

Organizations concerned with sustainable development

Dr. Jaber Eid Al-Wandah

International Consultant, Sustainable Development
Deputy General Manager – Al-Najat Charity

In this article, we aim to review and highlight the most important organizations and institutions concerned with sustainable development, tracking the indicators of achieving its goals, or following up on their reports, or issuing these reports.

In general, we can say that any institution or organization that deals with one of the pillars or three dimensions of sustainability, whether local, regional, or global, is concerned with sustainability. The data and reports issued by any entity that falls within the scope of interest and work of such an institution are also relevant.

Among the local institutions concerned with sustainability and its reports in our beloved country is the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, which, through its General Secretariat, issues voluntary reports on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has issued two voluntary reports: one in 2019 and another this year (July 2023, presented at the High-Level Political Forum at the United Nations). The General Secretariat of the Council holds many workshops and meets with relevant government entities, civil society organizations, academic institutions, private sector institutions, and UN organizations to prepare this disclosure, discuss its data, and finalize its content.

At the regional level, one of the organizations that has a presence and a role in monitoring sustainability matters is the Gulf Cooperation Council Statistical Center, which is the official source of data, information, and statistics related to the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. These statistics are naturally reflected in sustainability reports and disclosures, as they cover the environment, economy, and various societal issues such as education,

employment, and population statistics.

Another important regional organization is ESCWA (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia), which was established to improve economic activity among member states and enhance cooperation between them. It monitors and is concerned with sustainable development matters in these member states.

Additionally, the League of Arab States and its associated entities concerned with sustainable development, such as the Arab Labor Organization, the Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science (ALECSO), the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED), and the Arab Network for NGOs, also play key roles.

There is also the Regional CSR Network, which focuses on corporate social responsibility in the region.

As for international organizations, they are numerous, with the most prominent being the United Nations, the World Environment and Development Organization, and the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB).

It is worth mentioning that there are many observatories that monitor progress in achieving these goals, and they have well-known websites on the internet. Some of the most important include the SDG Gateway, the Arab Observatory for SDGs, the Arab Center for Climate Change Policy, the Sustainability Compass, the Sustainability Reports Gateway, the Knowledge and Learning Platform, and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which we will discuss in detail in the next article, as Allah wills.

Why are we discussing these organizations and institutions? First, to provide examples and demonstrate the multitude of organizations concerned with this important issue. Second, to highlight the need to learn from the experiences of these institutions in dealing with data, information, and reports. Third, to encourage these organizations and institutions to benefit from the reports issued by your charitable organization on sustainability.

To be continued