

## Introduction

### 1) Nature of the Second Report

The developments in the world over the past decades that followed the release of the First Report on Human Development in 1990 resulted in many issues that have assumed centrality from the perspective of human development, notably social progress, which means that people have greater access to knowledge, nutrition, and better health services. It also means that growth should be coupled with equity. It also involves participation and freedom, which mean empowering people so that they can participate and promote governance, democracy and equality between species (gender equality). Moreover, the provision of civil and political rights and cultural freedom are also key issues in this context. In addition to the foregoing, there is sustainability for future generations in the environmental, economic, and social sense and ensuring human security, which includes security in daily life, security against chronic threats such as hunger and sudden disturbances such as unemployment, famine and conflicts.

National reports on human development are a comprehensive survey of the state of human development in the concerned country in accordance with the framework referred to above. They provide a picture of this state in the various sectors that make up the overall concept of human development as a modern development approach that makes humans the focus of the development process as they are its end and target. They provide a down-top reading on poverty and human development.

However, these reports do not provide solutions or make recommendations, but report on the status of human development sectorally, geographically, in terms of gender, and in terms of age and others as provided for by the data. Therefore, the availability, quality and of up-to-date data are a key determinant of the contents of the report and the coverage they provide.

These reports raise an expanded social dialogue on the issues they address and provide a chance to the relevant bodies to examine them and propose solutions. In other words, the reports do not play the role of these bodies in providing urgent solutions and proposals that may not be necessarily the best.

Experience has shown that the most successful reports in influencing the development dialogue have been those that could follow the following principles:

- National ownership of the report
- Independent analysis
- Preparation of the report on the basis of participation and non-exclusion
- Quality of the analysis provided by the report
- Flexibility and creativity in presentation

It is also known in the context of preparation of national reports on human development that the first report should be comprehensive and covers all the areas under the concept of sustainable human development. In the light of the diagnosis provided by this report of the fields that need an additional developmental effort to accelerate their growth or address some of the imbalances in the development process therein, the most pressing fields that need focus are selected to be subjects of subsequent reports according to their respective importance and need for treatment.

There is no doubt that devoting the entire report to a particular subject shall allow expansion in its discussion and analysis in such detail that makes providing solutions later easier and more convenient. Comprehensiveness limits the space allocated for each subject limited to avoid excessive length that may make it unreadable.

Therefore, First Omani Report on Human Development, issued in September 2004, and covered period until the end of 2000, was a comprehensive so that the subsequent reports, including the Second Report, would be dedicated to a single issue that is the most pressing and in need of extensive study. A number of subjects have already been diagnosed and proposed to be the subject of the Second Report. Actually, this diagnosis was based on the facts and information contained in the First Report.

However, the length of the period between both reports, which witnessed the largest development expenditure in the history of the Sultanate, in addition to being full of many variables, led to the decision that the second report should be comprehensive as well. This was out of the conviction that this will make it easy to know the effects left by the huge development program huge on all aspects of human development in the Sultanate, particularly since the first report had recommended the preparation of a comprehensive report from time to time to assess the state of

human development in general and re-prioritize the report subjects according to the results of these comprehensive reports.

## 2) Time Period covered by the Report

The second report covers the period of 2001-2010. This period witnessed the implementation of two development plans: the Sixth Five-Year Plan (2001-2005) and the Seventh Five-Year Plan (2006-2010), which makes its timing appropriate to assess the development performance during that period. To make report data cover the entire abovementioned period, serious efforts have been made for this purpose, but the data are sometimes unavailable for various reasons. A part of these data is obtained through periodic surveys (such as Workforce Survey, Household Expenditure and Income Survey and accompanied surveys, General Census of Population and Housing, and various Health Surveys). These surveys are not necessarily annual. The last Workforce Survey, for example, was in 2008. Other data need a lag period for completion, such as national accounts, or they may be unavailable nationally and in this case estimates of international organizations are adopted.

It may be noted that report data sometimes cover years that exceed the date limit of the rest of the data. This is in fact due to the fact that last two years (2010 and 2011) witnessed the issuance of new directives and decisions that clearly affected some economic and social aspects which necessitated highlighting them and not to delay their use due to their importance in addressing some bottlenecks and weaknesses in certain aspects. Moreover, in some cases, data of older years are used when there is doubt about the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data of a given year. In this case, date of an older year is used to ensure accuracy.

Perhaps, the issuance of this report and the problems it encountered in terms of the availability, accuracy and up-to-datedness of data, as noted above, may be an occasion to reaffirm the need for a statistical calendar of Sultanate whereby various statistical activities are scheduled. According to its dates, reports and studies are prepared in such a way that ensures they benefit of statistical products early and consistently.

## 3) Who are the Targets of the Report and What are its Expected Effects

The report core function is to provide a survey of the state of human development in the country and put it in front of decision-makers, government planners and other development partners, i.e. the private sector and civil society. In this way, the report is a complementary document of the planning activity utilized to formulate the development alternatives for the next stage in the allocation of resources for the various development purposes in the coming plans on the other hand.

It is also hopeful that the issuance of the report would be a chance for a societal development dialogue that aims to enlighten all related parties of the realities and problems of development and the requirements from all parties, including the ordinary citizen, who is the ultimate goal of development. It also provides a lot of facts for scholars and intellectuals concerned with development affairs so that they can study them and provide views and proposed solutions, especially since the report usually does not offer solutions or proposals for developmental problems.

The development process in the Sultanate has taken important strides and gone beyond the initial construction process of the manifestations of the modern state and entered the phase of building new and complex manifestations of modern life aspects that are consistent with the scientific and cultural progress in the world and that have become more expensive and complicated. The citizens' needs have also changed, and now include new items, especially since the modern means of communication made everyone informed of what is going on in the world.

In the face of all that, negotiating development issues has become a necessity that makes all the parties which are partners in development burden their responsibilities in this regard and identify the roles required of each party to play. It also contributes to make these parties adopt more realistic and viable targets and demands.

The spread of the development culture among the general public in terms of familiarity with the available resources, costs of implementing the various requirements, limitations that sometimes restrict implementation capacity as well as the entire development scene help establish a sense of national responsibility of the individuals in the context of participation in development construction and not considered it only a government responsibility. It is noteworthy that this report does not necessarily express the official view of development issues but a professional technical reading of the development scene in all its dimensions, an assessment of what has been accomplished already, and statement of what should be done in the next phase.

#### 4) Mechanism to Measure the Impact of Reports

Globally, a number of variables have been determined as a basis for measuring the impact of the reports on the development process in the country concerned, namely:

- Improvement in the quantity and quality of statistics in terms of their response to the requirements of human development.
- Increasing awareness of the concepts and issues of human development.
- Expanding dialogue on policy.
- Increasing changes in policies.
- Impacting civil society activity.

In the Sultanate, the issuance of the First National Report had many positive effects on the development scene in the country, notably preparation of a matrix that includes a diagnosis taken from the report of the developmental tasks that need to be done in each sector, showing the status of each in terms of being underway or not, and stating the obstacles to address these weaknesses and whether they need legislation, resources, an awareness approach, or other tools. This matrix was placed at the disposal of the Supreme Committee for the Preparation of the Five-Year Plans.

The report has had beneficial effects on the discussions of the State and Shura Councils, which reviewed and discussed the contents of the report. Moreover, the report and its contents were used in the discussions between the members of both Councils with some sectoral ministers.

As for the improvement of statistics, those concerned with the preparation of the report have been in constant dialogue with data producers to develop data in terms of quality and quantity, timing of their issuance, and participation in shaping the contents of the statistical forms to include statistics that meet the needs of human development reports. At the educational level, the Ministry of Education inserted materials adapted from the First Report in some textbooks used by school students.

Moreover, a number of colleges used the report as an additional teaching material. The report has also become an important source for scholars in area of development affairs, particularly graduate students within and outside the Sultanate. This is in addition to the awareness impact on the public, especially that free copies of the report were distributed at Muscat Book Fair in addition to the executive summary, an easy-to-read and concise document that includes the highlights of the report for the one who does not find time to read it all.

#### 5) Mechanism for Report Preparation

In the preparation of this report, a new mechanism different from that used in the preparation of the First Report was used. Instead of forming research teams comprising representatives from various government and non-governmental organizations, a number of scholars were contracted after their selection through an ad at local and Arab newspapers. The ad included the conditions for participation, remuneration of researchers, and specifications of the background paper required for each sector. The Department of Sustainable Human Development at the Ministry of National Economy provided the data and some resources for scholars to facilitate their work. The draft background papers were presented to a number of assessors to review and provide feedback to improve them so as to provide some acceptable scientific material required for writing each chapter of the report.

This new mechanism contributed to achieving one of the objectives of the report. It promotes the culture of scientific research in this vital field. Providing a competitive reward to scholars is a positive message that shows respect for cultural and scientific effort. It was also an occasion for the introduction of a number of scholars to the field of human development, creation of contact between them and the concepts and various indicators of human development, and identification of how to address their specialized subjects in the context of a comprehensive and integrated human development approach.

The Council of Ministers approved the restructuring the Advisory Ministerial Committee supervising the preparation of the report as well as the technical working group to take into account the changes in the names of some ministries or the ministries that have been introduced during the period between both reports.