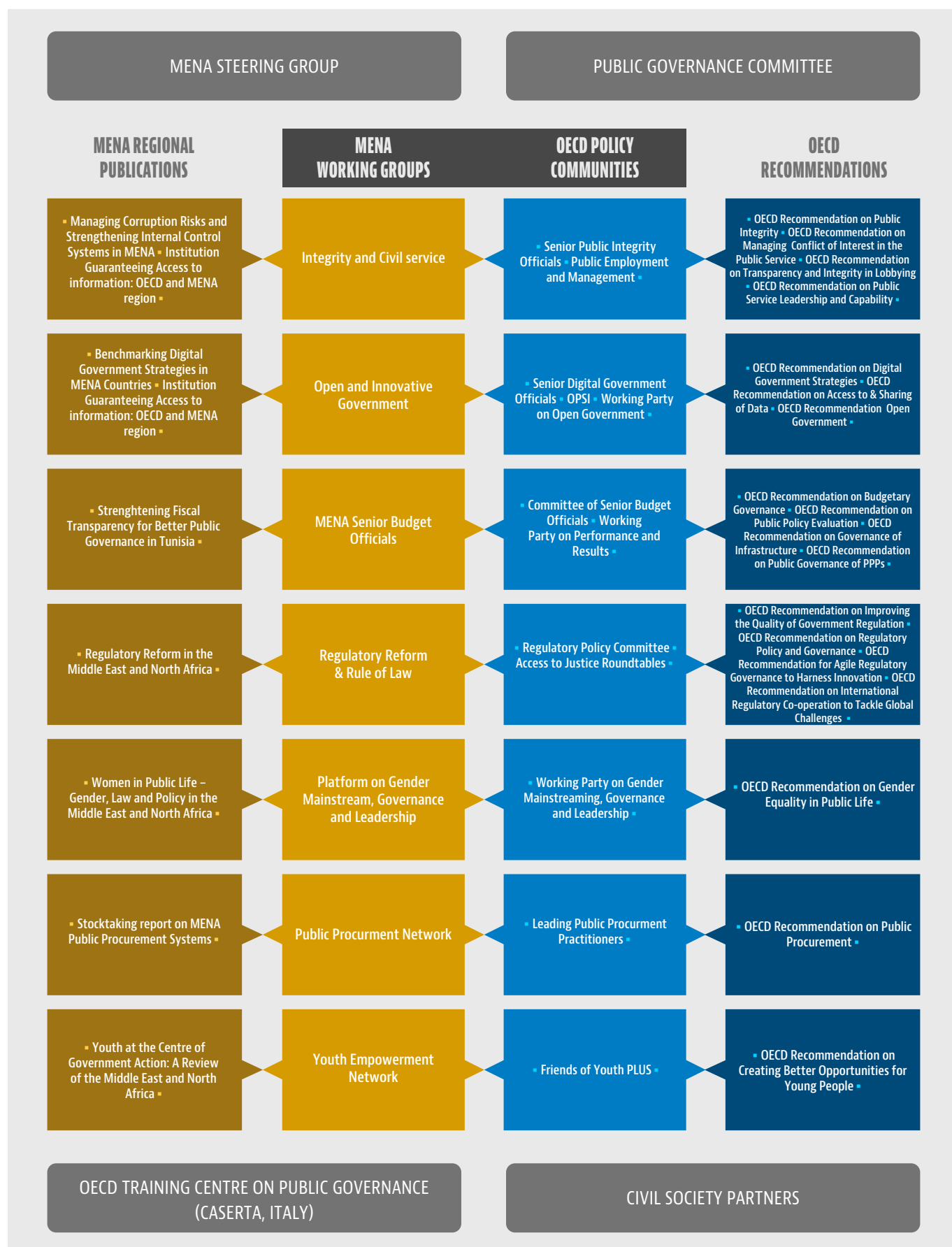




## THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE



## THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE



## STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS FOR THE PROGRAMME: THE 2021 MENA-OECD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

The 2021 **Ministerial Conference** of the MENA-OECD Initiative for Competitiveness and Governance “*Designing a Roadmap for Recovery in MENA*”, was organised online 1 April 2021. The event was opened by OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría, and gathered over 200 high level participants from 38 economies (24 OECD Member states and 14 MENA economies), including 15 Ministers. The Conference featured unprecedented participation, with keynote speeches from the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, and Ministerial participation from most MENA economies, together with ministers and high officials from OECD countries. Participants to the discussions expressed their views for a shared vision towards an inclusive recovery, addressing structural challenges and strengthening the resilience of economies and societies in MENA. A strong consensus emerged on making people-centred policies and a renewed growth model to attract investments core pillars of the recovery vision. As part of these discussions, participants launched the 2021-2025 mandate for the Initiative, which aims at enhancing coordination to work together towards a fairer, greener and more inclusive future. The Conference successfully concluded with the endorsement of the MENA-OECD **Ministerial Declaration**, and shared key messages for the future of the Initiative.

### DECLARATION

The Annex of the declaration lays out the strategic orientations and working methods for the MENA-OECD Governance Programme's fifth mandate, in line with the structure and agendas of the OECD's Public Governance Committee and Regulatory Policy Committee and their sub-bodies as well as the SIGMA Initiative. Key objectives are:

- Implementing effective risk governance and management
- Building more open and transparent institutions with solid integrity and anti-corruption frameworks as well as public sector digitalization and innovation
- Advancing gender equality as well as youth empowerment
- Developing infrastructure and public procurement systems
- Creating more accountable and responsive service delivery for the most vulnerable
- Enhancing rule of law systems and people-centered justice with an equal access to justice for all
- Supporting institution-building in post-conflict countries as well as at the local level
- Facilitating the effectiveness of public institutions through regulatory reform and strong budgetary and public finance frameworks
- Combatting illicit trade and reducing informal economies

**GOVERNANCE FORUM**  
Visions for recovery  
Delivering for the most vulnerable

**Roundtable and Open Discussion**

 <b>Ms. Miriam ALLAM</b> Head of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, OECD	 <b>Ms. Fabiana DADONE</b> Minister of Youth, Italy	 <b>Dr. Sahar EL SONBATY</b> Secretary General of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, Egypt	 <b>Mr. Chris HODGES</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary for Assistance Coordination and Press and Public Diplomacy, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, United States Department of State	 <b>Dr. Salma NIMS</b> Secretary General of the National Commission for Women, Jordan
 <b>H.E. Ambassador Paul GARNIER</b> Ambassador of Switzerland to Egypt	 <b>Mr. Tarek NESH-NASH</b> Founder of Impact for Development, GovRight and ICT4Dev R&D, Morocco	 <b>Mr. Labid ZAAFRANE</b> CEO of the Financing Bank of Small and Medium Enterprises (BFPME), Tunisia	 <b>Ms. Lynn CHEIKH MOUSSA</b> young journalist, Lebanon	

Ⓢ High-level speakers from the “Delivering for the most vulnerable” roundtable as part of the Governance Forum “Visions for Recovery” on 31 March 2021



# 2

## Regional policy dialogue and regional reports





# OPEN AND CLEAN GOVERNMENT

## MENA-OECD WORKING GROUP ON CIVIL SERVICE AND INTEGRITY

The Working Group on Civil Service and Integrity (WGI), co-chaired by Morocco and Spain, brings together policy practitioners from MENA and OECD countries to engage in promoting integrity and preventing corruption. It is one of the leading networks to promote regional dialogue and exchange best practices in the area of civil service reform for integrity, and for anti-corruption policies. Since 2013, the annual WGI meeting is often organised back-to-back to the OECD Integrity Week. In 2021, the Working Group met virtually on 25 November to discuss citizens' role in preventing corruption and to share relevant experiences in strengthening the role of the civil society in holding their governments to account. Discussions stressed the importance to involve citizens in monitoring the design and implementation of anticorruption strategies, as well as elections, lobbying activities and governmental action in general. Participants also discussed practical tools to ensure that citizens have the means to keep their governments accountable, and the importance to promote citizens' engagement in law-making and budgeting.

### ➤ Summary note

#### OUTCOMES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN 2021-2022

- Overall, MENA countries have undertaken efforts to improve communication with civil society and increase transparency to strengthen integrity and combat fraud and corruption.
- The implementation of access to information laws and integrity reform remains a challenge. Partnerships with independent institutions are an untapped potential to raise awareness and deliver impact.
- The adoption of specific legislative tools and institutional mechanisms is necessary to adapt to emergencies and make sure that integrity, transparency and compliance with the rule of law within the public sector is maintained.

#### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

- Pursue regional dialogue and data collection efforts on the impact of crises on public sector integrity.
- Promote public sector integrity in the design and implementation of recovery plans.
- Develop indicators to evaluate the progress in the implementation of access to information laws and integrity reforms.
- Support mediators and ombudsmen in strengthening integrity within the civil service.



① Meeting of the Working Group on Civil Service and Integrity, 25 November 2021, virtual

## MENA-OECD WORKING GROUP II ON OPEN AND INNOVATIVE GOVERNMENT

The MENA-OECD Working Group on Open and Innovative Government (WG II) is chaired by the United Arab Emirates and co-chaired by Italy, Korea, and Portugal. WGII provides a platform for MENA countries and OECD member countries to gather and share their experiences, good practices and lessons learned.

In 2021, the MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government (WG II) convened on 29 March for a first Bureau meeting bringing together co-chairs and representatives from MENA countries. The meeting focused on positive achievements and challenges in strengthening the foundations of digital government and citizen engagement for better service design and delivery. Participants insisted that, after a challenging year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for co-operation

## OPEN AND CLEAN GOVERNMENT

and collaboration to advance governments' maturity in openness, digitalisation and innovation had never been greater to ensure continuity and improvement in service design and delivery. The second Bureau meeting of WGII was held on 8 June 2021, and delineated the priorities of the Working Group in the area of open, digital and innovative government. The meeting focused on outlining action-oriented outputs and outcomes in the implementation of this agenda for more effective service design and delivery. The OECD Secretariat presented ongoing and new opportunities for collaboration among OECD member countries and MENA countries and Delegates discussed and reflected on the ways in which the OECD Secretariat could support this ambition from a regional perspective.

A High-Level Panel, titled "Towards greater digital and innovative citizen participation in the MENA region", was held online on 10 February 2022. It focused on the synergies that governments can identify in being more open, digital and innovative and how this approach can

contribute to promoting greater citizen and stakeholder participation in the region. Participants also discussed the benefits and challenges of leveraging digital tools and data and maximising innovation to further advance citizen participation, and highlighted relevant good practices in this domain.

The 2022 Working Group meeting took place on 3-4 October in Rome around "Transforming government: Taking innovative approaches to public services and civic engagement". This event focused on how governments can engage with citizens to co-source ideas and co-create solutions to collective challenges, leverage digital technologies to improve existing practices and initiatives and encourage innovative approaches, and use omni-channel strategies, as well as effective and inclusive public communication, to ensure that participation in public decision-making is accessible to all and that no one is excluded due to a digital divide or lack of ICT literacy.



### KEY OUTCOMES IN 2021-2022

- Launch of the report "The Economic and Social Impact of Open Government: Policy Recommendations for the Arab Countries"

### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

- Support MENA countries in moving closer to the OECD Recommendations on Open Government, Digital Government Strategies, and the Declaration on Public Innovation.
- Support MENA countries in making effective use of emerging technologies to transform the public administration, measure impact and build the needed capacities, especially in the post COVID-19 recovery phase.
- Promote exchange and dialogue on citizen-driven service design and delivery and innovative participation towards better economic and social outcomes, in particular in the design and implementation of the recovery reforms.
- Move towards co-creation, user-centred approaches and institutionalise innovation, openness and digital solutions.



📍 Meeting of the Working Group on Open and Innovative Government, 3-4 October 2022, Rome



## EFFICIENT MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT



① 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Middle East and North Africa Senior Budget Officials, 18-19 July 2019, Caserta, Italy.

### MENA-OECD SENIOR BUDGET OFFICIALS NETWORK

The MENA-OECD Senior Budget Officials Network (MENA-SBO / WG III) was co-chaired by Qatar and Switzerland during the period considered in this report. Activities of the network include knowledge sharing between MENA and OECD peers in areas such as implementing fiscal consolidation strategies, result-oriented budgeting and budget transparency as well regular presentations of OECD recommendations and guidance (e.g. OECD Budget Transparency Toolkit).

The 12th annual meeting of MENA-SBO was held online on 6 December 2021. This session focused on medium-term budget framework (MTEF) as a crucial tool for effective budget management. Medium-term budgets allow decision-makers to plan beyond the annual budget cycle, and to ensure continuous support to the implementation of

strategic priorities. Participants discussed the advantages and challenges typically faced by OECD and MENA governments in developing MTEFs to support medium term fiscal policy objectives. They also shared relevant experiences and best practices, especially with regards to political commitment, planning horizon, coverage, level of detail and formulation of targets.

A 13th meeting of MENA-SBO is expected to take place in 2023.

### KEY OUTCOMES IN 2021-2022

Thirteen participating countries shared their latest budgeting developments and insights:

- Nine MENA countries shared their latest budgeting developments and insights.
- Participants discussed principles to improve medium-term budget planning through the development of MTEF.

### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

- Increase collaboration with the region to spread OECD best practice and help build public finance management capacity (e.g. through topical meetings / seminars).
- Continue knowledge sharing between OECD and MENA peers to improve the efficiency and transparency of budgeting and public financial management processes.
- Promote sound public finance management in the design and implementation of COVID-19 recovery plans.



## EFFICIENT MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT

### MENA-OECD WORKING GROUP ON REGULATORY REFORM AND RULE OF LAW

The 2022 annual meeting of Working Group on Regulatory Reform and Rule of Law (WG IV), entitled “Better Rule-Making and Access to Justice for Recovery” was held on 21 March 2022, via Zoom. The meeting, co-chaired by Tunisia, Portugal and Italy, and organised by the MENA-OECD Governance Programme in co-operation with its Training Centre of Caserta, enabled participants to showcase challenges and opportunities, and to identify lessons learned about measures taken by governments to facilitate business through regulation and justice services during the pandemic. The exchanges focused on the impact of these efforts and allowed participants to reflect on areas where regulatory management tools and access to justice can be adapted and further improved.

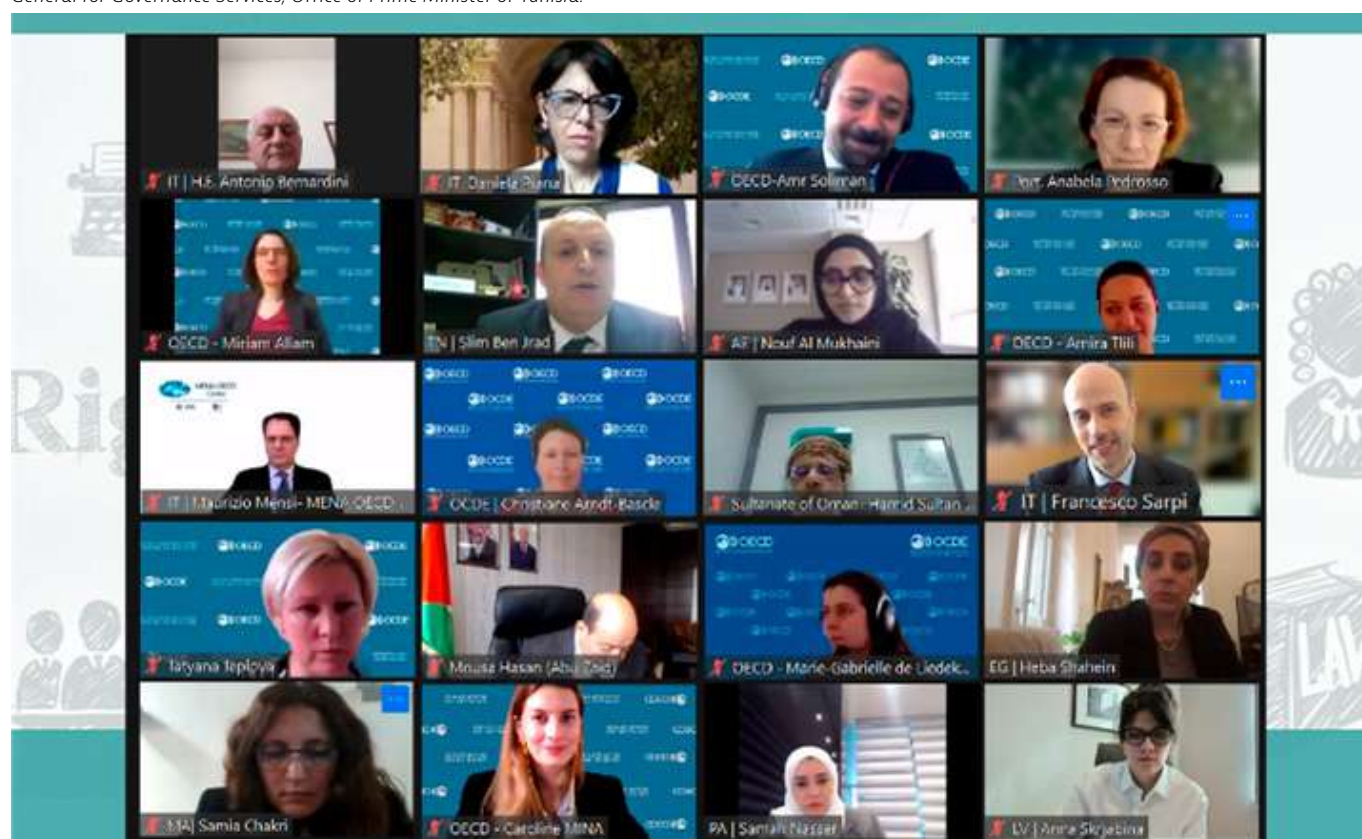
📅 Meeting of the Working Group on Regulatory Reform and the Rule of Law, 21 March 2022, virtual, with the participation of H.E. Ambassador Antonio Bernardini, Co-chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, Ms. Anabela Pedroso, State Secretary for Justice of Portugal and Mr. Slim Ben Jrad, Director General for Governance Services, Office of Prime Minister of Tunisia.

### OUTCOMES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN 2021-2022

- Participants recognised that the adoption of a long-term vision for regulatory governance is particularly helpful for governments to develop a structured use of good regulatory practices, instruments and tools.
- Governments should aim at ensuring an universal access to justice and adopt tailored mechanisms to make justice more accessible; such as the strengthening the use of digital tools (i.e. online dispute resolution (ODR) platforms and one-stop shops).
- Better access to justice for businesses is a fundamental tool for inclusive growth, investment and a solid recovery from economic shocks.

### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

- Broaden the scope of Working Group IV to address the challenges faced by marginalized groups, including women, youth and children.
- Deepen the exchange of good practices and learning in using technology to provide justice services.
- Promote alignment of regulatory reforms with the implementation of the goals of the Deauville Partnership and its compact for economic governance, and to the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



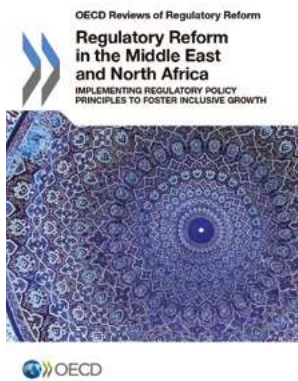


## EFFICIENT MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT



📍 Meeting of the MENA-OECD Public Procurement Network, 21 January 2020, Tunis

### MENA-OECD PUBLIC PROCUREMENT NETWORK



The MENA-OECD Network on Public Procurement, currently co-chaired by Egypt, Tunisia, and Italy, was launched in 2012 with the objective of sharing international and regional good practices, identifying needs for support and enhancing the regional dialogue on public procurement.

The MENA-OECD Public Procurement Network organised its annual meeting

online on 3 February 2021. The meeting focused on procurement practices in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants highlighted the challenges affecting the delivery of public services and procurement activities due to the

pandemic, and shared experiences and good practices of procurement strategies to mitigate the impacts and recover from the crisis, as well as to improve resilience to potential future shocks.



#### KEY OUTCOMES IN 2021-2022

- Enhanced dialogue and information-sharing on the adaptation of procurement practices in times of crisis.
- Shared understanding of international good practices to support resilience.

#### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

- Support capacity building of public procurement officials based on the principles of the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Public Procurement.
- Contribute to strengthening public procurement systems in the region to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of post-crisis recovery plans.
- Support MENA economies in setting up more robust procurement processes in the face of global challenges.



## GENDER EQUALITY

### **MENA-OECD PLATFORM ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING, GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

Reinforcing gender policies in the MENA is critical for the political, social and economic empowerment of women and the promotion of good governance. Since 2009, the MENA-OECD Women in Government Platform, renamed MENA-OECD Platform on Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership, provides a regional forum to exchange good practices and lessons learned.

A virtual meeting of the Platform was held jointly with the MENA-OECD Governance Programme Training Centre of Caserta on 16 November 2021. The meeting focused on governance and victim/survivor-centric approaches to violence against women (VAW) in MENA, especially in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. It brought together government officials, policy makers, experts from the MENA region and OECD Member states, representatives of NGOs and international organisations to discuss ways to strengthen public governance systems, and centre action on the needs and experiences of survivors/victims, and improve justice and accountability in order to effectively address VAW. It was an opportunity to exchange on

relevant experiences, good practices and lessons learnt on the complex phenomenon of VAW.

The 2022 Platform meeting took place on 28 September with the MENA-OECD Governance Programme Training Centre of Caserta around “Strengthening governance and survivor/victim-centric approaches to violence against women”. This event brought together around 20 high-level government officials and representatives of civil society organisations, both in person and online, from MENA and OECD governments. Participants engaged in a dialogue on how to strengthen institutions, regulatory frameworks and coordination capacities to prevent, address and eliminate VAW in MENA countries effectively, and provided feedback for the update of the draft OECD paper on “Governance and survivor/victim-centric approaches to violence against women (VAW) in MENA countries”, including examples of MENA governments’ responses to VAW during the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting helped enhance expertise and capacity of participants in preventing, addressing and eradicating VAW effectively. It also included a broader roundtable discussion that gave delegates the opportunity to share their priorities for the promotion of gender equality in public life in the MENA region.



📍 Meeting of the MENA-OECD Platform on Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership, 28 September 2022, Caserta, Italy

## GENDER EQUALITY



### GOVERNANCE AND SURVIVOR/VICTIM-CENTRIC APPROACHES TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW) IN MENA COUNTRIES

The “COVID-19 Response and Recovery in the MENA Region” project, implemented with the financial support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, aims to provide an interactive setting for thematic policy dialogue, experience-sharing, mutual learning and the collective production of new knowledge among policy makers. As part of the project, the OECD is finalising an paper on “Governance and survivor/victim-centric approaches to violence against women (VAW) in MENA countries”. Resting on the OECD Report on “Eliminating Gender-based Violence: Governance and Survivor/victim-centred approaches”, the paper make use of the results of the OECD Survey on VAW in MENA

### OECD TOOLKIT FOR MAINSTREAMING AND IMPLEMENTING GENDER EQUALITY

The OECD has produced a Toolkit to promote gender-sensitive policy making and support countries in the implementation of the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life. The Toolkit aims to unpack the provisions of the Recommendation, indicating priorities, assessment questions, key actions and pitfalls to avoid, and providing compelling good practice examples for each topic. It is designed to help policymakers, both in member countries and strategic partners such as the MENA region, identify weaknesses and opportunities in their country and work contexts, and highlight approaches available to advance gender equality. An updated version of the Toolkit will be published in the course of 2023.

countries to map the current situation in the region. In particular, it analyses country approaches to tackle VAW and proposes targeted policy recommendations in order to strengthen and better operationalise the legal, policy and institutional frameworks on VAW, adopt victim/survivor-centric approaches, and improve justice and accountability to address VAW effectively in the MENA region. The preliminary findings of the paper underpinned the capacity-building activities targeting MENA public officials that the OECD organised in the autumn of 2022, in cooperation with the MENA-OECD Training Centre of Caserta, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks in place in their respective countries to address VAW.

### RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNCIL ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC LIFE

The OECD Council adopted the Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life on 14 December 2015. The Recommendation sets forth 16 action-oriented recommendations aiming to support member and non-member countries to promote a government-wide strategy for gender equality reform, sound mechanisms to ensure accountability and sustainability of gender initiatives, and tools and evidence to inform policy decisions. It also brings forward policy options to boost equal access to public life, including politics, judiciaries, and public administrations for women and men from diverse backgrounds.



### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

- Support MENA countries in integrating the provisions of the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life.
- Strengthen institutions, regulatory frameworks and coordination capacities to prevent and tackle violence against women.
- Strengthen policies to allow equal access to decisionmaking positions for both women and men.
- Continue to promote and encourage knowledge transfer and policy dialogue between MENA and OECD countries to combat existing barriers and foster higher political participation of women.
- Promote gender equality and mainstreaming in the design and implementation of COVID-19 recovery plans.

## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

### YOUTH AT THE CENTRE OF GOVERNMENT ACTION: A REVIEW OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

The OECD report on “Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa”, was delivered in June 2022 in the context of the regional project COVID-19 Response and Recovery in the MENA region, implemented by the OECD Development Centre, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme in the OECD Public Governance Directorate, and the OECD Centre for Tax Policy and Administration.

The report analyses the current governance arrangements and practices across 10 public administrations in the MENA region in three areas:

- Uniting all institutional stakeholders to implement a shared, integrated youth policy and deliver services to young people;
- Building administrative and institutional capacities to mainstream the perspectives of young people in policy making; and
- Encouraging the participation and representation of young people and youth stakeholders in public and political life.

The report presents findings from responses to the OECD Youth Governance Survey of the public administrations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. It draws on the evidence and good practices gathered by the OECD Public Governance Committee, the Regulatory Policy Committee, the Committee of Senior Budget Officials and their sub-bodies as well on OECD Recommendations in the area of public governance.

Its key findings and policy recommendations were presented and discussed with MENA public officials and young people during the 2022 meeting of the MENA-OECD Youth Empowerment Network.



### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023-2024

Providing policy analysis and advice, bilateral technical support and a platform for regional dialogue among policy makers and public administrations on youth empowerment and intergenerational justice, in line with the OECD Recommendation on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People, in particular in the areas of:

- Creating an enabling environment to strengthen young people's trust in public institutions and for young people's political and civil participation and representation;
- Delivering integrated policies and public services for young people in vulnerable situations, including youth with disabilities;
- Tackling mis- and dis-information among young people;
- Evaluating the impact of policies on young people and integrating considerations of intergenerational justice across functions of government;
- Supporting young people as agents of peace and stability; and
- Engaging young people in tackling global challenges, including climate change, food security and digitalisation

### REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Delivering on the 2021 MENA-OECD Ministerial Declaration, the MENA-OECD Youth Empowerment Network regularly brings together high-level government officials, youth policymakers, young people and other youth stakeholders from MENA governments and OECD countries to promote regional dialogue, discuss cutting-edge research and share good practices.

The 2022 meeting of the Network, organised by the MENA-OECD Governance Programme and its Training Centre of Caserta, took place in Caserta on 23 June and brought together around 130 high-level government officials, youth policy makers, and young people, both in-person and online, from 33 countries.

The participants engaged in a policy dialogue on measures and good practices to place young people's considerations at the centre of policymaking in the context of the recovery from COVID-19 crisis and in light of global challenges. Participants also benefitted from the experiences shared by peers from the Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.



## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT



④ Meeting of the MENA-OECD Youth Empowerment Network, 23 June 2022 in Caserta, Italy.

### 2021 MENA-OECD YOUTH EVENT "YOUTH AFTER COVID-19"

The Ministry of Youth in Jordan and the OECD co-hosted the MENA-OECD virtual Youth Event 2021 "Youth after COVID-19" on 15 June 2021. During the event, 200 policy makers, youth and international partners from 21 MENA and OECD countries discussed the findings of the OECD Youth Reviews of Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Back-to-back to the MENA-OECD Youth Event 2021, the OECD organised a virtual

capacity building event "Building resilience with and for youth in the MENA region" in co-operation with the MENA-OECD Governance Programme Training Centre of Caserta. Speakers representing governmental entities in Egypt, UAE and Oman, and NGOs in Lebanon and Europe discussed how the fast pace of transformations is posing new challenges to resilience in the MENA region. In light of the COVID-19 crisis and challenges for future well-being, such as climate change, speakers discussed ways to build resilience with and for young people and future generations in the MENA region.

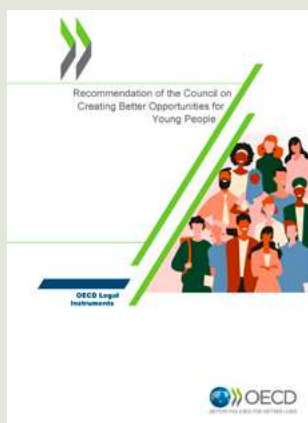


④ 2021 MENA-OECD Youth Event with the participation of H.E. Mohammad Salameh Faris Nabulsi, Minister of Youth of Jordan, H.E. Ms. Bridget Brind, British Ambassador to Jordan, H.E. Ms. Shamma Al Mazrui, Minister of State for Youth Affairs of the UAE, H.E. Ms. Hasna Ben Slimane, Minister to the Head of Government of Tunisia in charge of Civil Service and Co-chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, and H.E. Amb. Antonio Bernardini, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OECD and Co-chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme.

## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

### THE RECOMMENDATION ON CREATING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Recommendation on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People was adopted by the OECD Council at Ministerial level on 10 June 2022. The Recommendation promotes government-wide strategies and sets out a range of policy principles to improve youth measures and outcomes in all relevant areas, including skills and competencies, labour market outcomes, social inclusion and youth well-being, strengthening young people's trust in government and public institutions, and building government capacities to deliver youth-responsive services and address age-based inequalities.



### PRESENTATION IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

On 21 January 2021, the OECD hosted the webinar “A look into the future of the MENA region: The Arab Future Survey, Youth and COVID-19”, organised in co-operation with the EU Institute for Security Studies. The discussions benefitted

from the key results of the Arab Future Survey, implemented by the Arab Research & Advocacy Bureau, and OECD work in the area of youth empowerment to discuss how the “youth factor” and COVID-19 have been shaping the future of the MENA region.

On 28 July 2021, the OECD, as a member of the Youth Development Working Group (YDWG), co-organised a virtual Brown Bag Event on “Meaningful Youth Engagement” which brought international organisations, youth-led organizations, and experts to discuss practical examples of supporting young people and governments in systematically taking into account their perspective in their response and recovery efforts. The YDWG is a network made up of multilateral development banks and international organizations (including AFDG, ADB, IsDB, GIZ, UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO and OECD) with the aim of supporting and advocating for youth development issues as mandated by each entity. The OECD also contributed to a youth-led consultation event organised in the context of the ALF Euro-Med Youth Network series of activities, organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation in partnership with Chatham House. During the consultation event, the OECD provided young people with feedback and insights on youth-led initiatives based on its analytical work. The OECD has also participated in international conferences on youth organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. In 2021, the OECD contributed to a panel in the framework of the Centre's training programme for facilitators of online policy dialogue in the youth field, presenting key findings from OECD evidence and analysis on governance for youth empowerment in the MENA region and beyond. In 2022, the OECD presented its work on youth empowerment and building more youth-responsive

📍 OECD participation to the University on Youth and Development (UYD) on 11-18 September 2022, Mollina, Spain





## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

and accountable institutions in the framework of the 21st University for Youth and Development (UYD), organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe.

The OECD also presented its recent findings and analyses on youth empowerment and intergenerational justice with a focus on the MENA region at the UN High-Level Political Forum side event “Youth as the driving force for change after COVID-19” on 7 July 2022, which was hosted by the Czech Republic in the context of their Presidency of the Council of the EU.

### COOPERATION WITH ISPI IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MED DIALOGUES

Building on a long-term partnership, the OECD cooperated with Italian think tank ISPI in the context of the 2021 Rome MED Dialogues.

In particular, the OECD supported the MED Youth Forum Contest, which focused on “Green & Sustainable Solutions for the Future” and gave young people the opportunity to present their initiatives to a high-level audience. The OECD participated in the panel, which was opened by Italy’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Di Maio, sharing some of its work on youth empowerment in MENA. It also contributed to the selection of two initiatives that received financial support for implementation. During the 2021 Rome MED Dialogues, OECD Deputy Secretary-General Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen also participated in a panel on “The Youth Factor: How young generations can shape a greener future” sharing insights on youth participation in climate decision-making from the OECD report “Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?”. The OECD also co-organised with ISPI the first-ever MED Think Tanks



⌚ Participation of OECD DSG Knudsen during the 2021 Rome MED Dialogues, 3 December 2021



⌚ Participation of OECD DSG Kerri-Ann Jones during the 2022 Rome MED Dialogues, 2 December 2022

and Civil Society Forum on 2 December 2021. The event was opened by Ambassador Antonio Bernardini, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OECD and co-chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, Paolo Magri, Executive Vice President, ISPI and Miriam Allam, Head of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, OECD. The meeting convened representatives of civil society and leading think tanks from MENA and OECD countries for a closed-doors foresight exercise to explore future pathways with regards to stability, prosperity, migration, and civil society in the MENA region.

The partnership between the OECD and ISPI was further strengthened in the context of the 2022 Rome MED Dialogues, during which the OECD supported the first edition of the “Youth Forum – Youth Policy Lab for Climate Action” which provided young researchers from the region with the opportunity to contribute to the policy debate on climate action. In addition, OECD Deputy Secretary-General Kerri-Ann Jones participated in a panel on “The Mediterranean Needs Youth: Building Trust and Inclusiveness” together with Italy’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Edmondo Cirielli and young activists and leaders from the Mediterranean region. DSG Kerri-Ann Jones shared key insights on how governments can build trust among young people in the MENA region from the OECD report “Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa” and highlighted the OECD’s contribution to these objectives through its MENA-OECD Youth Empowerment Network and the OECD Recommendation on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People.



## OECD TRAINING CENTRE ON PUBLIC GOVERNANCE IN CASERTA

The OECD Training Centre on Public Governance in Caserta is hosted and supported by the Government of Italy, notably through the Italian School of National Administration, Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Italy's Department for Public Administration. Through its activities, the Centre promotes the development of the public sector in Partner economies, notably in the MENA region and Africa, allows public officials to share knowledge and expertise, and disseminates standards of good governance.

Since 2013, the Centre has supported the MENA-OECD Governance Programme in designing and delivering trainings, seminars, policy dialogue events, study visits and capacity-building activities aimed at public officials from the MENA region. These activities have helped participants develop and exchange a common understanding of issues, experiences and sharing of best practices in policy areas including good governance, open government, gender equality, public sector innovation, public procurement, public budgeting, youth empowerment, rule of law, regulatory policy, civil



service integrity, risk management, digital governance and institution building for post-conflict recovery.

The Centre has also facilitated the exchange of experiences and good practices among MENA and OECD public officials and the dissemination of the OECD's research, analysis and standards, sustaining regional policy dialogue notably by organising meetings of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme's working groups and networks on Public Procurement, Senior Budget Officials, Rule of Law and Regulatory Policy, Civil Service and Integrity, Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership, and Youth Empowerment. The Centre has also organised high level policy events including a webinar on 'Ensuring the Resilience and Continuity of Critical Infrastructures and Services', the MENA-OECD Governance Forum event on 'Digital governance and Rule of Law', and a session on 'Building Resilience with and for Youth in the MENA region' in the context of the MENA-OECD Youth Event 2021.

The work and activities of the Centre build on the work of the policy communities served by the OECD Public Governance Directorate, including the Public Governance Committee, the Regulatory Policy Committee, the Committee of Senior Budget Officials, and their respective subsidiary bodies.

### EVENTS SUPPORTED BY THE TRAINING CENTRE OF CASERTA IN 2021-2022

- 31 March 2021 – MENA-OECD Governance Forum session on "Digital Governance and Rule of Law for more open, accessible and efficient public services"
- 15 June 2021 – MENA-OECD Youth Event session on "Building resilience with and for youth in the MENA region"
- 16 November 2021 – Meeting of the MENA-OECD Platform on Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership on "Governance and survivor/victim-centric approaches to gender-based violence in the context of the COVID-19 crisis"
- 23 November 2021 – Workshop on institution-building for post-conflict recovery
- 25 November 2021 – Meeting of the MENA-OECD Working Group on civil service and integrity on "Preventing corruption: What role for citizens?"
- 6 December 2021 – Meeting of the OECD-MENA Senior Budget Officials
- 21 March 2022 – Meeting of the MENA-OECD Working Group on Regulatory Reform and the Rule of Law on "Better Rule-making and Access to Justice for recovery"
- 23 June 2022 – Meeting of the MENA-OECD Youth Empowerment Network on "Youth at the Centre of Government Action"
- 28 September 2022 – Meeting of the MENA-OECD Platform on Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership

### KEY OUTCOMES IN 2021-2022

- Conducted 9 activities in the areas of youth empowerment, gender equality, public budgeting, open and digital government, public sector integrity, institution-building, regulatory reform and the rule of law.
- Strengthened capacities of more than 700 government officials, experts, international partners and members of civil society.
- Sustained policy dialogue and exchange of good practices among OECD and MENA officials.





# 3

Projects for  
national reforms



# Regional Projects

## COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY IN THE MENA REGION

The project aims to support MENA governments in their efforts to respond and recover from the COVID-19 crisis as well as to enhance their resilience to future shocks, with a focus on public finance and tax policy as well as a focus on vulnerable groups, women and young people. It is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy and it is jointly implemented by the Directorate for Public Governance's MENA-OECD Governance Programme, the Development Centre and the Centre for Tax Policy and Administration's International Academy for Tax Crime Investigation. The project also involves two

OECD Centers based in Italy, specifically the MENA-OECD Governance Programme Training Centre hosted by the Scuola Nazionale dell'Amministrazione in Caserta and the OECD International Academy for Tax and Financial Crime Investigation, hosted by the Economic and Financial Police School of the Guardia di Finanza in Ostia. The project provides an interactive setting for thematic policy dialogue, experience-sharing, mutual-learning and the collective production of new knowledge among policy makers in the MENA region.

## STRENGTHENING PUBLIC GOVERNANCE FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY IN THE MENA REGION (2021-2023)

In 2021-2022, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, with the support of its Training Centre of Caserta, has been supporting MENA public administrations strengthen public governance and build capacities to respond and recover from the COVID-19 crisis as well as enhance resilience to future shocks, with a specific focus on delivering for young people and women and strengthening public finances.

In this pillar, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme has provided MENA public officials with the opportunity to gain awareness of key public governance issues and of OECD good practices and standards in the areas of youth empowerment, gender equality, public budgeting, open and digital government, regulatory reform and the rule of law. This pillar of the project has also provided MENA public officials with the opportunity to exchange experiences

and practices and learn from each other in policy dialogue at regional level on key public governance issues. Indeed, between May 2021 and August 2022, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme and its Training Centre of Caserta organised seven activities of regional policy dialogue with the Working Groups and Networks of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, involving around 600 government officials, experts, international partners and members of civil society. These activities also provided MENA public officials with the opportunity to exchange with and learn from public officials of OECD Members, drawing on the expertise of the OECD Public Governance Committee, the Regulatory Policy Committee, the Committee of Senior Budget Officials and their sub-bodies. For instance, Italy's Minister of Youth Dadone, Italy's Special Envoy for Climate



④ Ambassador Antonio Bernardini, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OECD, Ambassador Mohamed Karim Jamoussi, Ambassador of Tunisia to France, and OECD Deputy Secretary-General Jeffrey Schlagenhauf opened the project presentation event on 11 April 2022

## STRENGTHENING PUBLIC GOVERNANCE FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY IN THE MENA REGION (2021-2023)

Change Modiano, SNA's President Severino as well as peers from Italy's Departments for Public Administration, Digital Transformation and Equal Opportunities contributed to these activities. The activities also benefitted from the contributions of peers from the Czech Republic, France, Korea, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Within this pillar, MENA public officials have also contributed to the collection of data and evidence and the co-production of knowledge and policy analysis in key public governance areas. Indeed, youth policymakers from MENA public administrations contributed to the OECD report "Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa" through the collection of data, evidence, good practices and analysis on governance frameworks and tools to empower young people. The report presents findings from responses to the OECD Youth Governance Survey of the public administrations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. Its key findings and policy recommendations were presented and discussed with MENA public officials and young people during the 2022 meeting of the MENA-OECD Youth Empowerment Network. Within this pillar, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme has also been collecting data, evidence, experiences and good practices on public governance for COVID-19 recovery through its Working Groups and Networks, which will feed in the forthcoming OECD report "Visions for Recovery in the MENA Region" and on governance approaches to gender-based violence, which will feed into a regional expert paper.

### KEY OUTCOMES IN 2021-2022

- MENA public officials gained awareness of key public governance issues and of OECD good practices and standards in the areas of youth empowerment, gender equality, public budgeting, open and digital government, regulatory reform and the rule of law.
- MENA public officials exchanged experiences and practices and learnt from each other on key public governance issues through seven activities of regional policy dialogue with the Working Groups and Networks of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme. The activities involved around 600 government officials, experts, international partners and members of civil society and benefitted from the contributions of peers from the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Korea, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.
- MENA public officials have contributed to the collection of data and evidence and the co-production of knowledge and policy analysis in key public governance areas, in particular in the area of youth empowerment, gender-based violence and governance for COVID-19 recovery.

### PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023

- Support policy exchanges, peer learning and co-production of knowledge with MENA public officials, in particular on public governance for COVID-19 recovery, gender-based violence and public budgeting.
- Support the dissemination of OECD good practices and standards in the area of public governance in the MENA region.

# OPEN GOVERNMENT: REGIONAL PROJECTS

## STRATEGIC SUPPORT TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT AGENDA AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION LAWS

IN JORDAN, LEBANON, MOROCCO AND TUNISIA

Across the MENA region, governments are faced with growing challenges and increased instability, including persistently low levels of public trust, rising economic and financial volatility, and social fragmentation into increasingly polarised groups. Meanwhile, citizens are becoming more vocal, particularly given the amplifying effect of digital technologies, and their expectations for a more transparent and accountable public sector and better public services are growing. By leveraging new ways of thinking, working, and delivering, policymakers are now in a unique position to affect positive change in society through adopting open, innovative, and digital approaches to government.

Building on two decades of experience in the region, the MENA-OECD Open Government Project provides support to Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia in the design and implementation of their open government policies through a strategic mix of analytic support, capacity building, and international events that convene key stakeholders in sharing good practices. In doing so, the OECD seeks to support core governance principles of transparency, integrity, accountability, and participation as well as related digital and innovation initiatives to improve outcomes across the full spectrum of public policy.

This work is financed by a variety of sources, including in Tunisia by the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; in Lebanon by Germany's Foreign Office, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, and the Italian Agency for Development Co-operation; in Morocco by MEPI and the MENA Transition Fund of the G7 Deauville Partnership; and in Jordan by MEPI and the MENA Transition Fund of the G7 Deauville Partnership.

### JORDAN

As a founding member of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, Jordan has been working closely with the OECD to reform its public sector in line with OECD principles and practices. As such, the OECD serves as a strategic partner for Jordan by supporting the government's commitments made in its Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plans (NAPs). Since its inception, the project contributed to the elaboration and implementation of the 3rd and 4th OGP National Action Plans, the latter of which was the most inclusive and participatory in Jordan's history. The OECD also facilitated the creation of the Open Government Unit (OGU) within the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) in early 2018, which has allowed for a more systemic coordination of the national open government agenda, including the implementation of the 4th OGP NAP commitments.

In line with its current OGP commitments, the OECD has supported the government of Jordan in developing clear procedures and standards for public bodies subject to the access to information (ATI) law, including three protocols for classifying, enforcing, and managing information. On the demand side of ATI, the OECD is conducting a diagnostic report, in conjunction with the Centre for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ), to analyse the quality of information provided by ministries responding to information requests. The project also provided technical assistance for the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship (MoDEE) and the Joint Committee on Open Government Data to develop a procedural framework for classifying, measuring, and evaluating the quality of open government datasets, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers in late 2020. Currently, the OECD is in the process of elaborating an analysis, in conjunction with Lawyers Without Borders (LWB), on the necessary legislative and regulatory frameworks for the Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights to receive complaints related to human rights violations. In addition to its support for Jordan's OGP National Action Plan commitments, the OECD is conducting a global Survey on Open Government, which will serve as a basis for capacity building activities and a series of national dialogues, which will help inform the consultation process of Jordan's 5th OGP NAP.

### NEXT STEPS

- Provision of technical assistance for implementing the 4th OGP National Action Plan and support for the consultation process to elaborate the 5th OGP National Action Plan.
- Capacity building activities to develop an awareness action plan to enhance the knowledge of key target groups on Jordan's Access to Information Law.
- Capacity building workshops for government officials on the implementation of the procedural framework for classifying, measuring, and evaluating the quality of Open Government Datasets.
- Elaboration of a report on the complaints received by the Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights, in conjunction with Lawyers Without Borders (LWB).
- Completion of the Survey on Open Government, which will monitor the implementation of the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government.



## STRATEGIC SUPPORT TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT AGENDA AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION LAWS

### LEBANON

The operational context for the project in Lebanon has been challenging -including a severe financial and monetary crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, the catastrophic explosion in the port of Beirut, and high inflation on energy and food products, which was multiplied by the economic repercussions of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. However, in this difficult context, Lebanon recently adopted a robust legal framework to support Open Government efforts, including a National Action Plan and Implementation Decree to provide clarification on the 2017 "Right to Access to Information Law," a law on "Fighting Corruption in the Public Sector," as well as a "National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2020-2025," which led to a decree in February 2022 to create a National Anti-Corruption Commission. Most recently, Lebanon approved a "Law on Asset and Interest Declaration and the Fight against Illicit Enrichment," which brings Lebanon closer to meeting OGP Minimum Eligibility Requirements. In this context, the OECD was able to work with international partners and the Lebanese government to develop a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Right to Access to Information law. Since its adoption, the government has conducted preliminary trainings and activities within the framework of this plan, which have led to the nomination of the first accredited access to information officials in the country. In addition, the OECD is supporting the development of an ATI handbook, which seeks to inform public officials of what information they are responsible to proactively disclose and how to adequately respond to ATI requests in line with the law. At the same time, the OECD has helped the government develop Terms of Reference for Lebanon's first Access to Information e-portal based on good practices from OECD member and partner countries. Building on this progress, Lebanon has committed to continue its joint work with the OECD in pursuit of an open government agenda for eventual adherence to the OECD Council Recommendation on Open Government.

### MOROCCO

Morocco has undertaken important steps to pursue its open government agenda and finalised the implementation of its first Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan, assessing at 84% the general level of implementation of the action plan. With the support of the OECD, Morocco designed through a co-creation process, adopted and started to implement its 2nd OGP National Action Plan (NAP) in 2022, with an implementation rate of 76% at the beginning of 2023. This process included 10 co-creation webinars led by CSOs on different thematic areas related to Open Government (i.e. participatory democracy, access to information, open justice, innovation and digital government etc.) and several rounds of online consultation. This

innovative co-creation process was one of the first processes of its kind implemented in Morocco (together with the co-creation process for the new development model) and led to higher level of stakeholder satisfaction and buy-in. In addition, in the framework of this 2nd OGP national action plan, Morocco has updated the governance scheme for its implementation, through the adoption of a new handbook of the OGP steering committee, design during a workshop held with civil society members of the committee. The new handbook better defines the role of each stakeholder and is designed to tackle some of the challenges of the cooperation between the government and civil society on open government reforms. The OECD also supported Morocco in the launch of a communication campaign on the 2nd OGP NAP and on Morocco's commitments through technical support and advice in the design and dissemination of communication tools and material.

Furthermore, in December 2021, Morocco launched the online "civil society space" on the national open government portal ([gouvernement-ouvert.ma](http://gouvernement-ouvert.ma)) to increase the engagement with CSOs on the OGP process and open it more largely to civil society, in addition to the CSO taking part in the OGP steering committee. Through the platform, CSOs can subscribe and participate in online consultation aiming at nominating civil society members of the upcoming steering committee of the OGP, thus building on the participatory approach adopted in the co-creation process and strengthening it beyond it. The OECD also engaged with Morocco on civic space as part of the cooperation on open government reforms through two capacity building workshops focused on the promotion and the protection of civic space - with part of the session dedicated to public officials' engagement with citizens and CSOs - and supporting an enabling environment for CSOs. In parallel, in January 2021, the OECD and Morocco launched an Open government review to assess the environment for open government reforms in Morocco, take stock of the progress made since the first open government review in 2015, and establish a roadmap towards an open government strategy. The strategy aims at providing a long-term, integrated and holistic approach of Open Government reforms and policies at all levels of government. Morocco is one of the pilot countries (together with Finland, Canada, Tunisia and Argentina for instance) to decide to take this step with the OECD, in line with the OECD Recommendation on Open Government. A first draft of the Open government Review has been submitted to the Moroccan government in mid-2022.

Regarding access to information, Morocco continued to move forward in the implementation of the access to information law through capacity building activities geared toward public officials from local authorities on the use of the transparency platform as a one-stop-shop for access

## STRATEGIC SUPPORT TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT AGENDA AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION LAWS

to information, including at the local level. These trainings were held in prevision of the integration of a new module dedicated to local authority on the platform, which was effectively launched in January 2022 and accompanied by video tutorials supported by the OECD.

Finally, Morocco progressively established itself as a regional leader in the promotion of open government reforms. In October 2021, Morocco was elected in the OGP steering committee for 3 years, becoming the first country of the MENA region and of francophone Africa to be part of this steering committee. Morocco further confirmed this leading role on the occasion of the OGP Africa and the Middle East Regional Meeting, held in Marrakech on 1-3 November 2022, and co-hosted by the Moroccan government. The OECD supported the organisation of a panel led by civil society actors dedicated to the engagement of civil society in open government reforms. In addition, the OECD leveraged this key regional conference to highlight during various panel discussions the work undergone in cooperation with Morocco since 2012, showcase some of the latest publications and work on citizen participation, and discuss the relationship between innovation and open government.

### NEXT STEPS

- Launch of the open government review and support to the design of an open government strategy based on its findings and recommendations.
- Assessment of the main obstacles to an effective access to information, from the perspective of both the administration and users.
- Support to the co-creation process of the 3rd national action plan of the OGP.
- Capacity building of the network of public communicators.
- Workshop on good practices and international experiences related to laws and regulations on public consultation and participation, in support of the drafting of a law on public consultation.

### TUNISIA

Tunisia moved forward on the implementation of open government reforms with OECD support, in particular on defining a long-term strategy of reforms, fostering civic space as well as step up work on access to information and participation. In line with the previous national action plans, the 4th OGP National Action Plan comprises 13 commitments divided into four main pillars: transparency and natural resources governance, citizen participation including a focus on youth engagement, open government at the local level, and digitalisation to support more effective, accessible and transparent public services. This NAP was designed through a co-creation process, including at the first stage an online public consultation and a series of online meetings with participants from ministries, public agencies, municipalities and CSOs held in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. This first phase was followed by a number of working sessions of a Joint Advisory Committee (composed equally of representatives from public institutions and CSOs) to draft commitments based on the propositions gathered, which were later published for a last round of online public consultation. In addition, the OGP steering committee was renewed following an innovative approach, which included the heads of Tunisia's independent institutions reviewing and assessing candidates, thus ensuring enhanced transparency.

Tunisia also committed to design and adopt an Open Government Strategy, in line with the OECD Recommendation on Open Government to which Tunisia adhered in 2019, thus becoming the first country of the MENA region to launch such a project. The strategy process started in November 2020, with OECD's support. In October 2021, following preparatory meetings with the e-government unit in the PM office, Tunisia launched an online consultation, partly inspired by a good practice from Argentina. In December 2021, in-person consultation workshops were held with participants from government, public institutions and CSOs to discuss strategic priorities on the 3 pillars of transparency, accountability and participation. In 2022, the OGP steering committee, comprising government officials and civil society representatives, held a series of meetings to



## STRATEGIC SUPPORT TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT AGENDA AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION LAWS

brainstorm, conceive and agree on a national definition of open government as well as a mission and strategic objectives for the strategy. In August 2022, a consolidated draft of the strategy was shared with the members of the OGP Steering committee for their approval. The final draft of Tunisia's first ever national open government strategy was presented to all stakeholders, including public officials, civil society actors, and international partners, during a workshop held in Tunis in January 2023, with OECD support.

In parallel, following the announcement of the civic space scan in November 2020, the OECD conducted a rolling factfinding mission through a series of bilateral interviews with representatives from a wide range of CSOs and governmental institutions and two thematic roundtables with CSOs to explore the state of civic space in Tunisia around the four pillars of the civic space analytical framework developed by the OECD. Tunisia is one of the first countries to undertake this exercise, in the framework of the OECD Observatory of Civic Space. On the occasion of the publication of the report, in January 2023, the OECD facilitated a high-level roundtable with selected government and CSO representatives, which allowed for a lively and constructive debate around the recommendations of the Scan. Besides, alongside the analysis undertaken through the Scan, the OECD supported the Tunisian government through capacity building workshops on civic space and public authorities' collaboration and engagement with citizens.

Similarly, in order to support the implementation of the Access to information law adopted in 2016 and the INAI (access to information authority) in particular, the OECD provided a detailed assessment of the INAI's needs, challenges and weaknesses in monitoring public institutions' compliance with the requirements on proactive disclosure of information included in the ATI law, which was completed thanks to desk review, email exchanges and two working sessions with the INAI team on February 2nd and November 9th 2021. The final report, a working document shared with the INAI, provides the basis for capacity building activities in the coming months.

Following the successful implementation of citizens' charters in 6 pilot public services at the local level (in Tunis, Beja, Sousse, Sidi Bouzid, Tozeur and Tataouine), a tool to improve transparency, accountability and quality of public services, the OECD supported the development and implementation of citizens' charters in three state-owned enterprises: the National Health Insurance Fund (CNAM), the Postal Services (La Poste) and the Housing and Land Agency (AFH). After introductory advisory sessions to present the charters, the OECD coached and accompanied each enterprise to assess the quality of their services and identify the public service which could most benefit from citizen feedback and monitoring. The OECD supported

the enterprises to start the implementation of some engagements of their charters, notably through training sessions to improve the enterprises' communication skills. In parallel, the OECD supported the strengthening of the role of civil society in monitoring public projects in general and the citizen charters in particular, through training sessions, and developed tailor-made monitoring tools. A conference on 30th March provided the opportunity to present the three charters, distribute a newly developed guidebook on citizen charters and discuss scale-up of this tool with government and CSOs. A scale-up plan, aiming to extend the citizen charter tool to 50 more public entities, has been sent to the PM office for approval. In total, the more than 330 citizens and CSOs were engaged in the process.

### NEXT STEPS

- Support the dissemination and implementation of Tunisia's first open government strategy.
- Capacity building of the INAI to monitor compliance with proactive disclosure of public information.
- Support to the promotion of the access to information right among legislative bodies.
- Support to the implementation of key recommendations of the Civic Space Scan of Tunisia through capacity building, in particular supporting participation of marginalized groups and guidance on CSO's administrative processes.
- Support the revitalization of digital participation through an action plan including capacity building, awareness raising, communication and upgrade of the e-participation platform.



## OPEN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS' VOICE JORDAN, LEBANON, MOROCCO AND TUNISIA

### PUBLIC COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA FOR A MORE OPEN GOVERNMENT IN THE MENA REGION

As identified in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government, communication is a key element in promoting open government principles, as it strengthens transparency and integrity, and is a prerequisite for citizens to participate in public life and hold their government to account. In addition, evolutions in traditional media markets, the rise of social media, and the increasingly complex challenge of mis- and disinformation are changing how the government and citizens interact.

In the framework of the Transformation Partnership, and with the financial support of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, the OECD has been accompanying countries in the MENA region since 2016 to promote strategic public communication that support open government principles. During phase I (2016 – 2018) of this cooperation, the OECD helped establish and train a network of public communicators at the national level in Morocco and strengthened the activities of the existing network in Tunisia. The project also produced analysis and recommendations on improving the role of communication at the national level in both countries.

Phase II (2019 – 2021) scaled the remit of activities to Jordan and Lebanon, supported the implementation of key recommendations from phase I, and expanded the focus of activities at the local level in Morocco and Tunisia. It also created a regional platform for policy dialogue and exchange, where all four beneficiary countries endorsed a Regional Charter on Public Communication during the high-level MENA-OECD Forum event on 30 March 2021.

Phase III of this project (2021-2023) seeks to help create, strengthen and preserve spaces that facilitate the participation of civil society and media in public life and promote dialogue between these actors and the government in Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority. As part of this initiative, the OECD is developing assessments of existing efforts and challenges in this field and organising engagement, capacity-building and networking activities for civil society and media stakeholders to exchange practices in this field and strengthen their capacities. The project also includes a focus on media and information literacy (MIL) efforts.

#### JORDAN

In Phase II, the OECD supported Jordan in its efforts to restructure and professionalise the public communication function and implement the National Executive Plan on Media and the Information Literacy. The OECD launched in 2021 the “Citizens’ Voice in Jordan: The Role of Public Communication and Media for a more Open Government” report, which is based on surveys with 14 line-ministries.

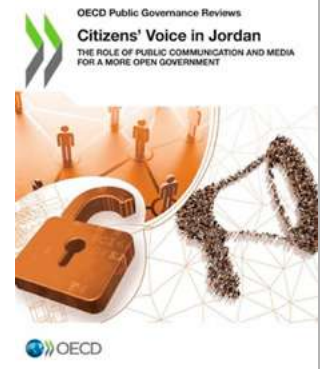
In collaboration with the Jordan Media Institute, the OECD also conducted an assessment of the “Haggak Tira” platform. In parallel, the OECD implemented a youth MIL activity in support of the Government’s commitments in the National Executive Plan on Media and Information Literacy.

In Phase III of the project, an assessment is currently underway focusing on the key benefits of government-CSO partnerships and the necessary requirements for their success, based on examples from Jordan. Activities ranged from fact-checking trainings, to opportunities to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past two years of MIL implementation and propose steps which could be taken moving forward, to training CSOs and journalism students on MIL, to strengthening networks of CSOs to support successful collaborative relationships with the government. Upcoming activities on access to information are also planned.

#### LEBANON

The OECD similarly supported the Lebanese government during phase II of the project to institutionalise and professionalise its public communication function. The “Citizens’ Voice in Lebanon” report was launched in 2021, based on quantitative and qualitative insights from a network of public communicators established through this project. The OECD also developed a package of instructive videos on key communication competencies as well as guided exercise sheets, and a manual for trainers, in addition to a workshop with OMSAR on the government’s digital presence.

As part of phase III, an assessment exploring whether and how representative deliberative processes can be implemented in Lebanon is being finalised, as a means to innovate and break barriers in the field of engagement in the country. The draft assessment aims to look at the viability of such processes



## OPEN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS' VOICE

in the country by identifying the central barriers in their initiation and implementation, as well as what impact could be expected. Activities ranged from fact-checking trainings for alternative media outlets ahead of legislative elections, to engagement activities on the criminalization of speech (particularly online) and means to ensure the media reform agenda regains importance and visibility. Additional activities to raise awareness on the concepts of innovative citizen participation and deliberation have also been organized.



Ⓜ H.E. Ms. Najla Riachi, Minister of State for Administrative Reform, Lebanon

### PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Phase III of the project included work with Palestinian actors, to understand the needs and challenges relating to civic space, media reform, government-stakeholder participation and MIL efforts. Two engagement activities took place in 2022 with Palestinian stakeholders, including a series of calls throughout the year, and during an event in December 2022, including CSOs. The objectives of these activities was to understand current priorities and needs, and discuss topics for the upcoming activities planned as part of this project. On 16 November 2022, an online activity was organized, with the participation of renown experts on organizational listening and digital communication challenges, including lessons learned from the covid-19 pandemic. A network of credible non-governmental partners that can act as drivers of change has been identified and priority topics and opportunities pinpointed. Activities on MIL and media sustainability will continue to be organized as part of the project.

### REGIONAL

Two regional events were held as part of phase III of the project (in 2021 and 2022). The events gathered more than 50 stakeholders to discuss the priorities, challenges, and opportunities regarding the media reform agenda in the region, as well as MIL efforts and the role of CSOs and media outlets in strengthening a more open government. The 2022 event also allowed a discussion on the preliminary findings of the Jordan and Lebanon assessments that are planned as part of the project.



Ⓜ Participants to the first regional conference of the Citizen Voice Phase III project, 2021

# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: REGIONAL PROJECTS

G7 DEAUVILLE PARTNERSHIP – MENA TRANSITION FUND

## STRENGTHENING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC LIFE

JORDAN, MOROCCO AND TUNISIA

Young men and women make up more than a quarter of the population in many MENA countries, with growing demographic pressure and unemployment rates that exceed those in all other regions of the world. The pattern of limited access to social, economic and political opportunities puts MENA youth at a significant risk of exclusion from contributing to and benefiting from the social and economic development of their countries.

The project “Youth in Public Life: Towards open and inclusive youth engagement” (2016-22), funded by the MENA Transition Fund of the G7 Deauville Partnership, supported the efforts of Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan to give young men and women a voice in policy-making and public life.

In collaboration with the Ministries of Youth, line ministries, parliament, local governments, NGOs, foundations, universities, civil society and youth associations, OECD's support focused on three areas:

- Supporting the process of formulating and implementing National Youth Strategies to overcome the fragmented delivery of youth policy and services;
- Scaling up the institutional and legal framework to foster youth engagement and representation in public life at the central and sub-national level (e.g. youth-representative bodies);
- Promoting innovative forms to engage young men and women in decision-making and help mainstream young people's demands in public policies.

Based on OECD policy recommendations and opportunities for regional dialogue, the project provided hands-on implementation support in line with the strategic priorities in each project country.



⊕ H.E. Mohammad Salameh Faris Nabulsi, Minister of Youth, with representatives from OWB on 21 December 2021 in Amman to discuss the roadmap and note prepared with young people.

### JORDAN

Based on the recommendations set out in the OECD report (2021) “Empowering Youth and Building Trust in Jordan, OECD Public Governance Reviews”, launched during the MENA-OECD Youth Event 2021 co-hosted by Jordan, the youth-led NGO Opinion Without Borders (OWB) was selected in the programme “Our Youth Takes Initiative” to deliver training activities targeting young people in selected youth centres in Jerash, Al Balqa'a, and Aqaba.



In cooperation with the participating youth, OWB developed a roadmap with recommendations for the Ministry of Youth to involve young people more systematically in the design of the centres' quarterly plans and a note with recommendations to revise Jordan's National Youth Strategy 2019-25. The roadmap and note were presented and discussed by OWB and OECD in a meeting with the Minister of Youth in December 2021.

As part of the MENA-OECD Youth Event in June 2021, OWB also engaged in a regional dialogue with policymakers and civil society organisations to encourage partnerships and the exchange of lessons learned across the MENA region.

The OECD findings and recommendations presented in the report were discussed with and welcomed by the Ministry of Youth and have informed the design of its Institutional Development Strategy and wider reform efforts, notably amendments to the Constitution in January 2022 to reduce the age required to run as candidate in national elections from 30 to 25 years and the inclusion of a commitment focused on the National Youth Strategy in Jordan's 5th National Action Plan for the Open Government Partnership.

### MOROCCO

The final version of the review ‘Renforcer l'autonomie et la confiance des jeunes au Maroc’ was launched during the MENA-OECD Youth Event “Youth after COVID-19” in June 2021. The recommendations developed aim to support the efforts of Moroccan youth stakeholders in elaborating and implementing public policies and services that are responsive to young people's priorities and needs.

Building on the recommendations and the priorities expressed by Moroccan counterparts, the OECD organized in September



## STRENGTHENING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC LIFE



① Capacity-building programme for representatives of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and representatives of youth houses on the modernisation of youth houses in Morocco, 21 September 2021, Rabat, Morocco

2021 a capacity-building programme for representatives of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS) and representatives of youth houses on the modernisation of youth houses in Morocco. Guidelines were developed to support public officials in developing a structure and services more adapted to youth's needs through the provision of key recommendations and actions complementary with the review.



The OECD also developed a guide on participatory approaches for young people at the national and local level that encompasses good practices and lessons learned from OECD and Member and non-Member countries to enhance young people participation, with a focus on innovative ways of participation.

### TUNISIA

The “Renforcer l'autonomie et la confiance des jeunes en Tunisie” report was published in 2021, and was officially launched at a high level during the MENA-OECD Governance Forum in October 2022. It presents a detailed analysis of governance arrangements for youth affairs in Tunisia, and formulates recommendations to improve youth empowerment and facilitate their transition to autonomous life. Based on specific recommendations and on the priorities shared by the Tunisian government, the OECD organized in 2021 two capacity-building programmes: senior staff from the Ministry of Youth's regional offices were trained on strategic planning, and newly-recruited civil servants from youth houses were coached on the participatory design of youth houses' activities. In addition, the OECD also led the programme “Our Youth Takes Initiative (OYTI)” and supported the Club Culturel Ali Belhouan (CCAB), a youth-led CSO in Tunisia, in the implementation of a country-wide initiative to strengthen youth civic culture and volunteering. The CCAB worked with youth houses and youth across six governorates to implement local initiatives implemented by young people for young people. Some of the initiatives included conducting volunteer actions to support the COVID-19 relief effort or sensitising people to climate change and recycling.



① Participants in the 2018 MedUni event in Tunis, 8-10 May 2018.

# Egypt

## G7 DEAUVILLE PARTNERSHIP – MENA TRANSITION FUND

### STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW: ENHANCING EFFECTIVE AND TRANSPARENT DELIVERY OF JUSTICE AND RULE-MAKING

The MENA Transition Fund Project: “*Strengthening the Rule of Law: Effective and transparent delivery of justice and rule-making in Egypt*” is a joint partnership with the Ministry of Justice and Court of Cassation, in cooperation with the African Development Bank and OECD as Implementation Support Agencies.

The Project contributes to consolidating the rule of law and supporting an enabling business environment through (i) enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of justice and (ii) strengthening transparency and public participation in the rule-making process.

The first objective addressed the need to improve the delivery of justice in the Court of Cassation. Under this framework, the OECD has provided advisory services, capacity-building and technical support on reforms needed to modernise the Court, and particularly to reduce case delays and improve the provision of judicial services to the public. Based on background research, work meetings and expert panels with the Court and technical questionnaires, the OECD Project Findings Document for an Action Plan for the Reform of the Court of Cassation of Egypt was developed to support addressing these challenges. The Document was officially launched in September 2021 through a High Level International Conference in Cairo which gathered representatives from the Egyptian Government and Judiciary along with senior international experts and allowed for key dialogue on the implementation of the recommendations from the OECD Document. The Document was also presented to OECD member countries and key international partners in Egypt during an online consultation meeting, and included an intervention from the Court to showcase key measures taken to modernise its functioning in the perspective of the OECD Document’s key recommendations.

The second objective is linked to the broader agenda of the government on ensuring greater transparency and access to information and focuses on the processes, tools and skills to draft good legislation for transparent and effective rule-making in the Ministry of Justice. Within this framework, a Legislative Drafting Manual was developed together with the Egyptian Ministry of Justice. A technical workshop was organised to introduce the Manual to Egyptian legal professionals, parliamentarians and civil servants working on drafting and reviewing legislation as a new, reliable tool for better regulation. The OECD also presented its publication “*Legislation and good governance: The role of legislative drafting manuals*” and organised three workshops to support the implementation of the Manual.



#### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Mapping exercise of the current situation of judiciary in Egypt in relation to the capacities of the Ministry of Justice, tools and procedures.
- Support the elaboration of a Reform Action Plan for the Court of Cassation of Egypt.
- Assisted the Ministry in developing an implementation plan to improve effective and transparent rule-making.
- Procurement of IT Hardware for archiving system in the Court of Cassation (African Development Bank).
- Conducted capacity building seminars and workshops on legislative drafting and study visit on Implementing and coordinating draft laws (access to laws, amending existing laws, codification of laws, developing reports on legislation, enforcement, compliance and monitoring mechanism).
- Developed the Egyptian Legislative Drafting Manual.



📍 High Level International Conference on 23 September 2021 in Cairo



## TOWARDS CHILD-FRIENDLY JUSTICE SYSTEM IN EGYPT

The objective of this project is to support the development of a child-friendly justice system in Egypt and better protect children in contact with the law. Aligned with Egypt's Vision 2030, the National Child Strategy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the project is implemented by the OECD with the financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The project facilitates high-level engagement in support of the objectives of the Strategic Framework and National Plan for Childhood and Motherhood in Egypt 2018-2030. It contributes to strengthening the Rule of Law and avails experiences from different OECD countries, particularly through peer-to-peer exchanges and policy dialogues with the Government of Egypt.

As part of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, the project provides support to the Government of Egypt in identifying key challenges and opportunities, building a Roadmap for reform and raising public awareness on the importance of child-friendly justice. The two main outcomes of the project are as follows:

- Improved capacities of child-justice stakeholders to better protect children in contact with the justice system; and
- Improved governance and coordination mechanisms among key child justice stakeholders.

Support will be provided in accordance with the objectives of the Strategic Framework & National Plan for Childhood and Motherhood.

Several policy dialogues and capacity-building activities were organised allowing stakeholders to exchange knowledge with OECD peers as well as to share experiences and good practices on child friendly justice standards. The activities strengthened inter-agency dialogue enabling better coordination among child justice stakeholders.



⬇ Capacity-building workshop, Integration of services to support children in contact with the law, 2 November 2022, Cairo



⬆ High-level Policy Dialogue to launch the Key Findings of the Strategic Review, Cairo, 9 June 2022

This facilitated the elaboration of the Key Findings and preliminary recommendations of the Strategic Review “Implementing SDGs for children in Egypt: Towards a child friendly justice system”.

The Key Findings of the Strategic Review were launched on 9 June 2022 during a High-Level Policy Dialogue in Cairo, Egypt. The High-Level Policy Dialogue was opened by H.E. Minister Nivine El Kabbag, Minister of Social Solidarity, H.E. Yvonne Baumann, Ambassador of Switzerland in Egypt and high-level Egyptian project stakeholders. The Policy Dialogue brought together over 130 high-level participants and senior representatives from key national stakeholders: the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Public Prosecution Office (PPO) and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), as well as judges, prosecutors, social workers and representatives from the Ministry of International Cooperation, international agencies, embassies and civil society organisations. The dialogue highlighted the commitment at high level to achieve the objectives of the cooperation, which is based on a participatory approach involving all key stakeholders to reach comprehensive findings and recommendations.

The Strategic Review will be followed by the development of a roadmap aiming to provide concrete recommendations for reform, and an accompanying implementation plan, including for legislative reforms, institution-strengthening and capacity-building on child-friendly justice in Egypt.

Moving forward and building on the close engagement developed through the previous project activities, the OECD will organise policy dialogues and capacity-building programs on various dimensions of international access to justice and child-friendly justice procedures to support coordination mechanisms between the relevant stakeholders based on a child-centred approach and the OECD child justice framework.

More information about the project activities and deliverables is available [here](#).



## EU FUNDED PROJECT - SUPPORT TO ENHANCED ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE IN EGYPT (2022-2026)

Since 2022, the OECD has been implementing a five-year project funded by the European Union with the aim to support the Government of Egypt in strengthening the design, monitoring and implementation of priority public governance reforms, including Egypt Vision 2030 the National Administrative Reform Plan, as well as existing public finance management systems.

To achieve these objectives, the project is structured around two main components:

- The Egypt Vision 2030/Public Administration Reform (PAR) component aims to strengthen government effectiveness and capacities for implementing and monitoring the Egypt Vision 2030 and the National Administrative Reform Plan.
- The Public Finance Management (PFM) component aims to enhance the Ministry of Finance's capacities for implementing more efficient and fair public finance management systems as well as policy frameworks to ensure the widening of the tax base.

Throughout 2022, the OECD conducted the inception phase of the project to frame the scope of the intervention in line with the priorities and needs of the Government of Egypt. Inception phase activities fostered discussions with key government partners on existing institutional arrangements and policy efforts in Egypt, as well as the challenges and opportunities to support the implementation of the country's ambitious reform agenda. As a key outcome, Government stakeholders highlighted the timeliness of this cooperation and expressed readiness to engage in forthcoming activities.



📍 Co-Chairs from MoF and the EU Delegation together with the OECD team during the Meeting of the TAG for the PFM component on 6 February 2023

As part of these activities, the Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group for the Egypt Vision 2030/Public Administration Reform Component was organised on 26 September 2022. This meeting marked an important milestone for the project with the official establishment of this group that gathered high level public officials from relevant Egyptian public institutions for the first time. Co-chaired by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and the EU Delegation to Egypt, the meeting allowed for in-depth discussions on the key findings of the inception phase, its foreseen activities and priorities for the activity work plan.

The Technical Advisory Group for the Public Finance Management component was also established during the



📍 Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on 26 September 2022 in Cairo.

## EU FUNDED PROJECT - SUPPORT TO ENHANCED ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE IN EGYPT (2022-2026)

inception phase and organised its first meeting on 6 February 2023. The meeting was co-chaired by the Ministry of Finance and the EU Delegation to Egypt and, following discussions on the project, the main findings of the inception phase report and the workplan of project activities, it agreed on the key steps towards fulfilling the component's objectives.

This work together culminated in a High-Level Conference organised on 8-9 February of 2023. The event served to kick start activities and promote peer-to-peer dialogue with over 250 representatives from the Egyptian civil service, youth and the international community, namely with the launch of the OECD Public Governance Review of Egypt process and the Youth Policy Shapers (YPS) Programme.

In terms of next steps, the OECD will continue to work closely with Government partners as part of the PAR component in the data collection phase of the OECD Public Governance Review of Egypt, delivery of capacity building programmes and conferences for the YPS programme. The PFM component will also continue to support the MoF and the Egyptian Tax Authority through the delivery of tax policy priority reforms, capacity building trainings and workshops.

### KEY OBJECTIVES

The project was developed, and will be implemented, in line with the 2014 Egyptian Constitution, the fourth pillar of its Sustainable Development Strategy focusing on transparency and efficient government institutions, and its 2014 National Administrative Reform Plan, providing guidelines for legal, institutional, human and financial public administration reforms. It is in line with Egypt's Voluntary National Review of Vision 2030 and Egypt's Human Development Report, both published in 2021. Through enhanced administrative and public economic governance, a strengthened public sector's effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and transparency should contribute to satisfying citizens' needs and improved public services.

The project action was designed and implemented in cooperation with local authorities and stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MPED) including the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD), which operates under MPED, the Central Agency for Organisation and Administration (CAOA), the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), and the Ministry of Finance (MoF), as well as independent bodies, civil society, private sector, and universities.

## EGYPT – COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The Egypt-OECD Country Programme aims to support the successful design and implementation of structural reforms to address Egypt's main economic challenges. It will also enable the country to move towards closer alignment with OECD standards and serve as guidance for the implementation of the recently revised sustainable development strategy Egypt Vision 2030. To that extent and in line with such priorities, the Country Programme builds on five pillars: Pillar 1: Inclusive and sustainable economic growth; Pillar 2: Innovation and digital transformation; Pillar 3: Governance and anti-corruption; Pillar 4: Statistics; and Pillar 5: Sustainable development.

The OECD supports Egypt in implementing its ambitious public governance reform agenda on a number of priority issues. It first supports the efficiency of the public sector, working on key areas such as institutional development, SDG implementation, monitoring and evaluation, the fight against corruption but also administrative simplification, modernisation of budget institutions and green and gender budgeting. The OECD furthermore provides strategic guidance for better service delivery through the inclusion of citizens and under-represented groups in decision-making, with a focus on

women's participation in public life. In this sense, it also helps strengthen the country's infrastructure planning, coordination capacities and public procurement practices. Finally, the Country Programme is an opportunity to support Egypt in developing sustainable, transparent, fair and people driven public services through advancing its digital government strategy, optimizing the role of digital tools and data, promoting public integrity and strengthening government-citizen relations.

Implementation started in 2022 for 4 projects covering public governance:

- Support to Suez Canal Economic Zone;
- Reinforcing the governance of the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD) and implementation support;
- Participation of Egypt in the Digital Government Index;
- Review of Egypt's infrastructure governance and delivery frameworks.

# Jordan

## MA'AN: TOGETHER FOR ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN JORDAN PROJECT (2022-2025)

The project is part of a broader EU-financed project called “EU support to improving integrity and accountability in Jordanian public administration at central and local levels”. The part on “Compliance and Performance” is what is being implemented by the OECD.

The overall objective is to improve public sector integrity and accountability in Jordan. In particular, the project will aim at improving the accountability and integrity environment based on a holistic and peer-review driven Public Sector Integrity Study and at improving the policy planning system based on links to public consultation and analysis through a holistic and peer-review driven Public Governance Review (Output 1); capacity building activities targeting main control bodies based on priorities identified in two proposed Action Plans resulting from the two studies (Output 2); support for a pilot of National Sectoral Plans using the integrity and accountability KPIs (Output 3); and involving stakeholders of the project from Jordan in OECD fora for regional dialogue and the exchange of good practices (Output 4).



⊕ Participants at the launch in Amman of the “Ma'an: Together for an Accountable and Transparent Public Administration in Jordan Project”, 20 March 2023, Amman.

The specific objectives of the project are to support the Jordanian Public Administration by enhancing institutional and decision-making arrangements for integrity and accountability. In particular, capacity building will focus on: enhancing institutional and decision-making arrangements and practices for integrity and accountability, among the central institutions of the National Integrity System and the Central Government, complemented by targeted capacity building activities to improve the policy planning system. The main Jordanian interlocutors include, among others: The Jordan Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission; The Audit Bureau of Jordan; The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation; and The Ministry of Finance.



⊕ The Chairperson of the Jordan Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (JIACC) HE Mohammad Hijazi, giving opening remarks at the launch of the “Ma'an: Together for an Accountable and Transparent Public Administration in Jordan Project”, 20 March 2023, Amman.

On 20 March 2023 the MENA-OECD Governance Programme organised a kick-off event in Amman, marking the start of the “Ma'an: Together for Accountable and Transparent Public Administration in Jordan Project”. The event included all of the project's main stakeholders, including civil society, and key donors working on Governance in Jordan. The Kick-off event, was followed by the project's first Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting, chaired by the Jordan Integrity and Anti-corruption Commission (JIACC). This was an opportunity for all stakeholders to exchange ideas about the project's activities at a technical level.

### NEXT STEPS

- Fact-finding mission to Jordan to refine the scope of the project's activities.
- Launch of the OECD Integrity Handbook in Arabic in Amman.
- Capacity building and learning opportunities that will involve virtual and in person events for key project stakeholders including the JIACC, the Audit Bureau, the Civil Service Bureau, and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.
- The first draft of the Public Governance Review (PGR) and Public Sector Integrity Study (PSIS) available for national consultation.
- The development of a capacity building workplan, based on recommendations from the PGR and PSIS.



# Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

## STRENGTHENING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The Governance Indicators and Performance Evaluation Division is leading a program of technical co-operation with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's National Center for Performance Measurement (ADAA) on issues of performance measurement and management. Building on a first cooperation phase from 2018-2020, the current program runs from 2021-2023.

The co-operation facilitates exchange of information, knowledge and good practices for performance

measurement and management between ADAA and OECD countries. Topics covered in the current cooperation phase have included measuring beneficiary experience and satisfaction with public services, supporting government agencies to improve their skills and maturity level in performance measurement, using performance information for decision making at the centre of government, and good practices in creating a performance culture. The work program has included a number of workshops in both Paris and Riyadh.

# Lebanon

## BRINGING GOVERNMENT CLOSER TO CITIZENS

Recognizing the value of digital government to champion more efficient, innovative, open, transparent, inclusive and resilient public sector, the Government of Lebanon benefited from OECD support in improving strategic planning and implementation for the transition from e-government to digital government. Chronic problems rooted in siloed and uncoordinated policy efforts and country's political, economic and social instability have impacted the government's ability to effectively and efficiently proceed with the digitalisation of its public sector.



At the request of the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR) and under the framework of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, with the support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), the OECD developed a Digital Government Study of Lebanon "Digital Government in Lebanon: Governance for coherent and sustainable policy implementation" in 2020. This study built on the analytical framework provided by the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government Strategies and the OECD E-leaders Handbook on Governance, and supported the OMSAR's efforts in driving public sector digitalisation efforts. Building on this support, the Government of Lebanon adopted in 2022 its new Digital Transformation Strategy.

In support to the Lebanese government's expressed interest in adhering to the OECD Recommendation on

Open Government, the OECD also developed in 2020 an Open Government Scan, with support from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, which details steps towards a national open government agenda. This report aimed at facilitating policy-makers efforts toward the adoption of practical measures to advance open government in Lebanon, which included the adoption of the core legislation on the Right to Access to Information and of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and the establishment of the National Anti-Corruption Commission. At the same time, the OMSAR has taken a leading role in promoting and co-coordinating open government initiatives, including setting up a technical open government team.



### NEXT STEPS

- Supporting Lebanon to become closer to the OECD Recommendations of the Council on Digital Government Strategies (2014) and on Open Government (2017).
- Validating and rolling out the digital transformation policy, securing effective implementation through a clear and solid institutional mandate for OMSAR, strong horizontal cooperation and strategic policy levers
- Supporting Lebanon in the establishment of more transparent participatory mechanism to bring together government and civil society.

# Morocco

## BETTER INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE MODERNISATION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The project *Faisons des citoyens et des jeunes des accélérateurs de la modernisation de l'administration locale*, implemented since January 2021, aims to promote good practices of dialogue with citizens and youth to accelerate local governance reforms and improve the engagement of citizens, and in particular youth in the planning and delivery of public services in the municipalities of the Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima region.

The project also aims to share the recommendations and good practices identified for the municipalities of Tangier Tetouan-Al Hoceima region with other regions facing similar challenges in terms of citizen participation and modernization of the administration.

The project includes three complementary axes:

- Promote good practices of dialogue with citizens, especially youth, as a driver for inclusive citizen participation to support the development of the municipalities in the region;
- Involve young people in the design and delivery of public services;
- Share the experience of the Tangier-Tétouan-Al Hoceima region and support capacity building on modernisation of administration and citizen participation in the regions of Drâa-Tafilalet and Guelmim-Oued Noun.

In the framework of this project, the OECD developed Guidelines on citizen and youth participation in local public life in Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima region and roadmaps to accompany the transformation of two pilot public services in Moroccan municipalities.

The referenced documents were presented during workshops in June 2022 in Al Hoceima and in March 2023 in Ouarzazate. The workshops gathered more than 100 participants, including DGCT representatives, elected officials and local civil servants, the OECD Secretariat, civil society representatives and youth associations.



⊕ Participants of the workshop on young people's civic participation and their contribution to the modernisation of local public services, 8-9 June 2022, Al Hoceima

## MOROCCO – COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The implementation of the second phase of the Country Programme, signed in June 2019, kicked off at the beginning of 2021 and will run until June 2024. It aims to support the implementation of the policy recommendations formulated during the first phase of the programme and provide a strategic assessment of Morocco's public governance arrangements. The country programme also aims to support Morocco's ambitions in further getting closer to OECD instruments.

In line with the priorities identified by the Moroccan authorities, governance projects notably include:

- A public administration review (with a particular focus on gender, budget, human resources and integrity issues), accompanied by one capacity building programme supporting the implementation of OECD recommendations adopted by Morocco on digital government;
- Three capacity building projects on the digitalisation of the judicial system, risk management and

the reinforcement of strategic performance and communication capacities of the Head of Government services to support the implementation of the OECD recommendations adopted by Morocco and the coherence of public policies with the organisation's norms and standards.

A new project on improving the performance of public investment projects in Morocco was launched in 2022 as part of the Country Programme. It aims to support Morocco in reforming its public investment system and to build the capacities of the various actors in this area for sustainable socio-economic growth.

More information about the Country Programme is available [here](#).

# Palestinian Authority

## BUILDING TRANSPARENT, INCLUSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



⊕ MEU Ambassador Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff, H.E. Mohammad Shtayyeh, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, and Mr. Janos Bertok, Deputy Director of Public Governance, OECD at the opening of the High-level Conference “Rule of Law, Governance and Public Administration Reform in the Palestinian Authority”, 27 September 2022 in Ramallah

### HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE “RULE OF LAW, GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM IN THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY”, 27 – 28 SEPTEMBER 2022

On 27-28 September 2022, the OECD organised a High-Level Conference “Rule of Law, Governance and Public Administration Reform in the Palestinian Authority” in Ramallah. The conference was organised in the context of the two parallel EU-funded projects implemented by the OECD to support the PA with Rule of Law and Governance and Public Administration Reform (PAR) respectively. The high-level conference was opened by H.E. Mohammad Shtayyeh, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority and EU Ambassador Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff and included high-

level participation from all key national stakeholders (e.g. Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Justice, General Personnel Council, Legislation Opinion and Advisory Bureau).

The Conference discussed the progress and achievements of the two projects, and notably featured the official launch of the OECD Review “Rule of Law and Governance in the Palestinian Authority: Delivering Better Policies and Legislation for People”. The Conference also put senior public officials from Palestine in conversation with counterparts from OECD and MENA countries to exchange best practices relating to policy- and law-making, public administration and civil service (with interventions by senior officials from Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Jordan).

## EU FUNDED PROJECTS

### SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY TO ENHANCE GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW (ROL) (2020-2024)

The overall objective of this EU-funded project (started in October 2020) is to support the PA and contribute to achieving a more effective, transparent and participatory policy- and law-making process set in a clear normative framework, and thus enhance citizens and businesses trust in their government’s action. More particularly, the project will aim at enhancing the capacity of law and policy-makers to:

- Produce clear, effective and transparent primary and secondary legislation;
- Use efficient public consultation mechanisms as part of the policy development process;
- Develop (and improve) online tools providing access to adopted and draft legislation.

As part of this project, the OECD developed a Public Governance Review on Policy-making and Regulatory Policy, which includes recommendations on policy- and law-



## EU FUNDED PROJECTS

making for the Palestinian Authority (PA): “Rule of Law and Governance in the Palestinian Authority: Delivering Better Policies and Legislation for People”. This review assesses the PA legal framework, mechanisms and institutional set-up for policy- and law-making, and is based on questionnaires developed and administered to relevant institutions and stakeholders, as well as three fact-finds missions between



Ⓜ Dr. Estephan Salameh, Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority for Planning and Aid Coordination in the Prime Minister's Office, during the High-level Conference “Rule of Law, Governance and Public Administration Reform in the Palestinian Authority” in Ramallah (September 2022)

March and September 2021, which included interviews with high-level officials and non-governmental stakeholders. The OECD also developed a draft “Good Practices Manual for Policy and Regulatory Planning”, which complements the OECD review and includes practical tools and OECD best practices related to regulatory management.

In addition, the project provides direct technical assistance in the form of trainings and on-site coaching to support the improvement of policy- and law-making institutional mechanisms and institutional frameworks in the Palestinian Authority. Two capacity-building programmes (June & July 2021), along with an on-site coaching programme (August – September 2021), were delivered to the Official Gazette Bureau to promote the use of online tools for improved public access to legislation. Moreover, the project included two

capacity-building programmes to train stakeholders from key centre-of-government institutions, line ministries and non-governmental organisations on effective skills, tools and mechanisms relating to the early stages of policy- and legislative-development (March 2022) and regulatory management (June 2022) respectively. The latter was further developed through a long-term on-site coaching program with the Ministries of Justice and Finance, in cooperation with the High Judicial Council, to promote the effective administration of regulatory impact assessments (RIA) for new legislative proposals.



Moving forward, the OECD will support the wide dissemination of the OECD Review and the ownership and uptake of its recommendations by relevant public stakeholders. The OECD will equally finalise the Good Practices Manual and encourage its adoption as a formal policy tool by concerned PA institutions. Finally, the OECD will continue to organise technical assistance activities for Palestinian governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to continue supporting a more effective and transparent policy- and law-making process in the PA. This notably includes the organisation of capacity-building and on-site coaching activities on public consultations mechanisms and relevant online methods and tools.

In December 2022, governmental staff of the PA received training on strengthening existing public consultation mechanisms as part of the policy- and legislative-development process and making a specific use of the tools to efficiently apply public consultation. The programme built on the PA Guidelines on Public Consultation developed by the Ministry of Justice in 2018.



Ⓜ On-site coaching programme on the development of online tools for adopted legislation with the Official Gazette Bureau (September 2021)

## EU FUNDED PROJECTS



📍 Meeting between MENA-OECD Governance Programme and H.E. Mr. Moussa Abu Zeid, Chariman of the General Personnel Council (GPC), February 2022.

### **SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY TO ENHANCE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM (PAR) (2021-2024)**

The project is funded by the EU, and aims to support the Palestinian Authority to improve overall governance capacity to design more effective and efficient policies and services and improve public administration management for the ultimate benefit of citizens and businesses.

The project is implemented in full coordination and complementarity with the other EU-funded project on “Support the Palestinian Authority to enhance Governance and the Rule of Law”.

As part of this project, the OECD is developing a peer-review of Public Administration Reform (PAR) in the Palestinian Authority, providing key recommendations and good practices to directly support the effective development and implementation of PAR. Moreover, the project includes the development of four targeted assessments (OECD Scans) of specific PAR sectors in the Palestinian authority: i) public employment and human resource management; ii) public service delivery; iii) the functions and mandate of centre-of-government institutions; and iv) the functions and mandate of pilot institution(s).

The project also includes technical support activities that support key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in implementing the recommendations highlighted in these different assessments. For instance, the OECD organised two sets of capacity-building programmes in March 2022 to strengthen the capacities of key public officials, CSOs, universities and representatives of the as on the effective development and implementation of PAR strategic frameworks. The capacity-building programmes

were complemented through an onsite coaching program to direct support a pilot institution (the General Personnel Council) in improving monitoring and evaluation frameworks and indicators for the institution’s sectoral strategy (the Civil Service Strategy).

Moreover, in line with the activities of the parallel Rule of Law and Governance project (see above), the OECD held two sets of capacity-building programmes in March 2022 on policy planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation and in December 2022 on cross-cutting policies.

Finally, the OECD conducted two sets of capacity-building programmes in December 2022 on the development of a competency framework for civil servants and in January-February 2023 on the development of civil service by-laws. The programme of the aforementioned activities was based on OECD standards and recommendations and included the sharing of experiences and good practices by OECD peers from Canada, Sweden, Portugal, Ireland, and Belgium.

Moving forward, the OECD aims to complete the different assessments mentioned and ensure the ownership and uptake of their recommendations by relevant stakeholders in the Palestinian Authority. The OECD will also organise capacity-building programmes and on-site coachings across different PAR-related issues (legal framework for civil service, public service delivery, administrative simplification, institutional mandates and coordination) to support the implementation of these recommendations.



# Tunisia

## SUPPORTING VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE CONTINUITY OF LOCAL AND CRITICAL SERVICES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The project “Supporting Vulnerable Groups and the continuity of local and critical services during the COVID-19 pandemic” supported Tunisia’s efforts to address challenges related to the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis by promoting an inclusive, equitable and responsive governance. Financed by the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office for the period August 2020-March 2021, the project contributed to supporting vulnerable groups in six priority municipalities: Sidi Ali Ben Aoun and Cebalet Ouled Asker in Sidi Bouzid, Enfidha and Sidi El Heni in Sousse, and Ghomrassen and Bir Lahmer in Tataouine.

### BETTER SOCIAL PROTECTION

#### For at-risk children and youth

In partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, social workers from the Centres for Defence and Social Integration in Sousse, Sidi Bouzid and Tataouine became better equipped to support at-risk children and youth through coaching on the implementation of conflict and health-sensitive measures.

#### For women victims of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence

In coordination with the Ministry of Women, Family and Seniors, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders (including, among others, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, the Pharmacies Association, and civil society organisations), and based on good practices from OECD countries, the project supported Tunisia in selecting and implementing a new emergency contact mechanism for survivors/victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Sousse, Sidi Bouzid and Tataouine. In addition, the project assisted the operationalisation of the newly created regional coordination bodies for the fight against GBV, helped identify their core responsibilities and missions, and strengthened their capacities to ensure effective support services for women victims of violence.

#### For rural women

The project supported the Ministry of Social Affairs in its efforts to improve the governance and access of social security coverage for rural women, identifying weaknesses in the design and implementation of the system, collecting original survey data on rural women in Sousse, Sidi Bouzid and Tataouine, and working with the various partners to improve the management of the social security system for rural women.

### BETTER CONTINUITY OF AND ACCESS TO CRITICAL LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES

#### In waste collection

The COVID-19 pandemic, and resulting preventive sanitary measures such as confinement and curfews, has compromised the continuity of essential local public services, such as waste collection. Waste management is however critical to prevent health risks and the further spread of the virus. Working with the Ministry of Local Affairs and the Environment (MALE), an epidemiological study and business continuity plans for municipal waste collection services were developed to ensure the continuity of the service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Waste collectors from the six pilot municipalities also received PPE and were trained on the implementation of sanitary measures to sustain this effort.

#### In public communication and digital services

In cooperation with the Presidency of Government and the MALE, municipal staff from the priority municipalities were coached on practical public communication tools and techniques to ensure a more open, transparent and inclusive local government, in particular for municipal projects and initiatives aimed at citizens and vulnerable groups. The project also supported municipal staff in elaborating communication strategies for the municipality to strengthen local transparency and citizen engagement.

#### In inter-stakeholder coordination

The project worked with the MALE to strengthen local-central coordination around municipal development through the creation of a digital platform facilitating the identification and funding of municipal development projects by the MALE. Municipal staff, elected officials, local civil society and regional commissioners in charge of social affairs in Sousse, Sidi Bouzid and Tataouine governorates were also coached on dialogue and coordination tools for more efficient local coordination mechanisms.

### BETTER PROCUREMENT AND DELIVERY OF CRITICAL GOODS, SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

#### Public procurement of critical goods and services

In partnership with the High Authority for Public Procurement (HAICOP), the project strengthened the procurement practices and system of two pilot entities, the regional Sahloul hospital in Sousse and the Tunisian National Water Company (SONEDE), to help them face the COVID-19 crisis and reinforce the resilience of their procurement systems, in particular through tailored coaching on emergency public procurement strategies. The project also supported the creation of two e-learning modules to support suppliers on the use of the



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## SUPPORTING VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE CONTINUITY OF LOCAL AND CRITICAL SERVICES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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e-procurement platform TUNEPS which ensures transparency and competitiveness of public procurement. In coordination with MALE and the priority municipalities, dedicated coaching sessions strengthened citizens and civil society organisations' knowledge on public procurement principles.

### **Citizen Feedback for better local service delivery**

The project worked with the Presidency of the Government to empower citizens and ensure the responsiveness of local public services to their needs by supporting the creation of a citizen charter in each of the six priority municipalities. These voluntary public commitments, made by service providers to uphold standards of quality and transparency, are a tool for citizens to exercise their watchdog role and hold service providers accountable. After jointly identifying a pilot local service, through a participatory approach with civil society organisations (CSOs), each municipality has developed its own specific citizen charter, which are then implemented

and monitored in partnership with local CSOs and citizens. Local CSOs in each governorate were trained to monitor the charters and cooperate with the municipality on their implementation. In addition, a digital platform was created to help citizens monitor the implementation of sanitary measures in local services. A third feedback mechanisms was established through the coaching of local CSOs to elaborate and conduct surveys on citizens satisfaction with regard to the quality of local public services and procurement.

### **Civil society support to the most vulnerable**

Local civil society has a key role to play in providing and delivering vital assistance to the most marginalised people. In partnership with the MALE, the project provided technical coaching on project development and management as well as support to local CSOs initiatives supporting vulnerable groups in the face of COVID-19 in each of the six priority municipalities.

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## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO BFPME AND OTHER AUTHORITIES TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

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The aim of the project "Technical assistance to BFPME and other authorities to mitigate the impact of COVID 19" is to strengthen the capacity of the Financing Bank for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (BFPME) and other public support organisations to provide non-financial services to support a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 economic recession.

Financed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the period August 2020 – March 2021, the project strengthened the governance and coaching capacity of the BFPME in terms of evidence-base, skills and tools, allowing them to support their clients in the development and implementation of tailor-made recovery plans.

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## SUPPORTING AN OPEN SOCIETY IN TUNISIA

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In Tunisia, the system of public governance has undergone profound changes since 2011 and has seen the gradual establishment of a new relationship between citizens and the public administration. Despite the considerable progress made, the uneven and partial implementation of the legal and institutional frameworks for democracy and open society as well as recent development may jeopardise these democratic gains, and cause a decline in terms of gender equality, youth empowerment, or civil society dynamism.

The "Supporting an Open Society in Tunisia" project (2021-2022) thus contributed to strengthen open society in Tunisia, with a specific focus on supporting civil society, youth empowerment and gender equality, as well as a more transparent, accountable and inclusive governance. The project action was designed and implemented in cooperation with the Tunisian government, and especially with the Ministry of Family, Women, Childhood and Seniors (MoW), the Ministry of Youth (MoY), the National Authority for Prospective and Support to the Decentralisation Process, as

well as local authorities and CSOs. The project was funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom.

### **GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

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Building on the results from a previous UK-funded project, the project supported the operationalisation of regional coordination bodies (ICRs) to support survivors/victims of gender-based violence (GBV), which were created by ministerial decision in February 2020 but were not functional. The project worked with the ICRs in the Siliana, Sfax and Zaghuan governorates and helped them identify their specific role and responsibilities, build their capacities and provide them with the following common working tools, such as rules of procedures, post descriptions, monitoring and evaluation tools, or mappings of all existing services at the regional level.

The project also further strengthened outreach capacities of the Sidi Bouzid, Sousse and Tataouine ICR, which were

## SUPPORTING AN OPEN SOCIETY IN TUNISIA



ⓘ Communication support to sensitise the local population on GBV and the existing support services

supported as part of a previous UK-funded project, and supported the organisation of sensitisation campaigns on GBV and support services. In close coordination with the MoW, the project developed communication material presenting the support services offered in the respective governorates and their contact details. The project cooperated with 6 local CSOs, themselves members of the ICRs, to conduct sensitisation campaigns to prevent GBV through in-person trainings and information sessions.

### SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

The project supported the development of a compendium of good practices on women's access to leadership positions in politics and public administration, based on consultations with Tunisian stakeholders and peers from OECD member countries. The compendium presents good practices from OECD countries, which could inspire Tunisia, and details women's current representation in leadership positions in the Tunisian public administration and in politics as well as the gaps in the legal and regulatory framework impeding women's equal access to leadership positions. The report also formulates recommendations for future action.

The findings of the compendium of good practices were discussed during a high-level policy dialogue session with representatives of the Tunisian public administration and civil society on 30 March 2022, opened by the Head of Cabinet of the MoW and the Deputy Ambassador of the UK. The policy dialogue was an opportunity to exchange on good practices and recommendations for potential measures to enhance gender equality in public life.

### YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION

The project supported a more democratic and effective governance of youth affairs through a dual approach, by strengthening administrative capacities to deliver for youth, and by supporting young people's skills to engage with policymakers and make their voices heard.

#### Strengthening the delivery of effective and youth-sensitive policies and services

Building on findings from the "Building Young People's Trust and Empowerment in Tunisia" report, which insists on the need to deliver more youth-responsive services and strengthen the capacities of public institutions and officials with a youth portfolio at the regional and local levels, the project thus supported the MoY in the delivery of more youth-responsive public policies and services. Senior staff and managers from the Ministry of Youth's (MoY) 24 regional offices were coached on adopting a strategic and participatory approach to design, implement and evaluate regional annual action plans and strategies, and a methodological guide on the design and implementation of public youth policies was developed in close coordination with the MoY and will constitute a practical tool for youth policy-makers to ensure long-term sustainability and coherence.

In close coordination with the MoY, the project also assisted the youth regional office of Nabeul in designing its own regional action plan for local youth policies and services, based on an inclusive and evidence-based approach with relevant stakeholders at the local level. This pilot experience was officially presented to the heads of the MoY's regional offices during its annual conference in May, and will support them in designing their own regional action plans.

#### Empowering youth to participate in decision-making

Many young people, especially from more under-served regions such as in the South and West of the country, have expressed in the past years a growing disinterest and mistrust in politics, and have regretted that they do not possess the necessary capacities and tools to effectively influence policies that affect them. The project thus also helped to empower youth and support their participation in public life for a more open and responsive governance.

Additionally, the project helped improve the MoY's

## SUPPORTING AN OPEN SOCIETY IN TUNISIA

responsiveness to young people's needs and demands, by coaching 24 young men and women from civil society organisations throughout the country on the Ministry's programmes and decision-making process as well as on participatory mechanisms. To ensure that the coached youth can effectively engage with the Ministry and relay young people's demands, high-level officials were sensitised on the necessity to establish a mechanism to improve dialogue and ensure youth-responsiveness in policy-making.

### Responsive public service delivery

The project supported 3 public enterprises in the development and adoption of citizens' charters, a tool to improve transparency, accountability and trust, through enhanced civil society and citizens' involvement in monitoring public service delivery. The OECD supported each enterprise in assessing the quality of their services and identifying the public services which would most benefit from citizen feedback and monitoring: the National Health Insurance Fund's (CNAM) online platform e-CNAM, the Postal services' online payment service D-17, and Housing and Land Agency's (AFH) welcome/reception services.

The project coached senior staff from the three enterprises on how to best consult citizens and CSOs at central and local levels to collect their feedback and integrate them in the final citizen charters. Following in-depth consultations with civil society representatives, the charters were officially adopted, and the project worked with each enterprise to initiate the implementation of the charters' commitments. The project notably helped improve the enterprises' communication skills and tools as a way to better reach out to citizens, and assisted them in preparing and conducting a baseline citizen satisfaction survey targeting a total of 250 users.

In order to support the generalisation of the citizen charters as a tool allowing citizens to exercise their watchdog



Ⓜ H.E. U.K. Ambassador Helen Winterton visited the Bouarguoub youth house and attended a series of interactive exercises on local governance and key citizenship concepts on 3 March 2022

function across regions and sectors, the project helped develop a guidebook detailing the official methodology to design and adopt citizen charters.

### Civil society engagement

With the objective to improve the role of the civil society in relaying citizens' needs and priorities, as well as to strengthen the state-citizen relationship, the project supported local CSOs in the design and implementation of local social action projects to promote youth empowerment and gender equality at the local level.

Members from the selected CSOs were trained on project design, management, monitoring and evaluation, and provided with individual and tailored coaching to equip them with the capacities to replicate such action in the future. The CSOs then received financial and technical assistance to support the implementation of their initiatives, which covered a wide range of topics, such as preventing online gender-based violence, mainstreaming gender in media, promoting youth volunteering and civic education for young people.



Ⓜ Participants to the coaching programme for youth representatives, with H.E. UK Ambassador Helen Winterton, and Mr Kamel Deguiche, Minister of Youth and Sports, Tunis, 11 March 2022



# United Arab Emirates

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN THE WORLD GOVERNMENT SUMMIT



④ Deputy Secretary-General Jeffrey Schlagenhauf delivering a speech during a session of the WGS in March 2022, alongside H.E. Huda Al Hashimi, UAE Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Strategic Affairs

The OECD took a leading role during the 2022 World Government Summit (WGS), held in Dubai on 29-30 March 2022 in conjunction with the closing of Expo 2020 Dubai. OECD Deputy Secretary-General Jeffrey Schlagenhauf participated in a session on Achieving Cross-Border Government Innovation, in which he and H.E. Huda Al Hashimi, UAE Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Strategic Affairs, launched the "Delivering and Enabling Impactful Cross-Border Solutions", developed by the OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI) in collaboration with the UAE Mohammed Bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation (MBRCGI). This report details some key examples of how governments can collaborate and innovate to collectively deliver impactful cross-border solutions, based on the analysis of 232 cases of cross-border innovation and workshops, and provides recommendations for governments to drive the evolution of public sector innovation globally. This session included discussion on the importance of governments coming together for collective action, as well as innovative governance structures and technological systems that can drive success in collaboration.

As part of the WGS, the OECD also presented its work on how to best manage critical and emerging risks to society and the economy, drawing from the principles of the 2014 Council Recommendation on the Governance of Critical Risks. The Chair of the OECD High-Level Risk Forum, Mr. Robert Kolasky, highlighted areas of reflection for future work, including disruptive cybersecurity threats and mis/disinformation, which exacerbate social tensions and

undermine efforts to communicate risks effectively to citizens. The OECD also reiterated that in the context of frequent and intense climate risks, government capacities to prepare and respond to critical risks are crucial factors of trust in government.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The OECD Global Platform "Governance of Future Risks" focused on how countries and institutions are strengthening their risk governance across various dimensions - from institutional design, to inclusiveness, transparency and accountability - to better respond to the challenges of disaster risk management.
- During the innovation panel, the OECD launched the third edition of the "Embracing Innovation in Government: Global Trends 2019", authored by OPSI in partnership with the UAE's Mohammed Bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation (MBRCGI), draws a global review of the ways governments are transforming their operations and improving the lives of their people through innovation, based on the analysis of 542 innovations from 84 countries.
- The gender circle explored the role of government tools, such as gender budgeting, inclusive procurement and behavioural insight approaches, in promoting gender balance and shifting underlying norms and attitudes that affect gender equality in the workplace and equal access to decision-making.

## EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING IN REGULATORY POLICY

The OECD Regulatory Policy Division has engaged with the Government of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on various projects to support evidence-based decision making in regulatory policy. These projects originate from a central commitment to support evidence-based regulatory policy making in the emirate, with a focus on measuring regulatory impacts on businesses, environment and society.

The first project began in 2018 with the Abu Dhabi Department of Health (DOH), which regulates the health care sector in Abu Dhabi. This project sought to support the implementation of good regulatory practices at the DOH, with a focus on regulatory impact assessments and the establishment of the Strategy Department as the regulatory oversight body. The project produced an assessment of the state of play and action plan to support the practical implementation of these goals. The report was presented in a digital workshop in October 2020 to connect the findings with the broader strategic vision of enhancing regulatory performance in the Abu Dhabi health sector.

Second, starting in 2020, the OECD has been supporting the Competitiveness Office of Abu Dhabi (COAD) inside the Department of Economic Development (DED) on a project to develop a methodology for measuring regulatory compliance costs in Abu Dhabi. COAD plays a key role in economic development by coordinating with various government

entities to develop and facilitate the business environment, monitor competitiveness and submit necessary proposals.

The COAD project, which seeks to better identify administrative burdens and compliance cost management, was successfully launched on 14th September 2021. The OECD developed a methodology for measuring regulatory costs, which was successfully implemented on a pilot project focusing on the administrative procedures related to opening a bank account for businesses in Abu Dhabi, and is now used by COAD on other selected administrative procedures. Since March 2022, the OECD is also supporting the UAE with a project focusing on improving Regulation for Trade Facilitation & Logistics in Abu Dhabi, in coordination with the Department of Economic Development - Abu Dhabi. The objectives of this 18 month project are:

- Review the regulatory framework for trade in Abu Dhabi to identify unnecessary regulatory burdens bottlenecks and opportunities for improvements
- Compile specific Trade Facilitation Indicators for Abu Dhabi, using the OECD methodology, to assess challenges relating to administrative processes at the border and allow benchmarking and tracking of progress
- Improve regulatory quality for trade by identifying the most burdensome regulations for trade and providing recommendations for reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens stemming from those regulations.



Ⓜ OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría on the occasion of opening the 2019 Global Platform.



# Yemen

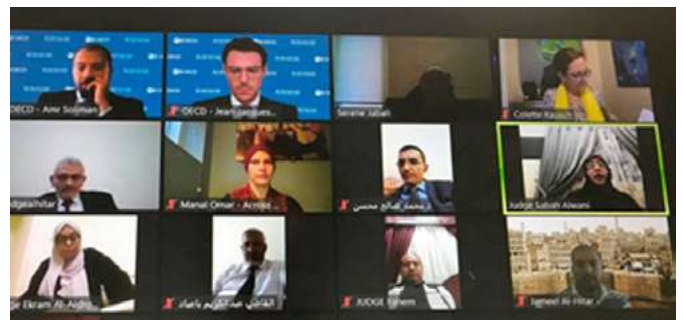
**G7 DEAUVILLE PARTNERSHIP – MENA TRANSITION FUND**

## REINFORCING THE RULE OF LAW: DEVELOPING THE CAPACITIES OF THE JUDICIARY IN YEMEN

Within the framework of the MENA Transition Fund Project “Reinforcing the rule of law: Developing the capacities of the judiciary in Yemen” of the G7 Deauville Partnership, and in partnership with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the OECD collaborates with the Government of Yemen to support the judicial capacity of the Yemeni justice system. The project provides support to the Government of Yemen in identifying key challenges and opportunities in this field, reflecting the conflict context and aiming to anticipate the post-conflict situation. This support was carried out in co-ordination with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of International Cooperation and Planning and the Supreme Court of Yemen.

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme organised 2 capacity-building programmes in the framework of its project funded by the G7 Deauville Partnership – MENA Transition fund, “Reinforcing the Rule of Law: Developing the capacities of Yemen Judiciary” in August 2021. The programmes brought together the Supreme Court, the Public Prosecution, the High Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice of Yemen and the Higher Institute of the Judiciary to discuss the governance of justice institutions. It allowed participants to acquire deep knowledge on good governance practices on the governance of justice institutions and roles in the justice sector based on regional and international good practices. It contributed to deepen the knowledge and raise awareness of the recent developments and innovative approaches in research methodology and legal studies, legal drafting, international legal standards and judicial good practices. Participants also acquired in-depth knowledge on how to conduct a training and design training material.

On 28 September 2021, the OECD organised a workshop which brought together high-level representatives from the judiciary and the Ministry of Justice of Yemen along with the OECD Secretariat. The consultation allowed to present the main findings and key recommendations of the Strategic Guidance document and enabled an exchange among participants on the content document. The workshop resulted in the Government’s endorsement of the Strategic Guidance document that has been developed in the framework of the project.



📍 Online workshops with Yemeni judiciary, 6-7 October 2020

The project also supported the development of an OECD Strategic Guidance Document on “Reinforcing the rule of law: Developing the capacities of the judiciary in Yemen”, which was shared with the government in December 2021. The document looks at key reform priorities for the justice sector in Yemen during and after the conflict, through a governance perspective, and with a particular focus on priority areas that were commonly identified with the Government and the judiciary.



📍 Judge Hamoud Al-Hitar, President of the Supreme Court of Yemen, Judge Ekram El-Aidarousi, judge of the Supreme Court, Judge Hala Alqershi, member of the High Committee of Supervision of Elections, OECD Secretariat., Dead Sea, Jordan, 23 September 2019.



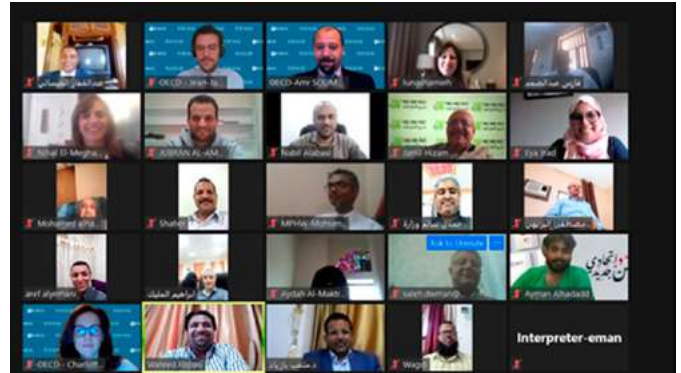
## G7 DEAUVILLE PARTNERSHIP – MENA TRANSITION FUND

## BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES TO PREPARE FOR RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION

Within the framework of the MENA Transition Fund Project “Building institutional capacities to prepare for recovery and reconstruction in Yemen” of the G7 Deauville Partnership, the OECD, in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank, supported the Government of Yemen (GoY) in building institutional capacities at the central and local level. It aimed to design and support policies that could provide a practical and efficient framework for delivering basic public services in a coordinated manner. By working on these inter-related priority areas, the Project aimed at supporting the Government's efforts in post-conflict Yemen to deliver public services and prepare for recovery and reconstruction. The Project sought to mainstream the National Dialogue Conference Outcomes through the development of the required institutional framework and capacities that will contribute to state rebuilding efforts in post-conflict Yemen. This support was carried out through workshops and training courses along with the elaboration of this Strategic Framework document, in coordination with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation of Yemen.

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme organised three capacity-building programmes to support the Government of Yemen (GoY) in the framework of the project. The main objective of the trainings was to build the capacities public officials in the central government to form a task force on governance techniques for better public service delivery.

Organised in January, July and September 2021, the capacity-building programmes trained 20+ public officials in good governance, coordination mechanisms and voice and accountability. It also enabled the creation of a social media



④ 1<sup>st</sup> OECD Training Programme for the Government of Yemen on Building Institutional Capacities, Zoom, 25-28 January 2021

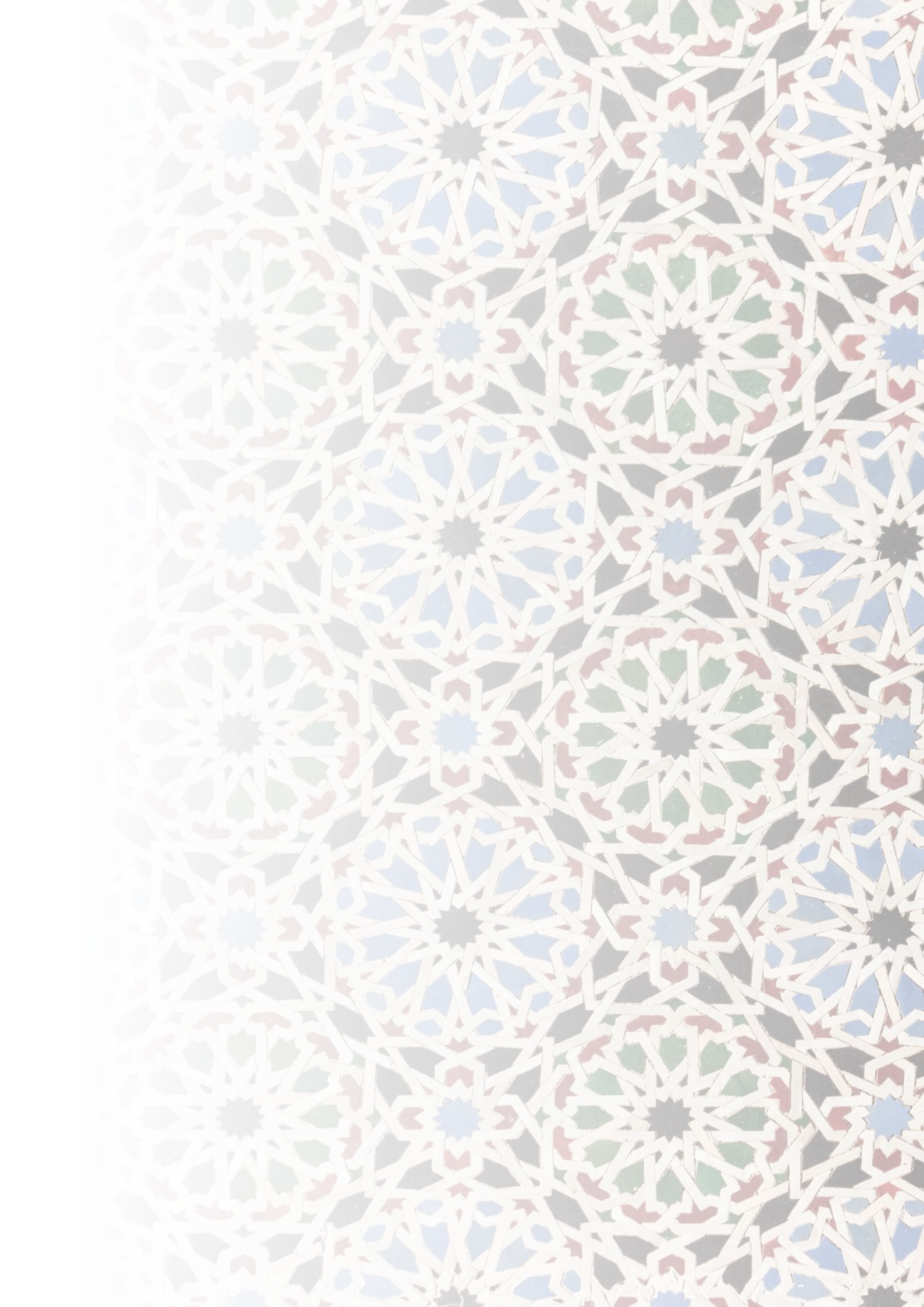
platform that is currently being used for exchanging good practices and relevant documents and materials amongst participants and with the experts. Participants were also able to identify gaps within their organizations that need further support and set an outline for reform plans.

In addition, the **OECD Strategic Framework Document** “Building Institutional Capacity for Public Service Delivery in Yemen” looks at key reform priorities for the institutional organisation in Yemen from a governance perspective, with a particular focus on priority areas that were carefully identified in close collaboration with the Government. It focuses on the institutional challenges facing the effective public services delivery before and during the conflict and provides actionable recommendations to support the Government in its institutional reforms.



④ High-level Consultation Round with the Government of Yemen, World Bank, IsDB and OECD, Jeddah, KSA, 25 February 2020.







# 4

## Annexes





## 2021 MENA-OECD MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

**WE**, the Governments of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Governments from the Middle East and North Africa region, participating in the MENA-OECD Ministerial Conference on Governance and Competitiveness for Development on 1 April 2021.

**NOTING** with satisfaction that the 60th Anniversary of the OECD recalls the fundamental value of multilateral collaboration to promote shared economic prosperity, and acknowledging the unique contribution of the Organisation to build a fairer and more efficient global economy.

**DETERMINED** to combat the COVID-19 pandemic through a global response based on unity, solidarity, south-south and triangular cooperation, and renewed multilateral cooperation among states, peoples and generations that will strengthen the capacity and resolve of states and other stakeholders to fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**CONSIDERING** that the MENA region has been engaged since 2005 in a process of public governance and economic reform as well as a social transformation supported by the **MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness for Development**.

**RECOGNISING** that while significant achievements have taken place, important challenges remain. This includes building more productive economies, delivering social equity and prosperity, and capacity in governments as well as public administration to respond to the demands and needs of citizens including for accountability, transparency, responsiveness and representativeness.

**AFFIRMING** that the COVID-19 crisis offers an **opportunity to engage in comprehensive reform agendas** to reinforce the social fabric in the MENA region, reach higher levels of welfare, stability, and socio-economic security for all citizens, and create new opportunities for today's young and future generations, while fighting growing inequalities and consolidating a health system accessible to all.

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that governments are encouraged to adopt more inclusive, participatory and responsive policy-making and public service delivery to ensure citizens' **trust in public institutions**. To this end, it is essential to make additional efforts to respond to the legitimate aspirations of citizens for prosperity and deeper, fairer and more efficient governance systems founded on democratic institutions, the protection of civic space and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**NOTING** that open, inclusive, innovative and resilient public sectors are crucial to create **public value** and deliver inclusive growth policies. **Integrity, transparency** and effective **anti-corruption** policies are critical to increase the quality and accessibility of **public services**, which is fundamental to achieve opportunities for citizens and businesses alike.

**EMPHASIZING** the need to use innovation and new technologies, including in international cooperation, for economic growth and sustainable development in view of the 2030 Agenda.

**STRESSING** that for the fiscal effort engaged by governments in their response to the COVID-19 crisis to be sustainable, it should be complemented with relevant reforms to develop a more efficient and resilient economic model, with a stronger private sector and higher economic diversification, promote the digitalisation and green transition of the economy to promote quality job creation, and have effective, efficient and accountable public finance strategies and investment processes.

**RECALLING** the need to design an ambitious **trade and investment** reform agenda, leading to more efficient integration in the global economy, tackle opportunities to build regional value chains and attract quality investments that promote a fair, inclusive and resilient recovery.

**OBSERVING** that many countries around the world are making **green measures** a central part of stimulus packages in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures are an opportunity to invest in economic transformations and technological innovations, such as technologies for solar and wind energy, smart green cities and green public transport systems.

**RECOGNISING** that the current health and economic crisis has shed light on the challenges posed by the **informal economy**, a major source of livelihoods in the MENA region that is also associated with high vulnerability for workers and firms. The crisis presents an opportunity to design innovative measures to promote the integration of informal workers and firms into the formal economy, with a particular focus on youth and women.

**CONSIDERING** that achieving **gender equality** is essential to move towards a resilient and prosperous recovery. MENA economies have undertaken reform efforts over the past decade to advance women's participation in political and economic life, but women's role as equal partners in building sustainable and inclusive societies is still limited though it would be beneficial to national and regional development.

**EMPHASIZING** the strategic role of **quality infrastructure investment** in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and in providing stimulus packages for the recovery phase. This crisis could be used as a lever to build more resilient, sustainable and inclusive economies through promoting quality infrastructure investment in accordance with international standards such as openness, transparency, economic efficiency, debt sustainability, good governance, enhanced connectivity, and a more strategic use of public procurement systems.

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that **youth** represents one of the

## 2021 MENA-OECD MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

biggest assets in the MENA region but faces insecurity and significant barriers to participate in public, social and economic life. Improving services that meet the needs of youth and enhancing youth's employability and skills is critical to leverage their potential for bringing innovation and digitalisation to the recovery and inclusion.

**RECALLING** the commitment made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to address the challenges of development financing and create, at all levels, an enabling environment for sustainable development in a spirit of global partnership and solidarity, and that it remains critical that official development assistance commitments be met, including the commitment to reach the 0.7% official development assistance/gross national income target.

**STRESSING** that **natural resource-based economies** in the MENA region are embarked on ambitious reform packages to diversify their economic structure and move away from a dependence on fossil energies while taking account of the three pillars of the sustainable development agenda – economic, social and environmental. Reminding that these efforts require better policies to promote skills, science and technology, and successful integration into global value chains as well as trade and investment flows.

**RECOGNISING** that protracted conflicts and the **different crises** continue to have devastating effects in several MENA economies, including Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen. This has led to the suffering of people, especially the most vulnerable, provoking displacements and an unprecedented refugee crisis in the region; while damaging the economies of neighbouring countries and negatively affecting the stability and economic prospects of the whole region.

**REALISING** the economic benefits that may arise from increased efforts for peace and security in the region supported by among others recently concluded bilateral or multilateral agreements.

**AFFIRMING** the need for stronger links between humanitarian assistance, **long-term socio-economic development opportunities and peace-building objectives in conflict-affected economies**. Regional policy dialogue and inclusion of officials, civil society actors and the private sector from these countries in multilateral networks offered by the MENA-OECD Initiative can contribute to build the capacities for more resilient economies.

### **DECLARE:**

- Our engagement to build a global economy based on equity, solidarity and international tools, standards, and policy dialogue and inspired by best policy practices, as distilled and promoted by the OECD.
- Our recognition of the positive role and tangible results of the MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness for Development, which is a valued

vehicle for advancing effective reforms agendas.

- Our commitment to jointly design and implement a comprehensive programme of work, to which MENA Partners and OECD Members will adhere, to meet higher quality standards in policy making in view of promoting a strong, resilient, green and inclusive recovery and better opportunities for citizens in the region.

**COMMIT** to pursue and strengthen the MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness:

- Mandating the **Steering Group** of the Initiative to provide strategic guidance and evaluate the progress of the Initiative to reach its objectives and report in regular intervals on the progress to the Organisation's External Relations Committee (ERC).
- Reaffirming the principles of the Initiative based on **partnership, ownership, joint chairmanship**, peer learning, demand-driven consultative and participatory processes, and reciprocal commitment.
- Encouraging the development of mechanisms to better measure, monitor and evaluate results of policy reforms and further collaboration to improve statistical systems and progressively incorporate MENA information to **OECD statistical systems and databases**.
- Reaffirming the **importance of competitiveness and public governance** as key levers for socio-economic development in the region and its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, welcoming the achievements of both pillars of the Initiative.
- Recognising the relevance of **OECD instruments, principles and standards** to provide guidance and inspiration to governments across the world, inviting the governments of the MENA region to adhere to those that correspond to their priorities, and welcoming the significant increase of adherences.
- Underlining the strong link between the MENA-OECD working groups and networks, and **OECD Committees**; welcoming the enhanced participation of several MENA countries in these committees as invitees, participants and associates.
- Building on the recommendations of the OECD/Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) report on regional integration; underlining the importance of promoting closer **intra-regional cooperation and integration**, by reducing existing obstacles to the exchange of goods, services and financial flows, developing a shared vision on human mobility, education and innovation and deploying efficient infrastructures to bridge the regional gaps.
- Underlining the importance of the African continent for the global economy and the need of reinforcing the involvement of African countries and African leading institutions in multilateral economic cooperation,



## 2021 MENA-OECD MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

including with the OECD and the MENA Initiative.

- Underlining the need to **foster dialogue and alliances** between governments, the private sector and civil society actors in order to promote economic governance and competitiveness.
- Commending the participation of MENA governments in other OECD initiatives such as the **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** and the **Base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS)** project, and inviting the OECD Secretariat to inform the Steering Group their progress and contribution to the competitiveness and governance agendas.
- Highlighting the positive impact of the collaboration of many MENA Partners with **SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management)**, a joint initiative of the OECD and the EU, promoting the Principles of Public Administration, a framework of standards and indicators developed in collaboration with the European Commission.
- Welcoming the **Country Programme of Morocco** and the soon to be expected signing of the **Egypt Country Programme**, inviting Morocco and Egypt to share their experience with other Partners through the MENA-OECD Initiative. Acknowledging the Memorandum of Understanding with **Tunisia** and the **United Arab Emirates** and welcoming their closer collaboration with the OECD.
- Praising the launch of the **OECD Istanbul Centre** and calling to support its activities and reinforce collaboration between the different OECD regional programmes. Underscoring the contribution of the **MENA-OECD Governance Programme Training Centre of Caserta** in supporting regional peer-to-peer exchanges and capacity building, calling to scale up the scope of the Centre.
- Expressing solidarity with the MENA economies suffering the most from **fragility** or those affected by **conflicts**, and reaffirming the Initiative's commitment to support the design of tailored solutions to promote long-term development and peace-building aimed at tackling the root causes of instability.
- Affirming the common will of all participants to support **Lebanon's** efforts in its urgently needed governance, economic and judiciary reforms, which are a condition for further assistance, as well as its efforts after the tragic explosion, which destroyed the Port and part of Beirut, in August 2020.
- Calling on all OECD and MENA governments to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and welcoming the upcoming meeting (COP 26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the United Kingdom in November 2021 as well as the European Green Deal action plan.
- Affirming the importance of close **collaboration** with other international and regional organisations and financial

institutions, as well as strong donor coordination.

- Welcoming the ongoing cooperation between the **OECD**, **ESCWA** and **UNCTAD** to promote competition law, policy reform and open and digital government.
- Acknowledging that the pandemic is a call to renew our region's commitment to the financing and realisation of **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region**, including mutual values of collaboration, economic integration and a collective commitment for shared prosperity.
- Calling participant economies and donors to support the implementation of the **MENA-OECD Competitiveness Programme** and the **MENA-OECD Governance Programme**, as described in the Annexes to this Declaration, and underlying the role of the Steering Committee of the respective programmes to define the mechanisms to effectively implement this Declaration.

### ANNEX: ORIENTATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

**We recognise** that socio-economic development relies, among others, on good governance. Over the past fifteen years, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme has achieved considerable impact in support of good governance in the region by promoting **open, transparent and innovative government; rule of law; local governance; efficient machinery of government; gender equality; and youth empowerment**.

**We thus resolve** to strengthen public governance frameworks in the MENA region in order to ensure a sustainable and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for all citizens, especially the most vulnerable, and greater long-term resilience of MENA economies and societies.

**We mandate** the MENA-OECD Governance Programme to deepen its engagement based on the unique approach of combining policy assessment, regional policy dialogue and peer learning, and implementation assistance through its regional working groups and networks as well as countryspecific projects.

**We mandate** the Programme to continue to assist MENA economies in strengthening their public governance frameworks and adapt its thematic priorities to better support MENA economies as they tackle the challenges created by the pandemic. This will include:

- Accelerating its support to **strengthen the implementation of effective risk governance and management as well as the resilience of public institutions**;
- Helping build **open, inclusive, transparent and accountable institutions** and thus trust in government along with **solid integrity frameworks, stronger monitoring and evaluation systems, public sector innovation** and the adoption of **new and digital**

## 2021 MENA-OECD MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

**technologies** by the region's governments;

- Increasing support for the **rule of law systems** and promote a **people-centred justice** approach to guarantee **equal access to justice for all**;
- Encouraging the design and delivery of more **inclusive policies and services for youth and women** from diverse backgrounds, in particular **vulnerable and marginalised groups**, including migrants and refugees;
- Continuing to assist MENA economies in modernising and reforming **public infrastructure and procurement systems, the public governance of economic institutions and regulators**;
- Promoting the **effectiveness of public institutions** and through better **regulatory policy** as well as **stronger budget and public finance systems and public employment and management**;
- Putting an emphasis on supporting **institution-building in post-conflict recovery and reconstruction**;
- Strengthening capacities for **local and regional governance arrangements** in delivering policies and services that are closer, more accessible and more responsive to citizens;
- Encouraging a more **responsible governance of trade** across the region by **combatting illicit trade and integrating informal economies**.

We support the Programme's framework and working methods to ensure sustainable impact in line with the demand of MENA economies. To that effect, the Programme will:

- Expand and leverage its offer of **data collection exercises, in line with the OECD Government at a Glance methodology**, in key policy sectors for the region, in an effort to develop a MENA-specific Government at a Glance report as requested by MENA and OECD governments;
- Strengthen its support to peer-to-peer exchanges and trainings by enhancing the reach and scope of the activities conducted through the **MENA-OECD Governance Programme Training Centre of Caserta**, jointly operated with Italy's National School of Administration and through active cooperation with **SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management)**, a joint initiative of the OECD and the EU, principally financed by the EU, and promote the Principles of Public Administration;
- Continue to actively cooperate with other international and regional partners in the implementation of projects and activities, including the United Arab Emirates through the World Government Summit as well as UN agencies to deliver on MENA economies' SDGs commitments (UN MAPS engagement), regional organisations and development banks;
- Further promote an inclusive approach, systematically involving key stakeholders from government, parliament, civil society and academics. To this end, the Programme will transform its Civil Society Advisory Board into the **Civil Society Partners** with a view to strengthen its role and mission. Building on this body as well as the OECD's **Network of Schools of Government**, the Programme will seek to enhance consultations and feedback from civil society, including monitoring and evaluation networks, as well as universities, research institutes/think tanks, and youth organisations;
- Maintain and reinforce its current structure of regional working groups as a strategic platform for regional policy dialogue and the sharing of good practices across OECD Members and the MENA region. In order to align with the PGC substructure, the regional working group dedicated to gender equality, the MENA-OECD Women in Government Platform, will become **the MENA-OECD Platform on Gender Mainstreaming, Governance and Leadership**;
- Further support the increased engagement of MENA economies with OECD committees and their sub-bodies, through the inclusion of MENA countries in the PGC and RPC Participation Plans and the adherence to OECD legal instruments. The Programme will also **ensure the strategic alignment of its programme of work to the various OECD committees**, including the PGC and RPC and their sub-bodies and policy communities;
- Extend the annual Regional MENA Youth Day to the new mandate, which could be consolidated in the form of a regional **MENA Youth Empowerment network**;
- Create **further synergies with the PGC Symposium** in order to reinforce the exchange with regional OECD networks.
- Establish, in view of the current COVID-19 crisis, a **new regional day on risk management and resilience**.



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## DONORS 2021-2022

### REGIONAL PROGRAMME



Abu Dhabi and Federal  
Government of UAE



Germany



Italy



MENA Transition Fund  
G7 Deauville Partnership



MEPI/US

### COUNTRY PROJECT



Abu Dhabi and Federal  
Government of UAE



Egypt



European Union



Germany



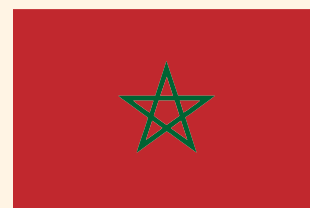
Italy



MENA Transition Fund  
G7 Deauville Partnership



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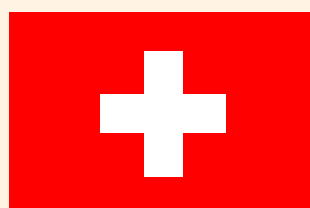
Morocco



Saudi Arabia



Spain

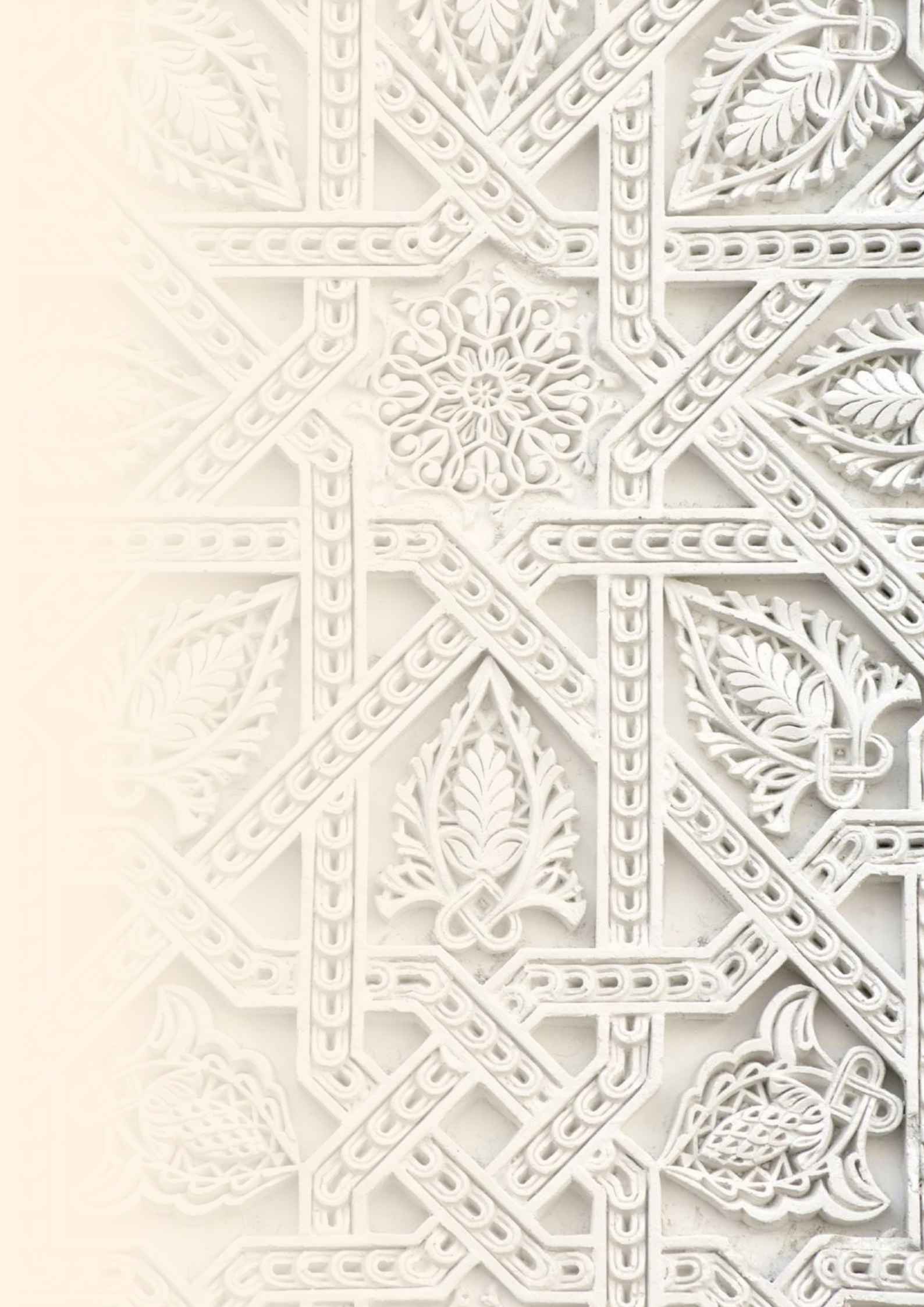


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