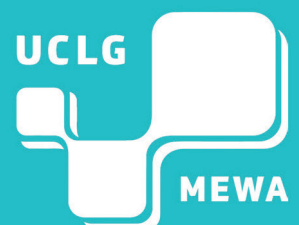
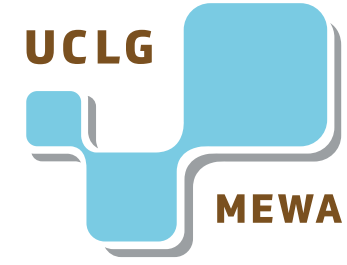


Sustainable Development Report **2025**

Analysis Paper

A Snapshot of
MEWA Region





Sustainable Development Report 2025: A Snapshot of MEWA Region

® UCLG-MEWA, 2025

Publisher on behalf of UCLG-MEWA

Dr. Mehmet Duman
UCLG-MEWA Secretary General

Authors

Aleyna Demircan
Esranur Tanrikulu
Yehia Ibrahim

Editors

Dr. Mehmet Duman
Junaid Rafiq
Dr. Reem Abusamra

Contributions

Design

Amir Lütfioğlu

FOREWORD

As UCLG-MEWA, our commitment is to advocate for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to take decisive action to localize these goals effectively. Our conviction is to raise the voices of local governments and emphasize the significance of local actions towards the achievement of the 2030 Goals.

Amid persistent global challenges such as the climate crisis, conflicts, and socio-economic issues, the importance of sustainable development is further underscored—especially for countries most vulnerable to these adversities. From this perspective, our region continues to face complex global challenges; nevertheless, it has achieved significant progress and demonstrated considerable potential for improvement in implementing the SDGs. This dual reality of challenges and possibilities emphasizes why local action is crucial in advancing the SDGs. This analysis paper reflects one of the UCLG-MEWA's important priorities that meaningful progress toward the SDGs must be grounded in local realities and shaped by local and regional governments.

Urban areas are at the forefront of the climate crisis, natural disasters, conflicts, and human rights violations. In this context, the SDGs provide a valuable roadmap as a tool for urban development while guiding policymakers, urban planners, and all other professionals to engage in creating resilient and sustainable urban futures. In this analysis paper, we provide information about local efforts by cities in our region, as well as with global status of the MEWA countries in sustainable development. Although the numbers are promising, we still lag significantly behind global progress, making our role crucial in embracing bold solutions and strong political will.

UCLG-MEWA represents the voices of local governments in the international arena, sharing their challenges and efforts on sustainable development. For this particular mission, we disseminate this concise and evidence-based report by providing a snapshot of our region and identifying areas of advancement, gaps that persist, and opportunities for acceleration. We briefly demonstrate the current global landscape and detailed regional outlook for our region, emphasizing the achievements and outlining the path forward over the next 5 years. We strive to provide additional information regarding fragility and ongoing difficulties in some countries to allow a fairer interpretation of their progress. Through this paper, our aim is to encourage local governments to take the lead in sustainable development and recognize their progress in this regard.

The road to 2030 is short, and the task ahead is formidable. Yet the ongoing efforts in the MEWA Region are promising. Local action offers to foster sustainable development strategies with its closeness to communities. We are determined to carry out our effort to empower local governments for sustainable futures, ensuring no one is left behind in the MEWA Region.

Dr. Mehmet Duman

UCLG-MEWA Secretary General

INTRODUCTION:

Figure 1. 2025 SDG Dashboards for the MEWA Region¹

Country		Rank	Score	Progress since 2015*	SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17
1	Jordan	71	71.0	+6.7	→	→	↗	↑	→	→	↗	↗	↗	x	→	↗	↗	→	→	→	↗
2	Türkiye	73	70.6	+3.7	↑	→	↗	↑	→	↗	↗	↗	↑	→	↗	→	↓	↗	→	→	→
3	United Arab Emirates	80	69.8	+9.9	→	→	↗	↑	↗	↗	↗	→	↑	x	↗	→	→	→	→	→	→
4	Iran	83	69.9	+2.8	↗	→	↗	↑	→	→	→	→	↗	→	→	→	↓	↗	→	→	→
5	Oman	97	67.1	N/A	x	→	↗	→	→	↗	↗	↑	↗	x	↗	→	→	→	→	x	→

The MEWA Region is again marked by disparity when it comes to commitment to UNBased multilateralism. While countries like Kuwait (74), Jordan (70.5), and Oman (66.5) score above the median, countries like Lebanon, Türkiye, Afghanistan, Syria and Iran demonstrate very poor performance in this regard. Türkiye also has a relatively low commitment compared to other G20 Countries.

For treaty ratification the global median stands at 83%, with Türkiye exceeding it at 93%, while Saudi Arabia falls below 75%. Also, while Saudi Arabia aligns with the international majority in more than 80% of UNGA votes, it scores poorly on disarmament and militarization, alongside Türkiye. Both Türkiye and Iran fall below 70% regarding alignment to the international majority of UNGA votes. Furthermore, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are among the top four globally in militarization between G20 and other large countries, behind only Russia and ahead of the United States, reflecting the geopolitical tensions and sentiments of insecurity that plagues the region. This indicator reflects data such as military expenditure compared to GDP, the total number of military personnel per capita, relations with neighboring countries and funding allocated to UN peacekeeping missions.

Another area of concern is the use of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs), which the United Nations has repeatedly condemned as contrary to international law, the UN Charter, and humanitarian norms. Both Türkiye and Saudi Arabia score above the global median on this indicator, emphasizing the need for greater alignment with internationally accepted norms of peaceful and lawful state conduct. Finally, when it comes to financial contributions to the UN, both countries exhibit moderate payment delays. Türkiye meets the global median score of 66, while Saudi Arabia falls slightly below at 60.



■ ANALYSIS OF MEWA COUNTRIES' PERFORMANCE

BAHRAIN



TOTAL AREA
800,00 km²

CAPITAL CITY
Manama

CURRENCY
Bahraini Dinar

LANGUAGE
Arabic

The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UCLG-MEWA.
Source: Administrative Boundaries. Retrieved from: Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) platform.

Score	Global Rank	Rank in MEWA Region
64.4	110/167	8/16

Bahrain demonstrates strong performance in digital connectivity, infrastructure access, basic service provision, and certain health and education indicators. The country enjoys universal access to electricity, clean cooking, sanitation, and high internet penetration, alongside relatively high life expectancy. However, it faces major challenges in environmental sustainability, particularly with high CO₂ emissions, minimal renewable energy use, and significant freshwater over-extraction. Air quality, biodiversity protection, and waste management are also concerns. Gender equality indicators show mixed results, with strong parity in education but persistent gaps in political representation and family planning coverage. Data availability is a challenge, especially in poverty and inequality metrics, limiting a complete assessment.

Areas of Strength

SDG Area	Achievements
SDG 9 - Infrastructure & Innovation	Universal rural road access, 100% internet coverage, high mobile broadband penetration, and strong logistics infrastructure
SDG 7 - Clean Energy Access	100% access to electricity and clean cooking fuels
SDG 6 - Sanitation	100% access to basic sanitation services; high wastewater treatment rates
SDG 3 - Health	



www.uclg-mewa.org