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Arab NGO Network for Development
شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية

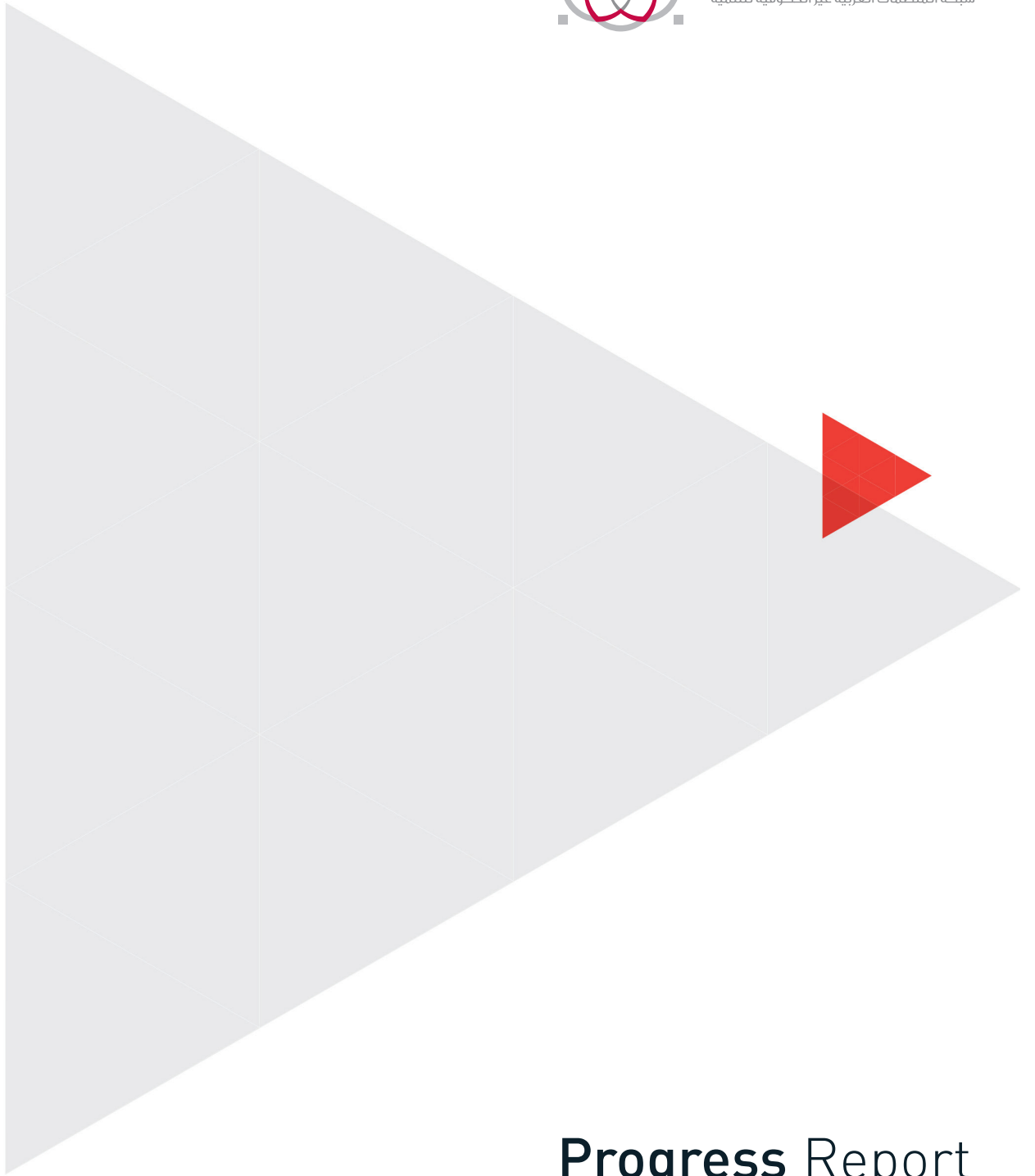


Progress Report 2019



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▶ Introduction

A Year of Challenges and Breakdowns ... But Hope for a Better Future is in Sight

The year 2019 saw major events unfolding at the international and regional levels, perhaps the most important of which was the eruption of protest movements across the world, from Latin America to Asia, Africa, and the Arab region, raising common demands under the same title: Social Justice. At a minimum, they expressed the failure of prevailing policies since the turn of the century, those of brutal neoliberalism, austerity, and the dominance of the current financial system, which allows an unfettered flow of capital, the existence of tax paradises, and the spread of tax evasion.

The above policies led to the exacerbation of the social and economic crisis, increased the concentration of wealth in the hand of the %1, and led to the deterioration of the conditions of more than %60 of the population. An Oxfam report released at the end of 2019 goes further and says that %82 of the world's wealth is held by %1 of the billionaires and that the world's 2,153 richest billionaires possess more wealth than more than %60 of the people globally. According to Oxfam's calculations, "globally, %42 of women of working age, compared with %6 of men, are outside the paid labour force because of unpaid care responsibilities."

Along this description of the economic and social consequences of neoliberal globalization, it must be noted that it is accompanied by developments in ideology and political practices at the international level, where a generalized and systematic violation of the human rights system and international law is taking place. Strong parties, internationally or regionally, adopt a policy of brute force in international diplomatic, economic, and social relations to impose their conditions on other parties. It can be through trade wars armed

with political or administrative measures or through direct military intervention in the affairs of other countries and provoking conflicts. In the Arab region, whose people are their biggest victims, such policies are being shamelessly flaunted by highly influential international and regional powers.

A wide inequality gap exists both between and within Arab countries. An ESCWA report issued in early 2019 indicated that the Arab region is stuck in the inequality trap; the differences are not limited to income, but affect social, political, and economic aspects, including human capital. For example, one of the report's shocking results is that it is the most unequal region, with the richest %10 of the population controlling %62 of the wealth. This is due to the unequal opportunities between citizens in accessing public services, especially decent work opportunities, as a result of institutional deficit and structural decay.

Thus, it was no surprise that 2019 witnessed the eruption of the Arab Spring's second wave from Algeria, where the people overthrew President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and began on a steady path towards desired democratic transformation, albeit which remains winding, complicated, and ambiguous, due to the continuing primary role of the armed forces in the process. In Sudan, the peaceful revolution succeeded in toppling President Omar Hassan al-Bashir and establishing a transitional phase led by a joint council between the leadership of the armed forces and representatives of the revolution. Despite these two accomplishments, both countries continue to face challenges on the road to building democracy and a modern state as demanded by the people, brought about in part by the role played by the armed forces, which contrasts - if not contradicts - the aspirations of civil forces in Sudan as well as in Algeria.

Lebanon and Iraq, on the contrary, are in a very similar and closely related situation. The geopolitical crisis and conflicts between the regional axes and their international extensions have had serious repercussions on the political, economic, and social conditions in both countries. The nature of both political systems is one of a clientelist political-sectarian division and where decision-making mechanisms fall outside of constitutional institutions, weakening their immunity and multiplying their fragility and inability to overcome crises. Both systems do not allow citizens' active participation and tend to hinder the mechanisms of disclosure and accountability. In addition to the crisis faced by both economic models, where production in basic sectors decreased as a result of conflicts, tension, and external interference in Iraq, the economic choices and financial and monetary policies of Lebanon, and the spread of structural corruption, clientelism, patronage in employment and supplies, and monopolizing commodity markets in both countries. The situation is compounded by weak redistribution tools, such as fair tax policies, comprehensive social protection systems, and fair wage policies. All of these factors have led to increased social inequality at various levels and to a periodic eruption of severe political and institutional crises.

The Syrian crisis brought serious repercussions inside Iraq and Lebanon, threatening stability and civil peace due to the fragile nature of both regimes and political divisions. In Lebanon, the Syrian crisis closed land borders leading to Jordan, the mandatory passage for Lebanese goods towards Gulf markets, in addition to increasing smuggling operations to and from Syria, not to mention the influx of refugees, whose numbers exceed one fifth of the Lebanese population. Furthermore, political factors related to the Syrian situation

led to worsening relations between Lebanon and GCC countries, who had been the biggest contributors to supporting the economy through direct investments, bank deposits, real estate investments, aid, and tourism in addition to remittances by Lebanese expats in those countries.

Structural corruption and the nature of the banking system in Lebanon aggravated the situation. The most recent crisis in Autumn 2019 caused the deterioration of the exchange rate from 1,500 Lebanese Pound to the Dollar in July 2019 to 2,500 before a slight recovery, but remaining unstable until the writing of this report. The resulting decrease in the purchasing power of Lebanese citizens reached between %35 and %40. Unemployment, officially estimated at %16 in total, %23 for youth, and %55 informally employed in 2019/2018, is expected to have reached %25 due to stagnation and the total or partial closure of establishments. The poor population is also expected to have increased from around one third to around one half of the population by the beginning of 2020.

In Iraq, sectarian and political divisions contributed to rampant corruption and depletion of the economy and resources; one of the biggest oil-rich countries in the world is now one of the poorest.

As for the countries of the Arab Spring's first wave (2011), the situation is not perfect. Despite the peaceful political transition in Tunisia, the political and economic situation is still complicated, placing the country under the pressure of European neighborhood policies, which demand the conclusion of bilateral trade negotiations, calling for more liberalization, on the one hand, and IFIs demanding more austerity that reflects on the social and service conditions of citizens, on the other. The direction of the political process is also unstable, as the sequential results of the parliamentary, municipal, and



presidential elections have shown, adding to the ambiguity surrounding the political and socio-economic tracks. In Egypt, civil society is passing through some of the most difficult times, besieged by restrictions and judicial and security prosecution, under a military regime. Armed conflicts continue in Yemen and Libya, with the humanitarian situation worsening as a result of external interference and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law, exposing civilians to increased danger.

Right before finishing writing this introduction, the Deal of the Century appeared in the most horrific of forms. It was announced by the "US sponsor of Middle East peace negotiations" and its partner, the "enemy's" prime minister, unilaterally and in a manner never before witnessed throughout history, calling on the Palestinians and neighboring countries to join the Deal in exchange for a sum of money amounting to fifty billion US dollars. Regardless of the form, the Deal, which we believe was stillborn as it carried the reasons for its failure, will have serious repercussions on the region's security and stability. It will inevitably increase tensions in the occupied territories and lead to political and economic pressures on countries that refuse to engage in it. The Deal cannot be accepted, as it deprives the Palestinian people of their most basic human rights, foremost of which is the right to self-determination, the establishment of an independent state, and the right to development and to live in peace, security, and prosperity. It also deprives the Palestinians of the diaspora of the right of return, although stipulated by all international charters and laws and repeated by UN resolutions, the world's only legitimate international institution.

In short, the region is undergoing one of its direst moments, with occupations, armed conflicts, economic, financial and political crises, external interventions, and, above all, its exposure to pressure from IFIs and their non-

stop interference under the pretext of getting out of the financial and monetary crisis or providing social safety nets to vulnerable groups, demanding structural reforms in public policies and ignoring human rights. There is ample evidence in the reports of many international, regional, and national human rights organizations of flagrant human rights violations caused by the application of IFI policies, including reports by the special rapporteurs for human rights.

This is the region's unfortunate situation. Nevertheless, reports submitted by its governments to international organizations paint a different picture, whether in the UPR process before the Human Rights Council in Geneva or the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on sustainable development policies during the HLPF at the UN headquarters in New York. These governments bow to the IFIs and are subject to their conditions, so they place no value on human rights, especially the right to decent work, social protection, fair wages, or fair tax systems and call for the privatization of public sector institutions without any feasibility studies or the ability to monitor the private sector's performance, especially if it is affiliated to partners in power. There can be no doubt that relations with the international community are necessary and incontrovertible. However, they must consider national and regional priorities and interest first, which should be identified by the region's own peoples, without the tutelage of a ruler, a high commissioner, or a donor. We are certain that our rulers do not choose austerity measures that impact their interests, but those that come at the expense of citizens. And this formula needs to change.

In 2019, the region fell between a stifling crisis and authoritarian and corrupt governments, on one hand, and the conditions imposed by IFIs, on the other, in addition to the shift in international politics away from human rights standards and respect of international law, towards the

militarization of globalization and the hegemony of the security approach at the expense of all rights, including the right to development. Nevertheless, the explosion of popular anger evokes a lot of hope that the peoples' voices will be heard in the coming years and they will be gradually realized towards building modern civil states and constitutional democracies, providing social justice, respect for human rights and citizenship, adherence to international law and the maintenance of international peace, and dispensing of policies of imperial intervention, which should be a reminder of a long gone past.

Perhaps the biggest danger facing people and civil society in Arab countries is the almost complete departure from the principle of the supremacy of law and respect for the constitution in most countries. It does not make these states failed or rogue from the perspective of international equilibrium, but rather transforms them from countries governed by constitutions, the law, and governments that have a minimum level of legitimacy and legitimacy, to countries living outside their constitution and private laws in relation to their institutions, actors in their political system, or their people. This entails dangerous consequences, not least of which is the aggravation of benign conflicts and contradictions that contribute to the development and advancement of society into the path of chaos and mutual and self-destruction, due to the absence of standards, rules, and institutions qualified to manage conflicts and contradictions in society.

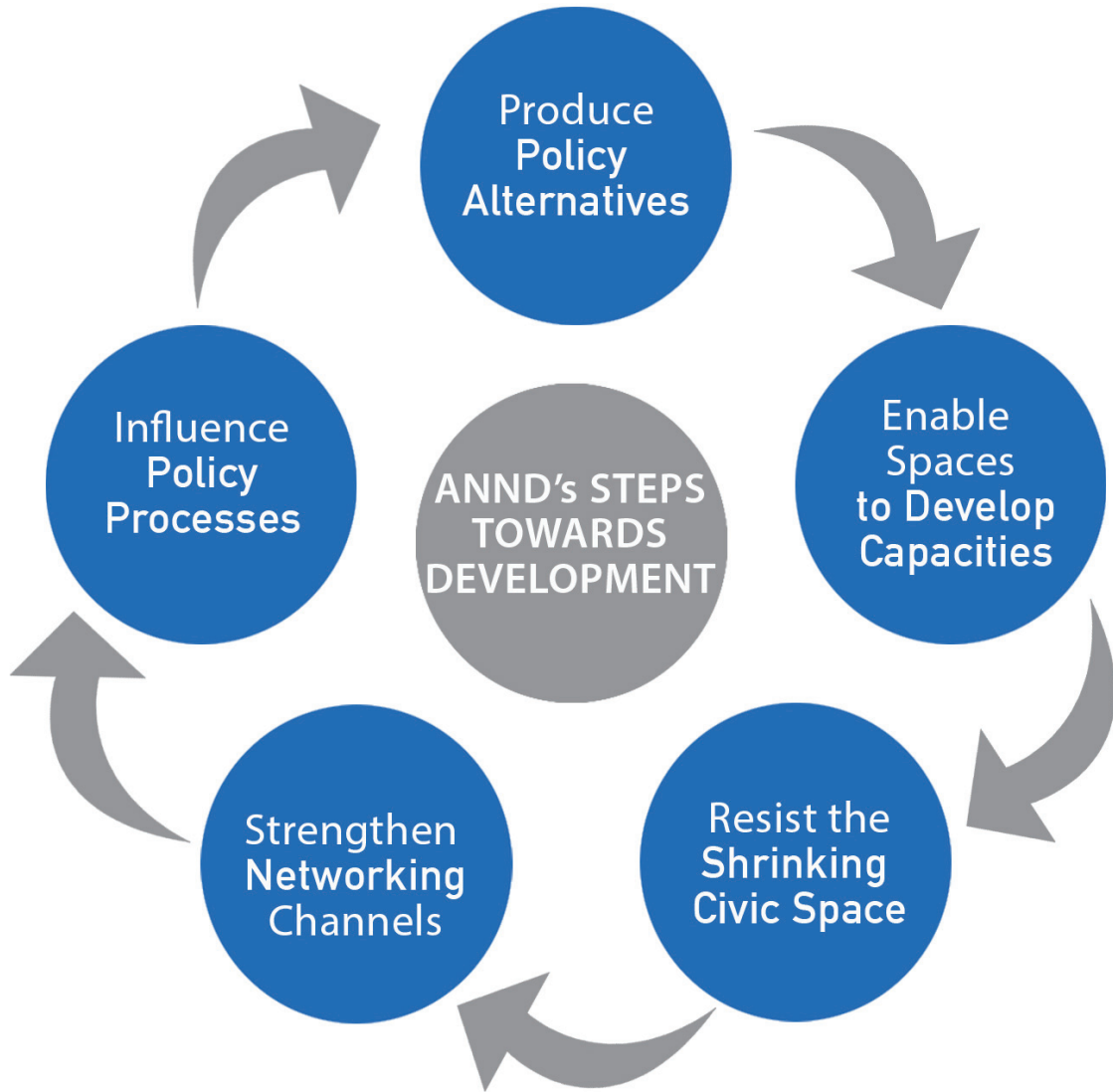
For the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), this was a year rich in activities and achievements. It launched a regional report on the right to food, the result of efforts by tens of Arab and international experts and two years of work and perseverance. It also published reports on the situation of civil society and available civic space, in addition to contributing to organizing dialogues with the European Union (EU) neighborhood on all

aspects related to its political, economic, security, and trade policies in the region. ANND also continued its work on international financial and development institutions, especially the dialogue on their regional policies and role in providing support without adhering to austerity measures detrimental to human rights. ANND also followed-up on governmental reports and supported the drafting of civil society reports delivered periodically or voluntarily to the UN regarding human rights and sustainable development policies, aiming to propose policy alternatives and engage in dialogue with those in charge of political decisions in Arab countries.

This publication reviews the many achievements and challenges of 2019, through the efforts of the unknown soldiers of the executive office, coordination committee, member organizations as well as experts, friends and partners as ANND prepares its 2020-2023 strategy. All these achievements would not have been possible without their dedication and sincere work and they deserve all the respect, appreciation and love.

Ziad Abdel Samad





Policy Alternatives: Developing Knowledge on
Tax Justice, Right to Food and Private Sector's
Engagement in Development



► Relevance:

In 2019-2017, ANND pursued its work towards proposing policy alternatives by conducting research at the national level through its members and partners who have contributed to developing policy recommendations on the regional level, and thus feeding into the network's advocacy work. The research work of ANND has covered a wide range of socio economic policies including trade and investment, social protection and informality, education and labour. In the line of the Network's holistic approach to development and its work to tackle all socio-economic policies, the focus during the reporting period was set on the Right to Food, Tax Justice and Private Sector Engagement in Development.

The Right to Food:

The right to food is one of the basic human rights enshrined in international conventions and instruments as it is linked to human life, living conditions, dignity and physical and mental health. The concept of food sovereignty originated in the mid1990-s to propose the right of all individuals to adequate, healthy and safe nutrition that is compatible with their food and health habits and traditions, while maintaining sustainable production and consumption patterns. Moreover, it is utterly important to preserve the environment and not deplete the natural resources and wealth that are the right of future generations.

Arab countries suffer from undernourishment and lack of food, primarily because of the food, economic and social policies that have been adopted, which led to changing the patterns of production and consumption of food, including changing the patterns of food towards imported products, and secondly as a result of wars and conflicts. As such, the Food and the Agricultural Organization (FAO) estimates that the number of

undernourished people in conflict and crises in the Arab countries has doubled dramatically, from 16.5 million to 33 million between 1990 and 2016. The level of undernourishment in conflict countries, particularly in Sudan, Syria and Yemen, is six times greater than in other countries.

Agricultural and civil society organizations have continuously advocated for the concept of food sovereignty, as they perceive that the technical and fragmented definition of the "food security" concept fails to provide an analytical and practical framework to address food problems at the international and national levels, as well as on the household and individual levels. And therefore, "food sovereignty" aims to link between the technical objective as stated to the macro and sectoral policies that allow the realization of the right to food for all, from a sustainable development and human rights perspective to ultimately achieve "food security". "Food sovereignty" is thus the way and means for achieving "food safety" and "the right to food".

Tax Justice:

Tax systems are important tools for policy-making on the economic level, and can support productive sectors and investment and constitute a wealth redistribution mechanism aiming at achieving social equality through public service financing. Therefore, CSO work on the monitoring of the mentioned systems and policies need to be developed, as society should hold officials responsible in regards to the collection of these resources and the way they spend them.

In the Arab region, tax systems suffer from structural deficiencies that hinder the achievement of the abovementioned function: on one hand, in terms of their usability as an economic investment tool, they contribute to the expansion of the rentier economy at

the expense of the productive economy, particularly through exemptions given to the financial and real estate sectors. Additionally, they push for the reliance of the market on imported goods within the framework on the overall trade policies and agreements. On the other hand, in terms of their role as a redistribution tool, they are not adequately progressive and rely heavily on indirect taxes (mostly VAT) that don't distinguish between citizens' wealth and purchasing power. Also, tax burdens are not distributed appropriately in public spending on all economic activities and social segments, particularly between men and women, and lack some necessary related channels to achieve that such as gender-sensitive budgeting.

In this context, ANND is engaging in the process of monitoring the impact of the tax systems in the Arab region for the achievement of socio-economic rights, development and social justice by building CSOs' capacities in the region and providing them with space to advocate for fairer tax systems on different levels. And therefore, ANND relies on knowledge production material highlighting regional, national and thematic specificities of the different tax systems, while providing a comparative analysis portraying main common elements and recommendations for alternative policies.

Private Sector Engagement in Development:

Development agendas, particularly Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Financing for Development agendas, have been focusing on an increased role for the private sector in shaping policy choices, participating in policy making, financing development, as well as implementing projects. Nevertheless, International Financial Institutions and development banks have been

advocating for more private sector engagement, emphasizing the need to move the discussion from "Billions" to "Trillions" in investments of all kinds, which also means shifting the focus from Official Development Assistance (ODA) to private finance. New tools are currently being innovated and promoted for increasing the private sector engagement, mainly through blended finance and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs).

While the narrative on the role of the private sector in development is evolving quickly, the discussion on the accountability of the private sector is not catching up. In this context, and in light of the Network's work on research for advocacy on policy alternatives, ANND worked on producing a regional paper on PPPs, providing an overview of the region's experience with PPPs and suggesting a framework for monitoring PPP cases in the region from the civil society's perspective. Based on this paper and the guidelines it presents, case studies on PPPs in Lebanon and Iraq were produced by ANND's partners, and future case studies in other countries will also be produced, to feed into ANND's engagement in the process of monitoring the role of private sector in development.

▶ The Key Achievements:

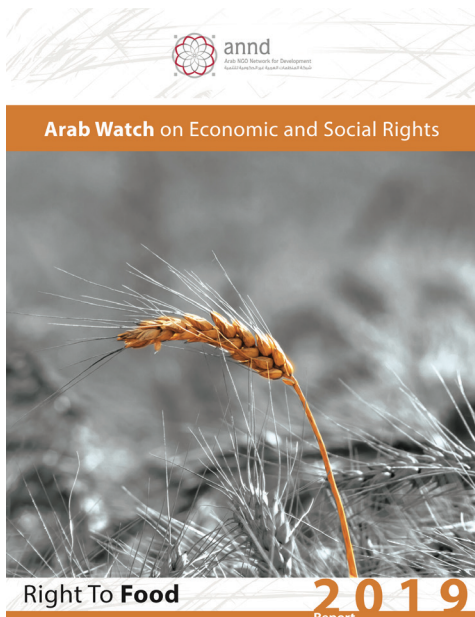
- The Report on Tax Justice, Tax and Gender and Right to Food are published and disseminated. They provide solid information on the topics and action oriented policy recommendations. The process of developing the reports provided valuable opportunities to establish dialogues between CSOs and expert academics, stressing the need to adopt a human rights approach to policy processes.
- The dissemination of the report was broad through regional events organized by ANND or other events that ANND members and staff were engaged in. Particularly two regional events were dedicated to launch the Arab Watch report, in Jordan and Tunisia.
- The regional paper on PPPs was produced, and presented to partners in a regional event in Amman, Jordan, kicking off the process of researching and monitoring PPPs in the region. Two case studies on PPPs in Iraq and Lebanon were produced as well, including two specific projects that were assessed based on the framework suggested by the regional guide. These papers ensure that relevant advocacy material is being produced, especially in relation to advocacy on IFIs.
- The engagement in new policy areas in the last 3 years allowed engagement of ANND members and staff in policy processes and with international networks. ANND has been newly engaged with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and is part of the founding members of the Tax Justice Alliance in the Arab Region. Also, ANND has been engaged in the global tax justice networks alliance.
- ANND is pursuing and engaging in the different policy processes while disseminating the results of the Arab Watch report and the tax justice work: ANND organized sessions at the IMF and WB spring and annual meetings to discuss the results of its research work.
- The accumulated knowledge in the past years in the framework of the AWR on Social protection and on Informal Employment has continued to be used in advocacy work at the national and regional levels .

► Highlights of 2019

ANND has launched in 2019 **the Arab Watch Report (AWR) on Right to Food**. The report includes 10 national reports and seven thematic papers addressing the concept, the background, the regional trends, and the implications of economic policies on the right to food. The fourth Arab Watch Report explores from a comparative perspective the political food economy in the Arab region as well as alternative models of food systems, such as the right to food, food justice, food security, food sovereignty and their potential implications in the region. The report includes 10 case studies from the region that serve as a comprehensive set of national reports covering half of the Arab countries which are Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria.

You can find the full report in [English](#)

You can find the full report in [Arabic](#)



Lessons from tax systems in four countries

the regional report portraying how fiscal systems in the Arab region could better support social justice and the delivery of the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals in the context of the socioeconomic and political challenges in the region. It offers a comparative analysis of tax systems in four Arab countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan), highlighting the common trends and challenges, in addition to analyses of tax systems in the four countries (national cases). The report was completed in partnership with Christian Aid and with the support of Ford foundation, and is based on research conducted by ANND's members and partners and on the compiled research of Dr. Nasr Abdel Karim.

You can find the full report in [English](#)

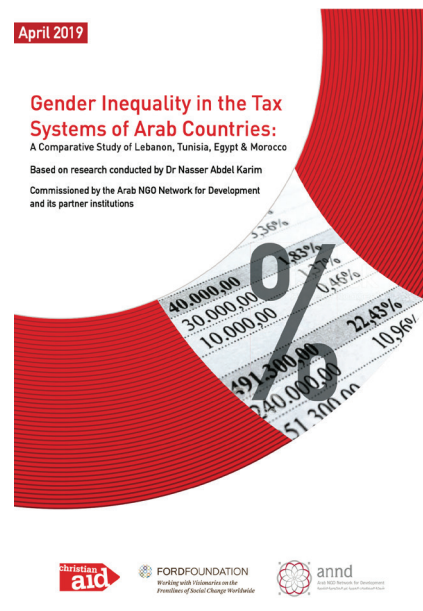
You can find the full report in [Arabic](#)

ANND has launched in 2019 the “Gender Inequality in the Tax Systems of Arab Countries:

A comparative study of Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco” regional report that discusses the links between tax policies and gender inequality, while drawing a comparative analysis in the gender bias present in the above-mentioned countries’ tax systems, in addition to national case analyses in each of the four countries. The report was completed in partnership with Christian Aid and with the support of Ford foundation and is based on research conducted by ANND’s members and partners and on the compiled research of Dr. Nasr Abdel Karim.

You can find the full report in [English](#)

You can find the full report in [Arabic](#)



ANND launched in 2019 a first of a kind “Guidebook on Tax Justice for CSOs in the Arab Region” that was elaborated in consultation with numerous CSOs and experts from nine countries of the region during multiple workshops and seminars. The guide outlines in its first part the notions and definitions of tax justice and their links with civil society’s work on sustainable development and human rights, and proposes in its second part methods for Arab CSOs’ engagement in advocacy work on tax justice on a national and regional level.

You can find the [Arabic version here](#)

Launching the process of Monitoring PPPs in the Region

After producing the regional paper on PPPs “Civil Society Guidelines on PPPs in the Arab Region”, ANND, through its members and partners, is currently working on monitoring PPPs cases in Arab countries in order to locate weaknesses and highlight gaps, especially as per the commitment to human rights and achieving social justice. The first part of the paper deals with the theoretical discussions around PPPs, such as the problematic definition, and the potential advantages that lead states to adopting PPPs. The second part studies the experience of the Arab region with the PPPs and their distribution among contract types and sectors. The third part proposes to assess PPPs based on a framework using a human rights based approach that takes into account inclusive economic development, social development and ending poverty, and environmental sustainability, on both macro and local levels. Finally, the fourth part discusses the civil society’s role in monitoring PPPs. This paper will be guiding the monitoring process, and will be led by ANND’s members and partners.





Enabling Spaces to Develop Capacities and
Increase Knowledge on Macro-Economic
Policies and Fiscal Policies



► Relevance:

Since decades, the Arab states have been implementing a growth-based development paradigm founded on austerity measures, and neo-liberal policies that deepen inequalities and dismantle social protection systems. This structural challenge is linked to the global economic and financial structure that gives primacy to financial systems on the expenses of the real economy. Additionally, the structure of the global trade system does not accommodate between needs and capacities of the economies of developing states on the one hand and the openness of their markets and their involvement in the global markets on the other.

In this context, efforts from civil society representatives to monitor the impacts of macro-economic, trade and investment and fiscal policies are crucial and should be strengthened with research and advocacy calling for rights-based policy revisions. Despite all the advocacy work that is being done by the civil society in the Arab Region on economic and social policies, the work on macro-economic and fiscal policies is still minimal and the capacities of CSOs to engage in these policy areas remain limited. Fortunately, ANND through its engagement in global policy processes and with international networks, has developed capacities and opened channels for engagement in those policy areas with regional and global networks. As such, ANND is facilitating a space for exchange and capacity development between Civil Society actors around macro-economic policies and fiscal policies.

► Key achievements:

- Increased capacity on macroeconomic, trade, investment and development issues for 78 researchers, professionals and activists from nine Arab countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Sudan and Yemen)
- Awareness-raised on international institutions and their work on trade and investment through bilateral meetings and briefings organized particularly with UNCTAD Division on Globalization and Development Strategies and ILO Social Protection Development
- The first of a kind TOT provided the space for experts and CSO representatives from Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Yemen to discuss common strategies on tax justice, to exchange their country experiences and to build a basis for a regional tax justice plan for CSOs. In addition, there's the Guidebook on Tax Justice for CSOs in the Arab Region (ref .Section 1)
- Increased awareness and capacity on monitoring PPPs in the region, through developing guidelines for CSOs on monitoring PPPs in the region.

► Highlights of 2019

Organization of a Training of Trainers (TOT) on Tax Justice in the Arab Region, 20 - 18 March 2019 in Amman, Jordan.

ANND emphasizes in its approach on the importance of financial and fiscal monitoring, as it is an entry point to tackling wealth redistribution, inequality and government accountability from a human rights perspective. In this context, a first of a kind TOT was organized by the network to develop CSOs capacities in the region on the analysis of fiscal policies on a national and regional level and their incorporation in the international advocacy channels. In addition, the training provided the participants a space to share experience on past related advocacy campaigns and to enhance their networking skills and opportunities with other CSOs.



Development of Guidelines to Monitor PPPs in the Region

Guidelines to monitor PPPs mainly target CSOs and CSO actors to build their capacities on assessing PPP projects and engage in evidence-based advocacy especially when it comes to PPP laws and policies. Most of the countries in the region have either recently adopted new PPP laws or are in the process of developing them, amidst increased promotion of PPPs as a possible solution for corruption, mismanagement and budget deficits on one hand, and limited data available on such projects, on the other hand. In light of all the controversies that adopting PPPs potentially holds, civil society carries a great responsibility towards monitoring such projects, assessing their contribution towards sustainable development, and pushing for more transparent and participatory approaches in deciding and implementing such projects. The guide uses a human rights based approach to construct a framework, specifying the standards based on which PPPs can be assessed by CSOs. An event was held to introduce ANND partners and members to these guidelines and receive their feedback based on their national contexts, to inform the development of the guidelines. Two case studies have been developed so far based on these guidelines, in Iraq and Lebanon.

The Study Weeks on Macro-economic policies

Until 2019, the Study Week was organized six times in collaboration with Geneva-based partners, and engaged around 70 researchers from various Arab countries. Testimonials from the participants confirmed the added value of the experience. "The study week was a very good opportunity to understand the mechanisms and stakes of economic, trade and investment policies. The study week also initiated me to the means and the alternatives which are presented to the developing countries to found and preserve their economic, commercial and food sovereignty and consequently political. It was also



an excellent moment of exchange and sharing with researchers and civil society members with different backgrounds.” Said Alahyane-Morocco

► Success story

Whereas in previous years, ANND created within the study week further opportunities for researchers to engage in research and capacity building activities. In follow up with 2018 study week, ANND produced a compilation of research papers written by the participants on various subjects tackled during the study week. The e-publication is considered as a tool that can demonstrate the capacity-built for the participants, but more importantly, it will set a contextual baseline for participants in future exchanges and will constitute the key material to be read. The below listed papers are written by the participants from the 2018 study week from Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco focusing on key issues elaborated during the exchange and with their own-analyses from respective countries, including on food security, energy investments, role of international financial institutions, local development, etc.

1. **DCFTA, Electricity and Renewable Energy - By Imen Louati**
2. **A Developmental Parody- By Kareem Megahed**
3. **Impact political choice on food security in Morocco (soft wheat case) - By Kawtar Rerhrhaye**
4. **Local disparity and perspectives of territorial development in southeastern Tunisia - By Riadh Bechir**
5. **Agriculture and food security in Morocco - Said Alahyane**
6. **الإصلاح الاقتصادي والنمو غير الاحتوائي في مصر - By Hussein Suleiman (Arabic Version only)**



Resisting the shrinking space for civil society

▶ Relevance:

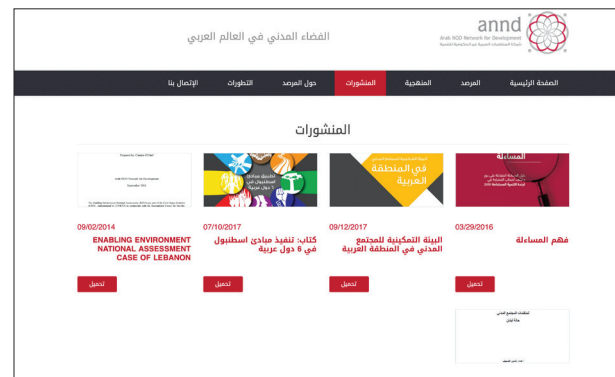
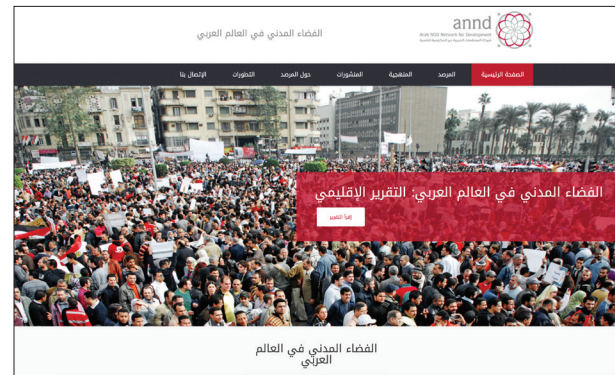
The 2019 People Power Under Attack report, produced by the CIVICUS Monitor, which is a global research collaboration that ANND is a research partner of, summarizes the worsening civic space and the backsliding of basic freedoms of association, expression and peaceful assembly. From the Arab region, no countries fall in the open or narrow categories, and 8 out of 10 people are living in countries where governments violate their basic freedoms. In this context, ANND considers monitoring the civic space as a first step towards accountability, enhancing this watchdog role together with awareness-raising, capacity building and with targeted multilevel advocacy and supporting movements and enhancing solidarity actions.

Monitoring Civic Space

TANND established in 2018 a civic space monitor covering ten Arab countries so far: Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Bahrain, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, and Sudan. The monitor tracks the space for civil society to practice its rights and freedoms in law and practice, as well as CSOs' ability to operate and organize freely and take part in policy discussions. The e-platform of the monitor includes news and highlights about the ten aforementioned countries, updated periodically. It includes as well annual national reports that provide a deeper overview and analysis of the status of civic space on a national level, as well as a regional report that combines regional conclusions and main takeaways from national reports.

Towards the end of 2018 and throughout 2019, the region witnessed a new wave of Arab Spring, as people took the streets in Sudan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Algeria, demonstrating peacefully for their rights.

Most of the protests in these countries were sparked by the demands of socio-economic reforms, before developing into country-wide movements calling for a regime change, and refusing any negotiations with the current regime. Other countries such as Egypt and Jordan, have also witnessed waves of protest during this year. This proves that the process of change in the Arab region, led by the peoples of the region, has not concluded yet. Starting from this reality, the civic space monitor focused this year on social and civil movements in the region, analyzing their development and their strategies and the way they organized, especially in light of the shrinking civic space and the increasing repression. Research work is being developed for this year, on one hand, to look into the changing role of civil society in light of this changing reality, and on another hand, to produce evidence-based advocacy material that reflects the reality of freedoms and civic space in the region. role of private sector in development.



<http://www.civicspace.annd.org>

▶ The Key Achievements:

- Support provided to ANND members in preparing joint submissions and formulating advocacy messages for engagement in United Nations human rights monitoring mechanisms, mainly UPR. During 2019, with increasing restrictions imposed on civil society in Iraq, ANND has promoted the work of Iraqi civil society. The groups organizing various capacity building efforts at the national level were supported for Geneva-level advocacy, precisely to take active engagement in the pre-session through ANND members in Iraq that raised various human rights violations and advocacy recommendations on civic space, economic and social rights, and Human Rights Defenders' protection.
 - Expansion of ANND's civic space monitor to cover ten countries so far: Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Bahrain, Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania and Morocco (<http://civicspace.annd.org/>)
- Coordination work for Lebanon's 3rd cycle UPR started by late 2019, towards developing joint and comprehensive submissions on economic and social rights and civil and political rights.
- ANND participated in Global Accountability Week 2019, with videos and statements on CSO accountability measures implemented within ANND. ANND has also engaged its members and developed a brief tool sharing best practices on CSO accountability with cases from Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon. <http://www.annd.org/english/itemId.php?itemId=#747sthash.zFqaiwnq.dpbs>



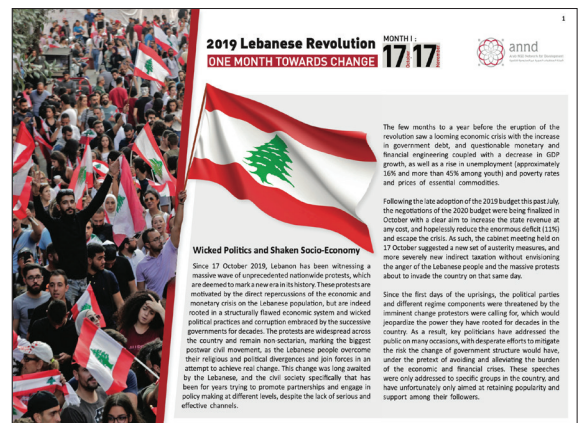
► Highlights of 2019:

- Collaboration with CIVICUS continued, with monthly coverage of civic space situation from the region. Egypt was listed on the “watchlist”.
- On 15 March 2019 during the adoption of the Jordan UPR report, an [oral statement](#) was delivered, calling Jordan to implement the recommendations it accepted on promoting the right to freedom of expression and further commit to review legislation that imposes unnecessary and disproportionate restrictions on the freedom of expression.
- ANND, in partnership with local members and partners, organized a national workshop on 2 October 2019 in Beirut to discuss CSOs partnerships and shrinking space. The workshop was attended by 59 experts and civil society activists, as well as representatives of ministries and public administrations to discuss the reality of civic space, public freedoms and the status and future of partnerships between the civil society and public sector in light of the worrying austerity measures and shrinking civic space. [Outcome documents](#) available in Arabic.
- For the 34th Working Group session of the UPR, when human rights records of Egypt and Iraq were reviewed, ANND collaborated with members in Iraq and presented two submissions, one comprehensive covering economic and social rights (Final logos added ESR-CP Joint Submission) and one specifically looking at civic space (ANND CIVICUS Al Amal Al Namaa Joint UPR Submission Iraq FINAL). For Egypt, together with CIVICUS, a joint submission was presented on enabling environment (ANND CIVICUS Joint UPR Submission Egypt_Final).
- Issuing solidarity statements with groups calling for reforms, transfer of power to civilian rule, fighting against corruption and social

injustices, and demanding social and economic policy shifts.

1. Solidarity Statements for Sudan: Late 2018 Sudanese revolution started and ousted President Bachir. Throughout 2019, ANND continued issuing [solidarity statements](#) recalling the importance of immediate transfer of power to civilian rule establishing a democratic order respecting, promoting and fulfilling people’s human rights and freedoms.
2. Solidarity with the Revolution in Lebanon: ANND has been issuing since November 2019 News Bulletins on the Lebanese Revolution, disseminated widely among the global networks and on the civic space platform. Each Bulletin provides updates on the political, social and economic levels, as well as analyses on issues at stake, including debt, the role of IMF, asset recovery, alongside violations against protesters.

The news bulletins are available on these links: in [English](#) and in [Arabic](#).



► Success story

The results of the workshop on CSOs partnerships and shringing space and the wide engagement in formulating recommendations, as well as the creation of the follow-up committee showed the interest of CSOs (at a national level) in this project. Moreover, the participation of multiple stakeholder (representatives from different ministries, media agency, CSOs, etc.) strengthened the links between the civil society actors, and between them and other stakeholders. As a result of this project, the committee has committed to ensuring the coordination and collaboration initiated between Lebanese CSOs on the one hand, and with other stakeholders on the other hand.



2019 Lebanese Revolution
TWO MONTHS TOWARDS CHANGE WEEKS 5 - 7

Socio-Economic Updates:

Since 17 October 2019, Lebanon has been witnessing a massive wave of unprecedented nationwide protests, calling for a massive change in the country. These protests are motivated by the direct repercussions of the economic and monetary crisis on the Lebanese population, but are indeed rooted in a structurally flawed economic system and wicked political practices and corruption embraced by the successive governments for decades. Please refer to ANND's News Bulletin for background information.

The first major victory the revolution achieved with the exit of Michel Diab as Chair of Beirut Bar Association on 17 November marked the end of the first month of the Lebanese Revolution. Since then, protesters have achieved two wins despite the threats and violations that did not cease to exist.


On 19 November, protesters peacefully gathered and successfully blocked all roads leading to the Lebanese parliament, prohibiting the members of parliament from attending the parliamentary session and unilaterally pass a new amnesty law. This law is tricky in all aspects as it shows amnesty to individuals and groups involved with financial and ecological crimes among other crimes, and would thus block any attempt to file lawsuits and condemn anyone, including politicians and public officials, for any corruption related charges.

The second win on 22 November came as the result of the efforts of all the groups of the society, including youth, women, children, professionals and artists, among other, put together in order to celebrate one big national independence day, a genuine one the country has never seen before. The number of independent protesters and displays, especially in the Martyrs square in downtown Beirut, showed cooperation across all citizens and the efforts they are willing to put together to achieve real change in the country.

Nevertheless, weeks 5 and 6 of the revolution saw increased violence incidents, being from arbitrary arrest of protesters to escalated clashes in the streets. On 23 November, five youth including two minors were arrested and detained by security forces for taking down a banner belonging to a political party. On the same day, supporters of Hezbollah and Amal movement violently clashed with peaceful protesters in Beirut and other regions to denounce the closure of roads. These updates have accordingly added to the increased amount of violence since the eruption of the protests in October, firmly denounced by the United Nations Experts and Social Reporters who called on the Lebanese government to respect the right to the freedom of expression and protect protesters.

Following the closure of banks for almost two weeks during the first month of the Revolution, and several interruptions later, the economic and fiscal situation has continued to worsen. Indeed, banks are still keeping a tight grip on all kinds of transactions and money withdrawal, further restricting informal capital control and increasing repercussions on individuals and businesses. These controls have had tremendous implications on different economic and social sectors.

The restrictions on foreign currency (particularly USD) have strengthened the black market controlled by the exchange offices that are buying the dollars with rates amounting to 50-70% from the official rate of dollar to Lebanese pound. As a result,



2019 Lebanese Revolution
ENDING THE YEAR WITH HOPE WEEKS 8 - 10

Political Updates:

The protests in Lebanon have continued since the eruption of the Revolution on 17 October 2019, with unprecedented levels of violence during the reporting period. Please refer to ANND's News Bulletin for information on the first month of the revolution, and News Bulletin 8 for further socio-economic and fiscal analyses, as well as an update on the three following weeks.

Since the resignation of the government on 29 October in response to the protesters' demand, the President called for almost two months to host the parliamentary consultations to nominate a new Prime Minister (PM), hesitantly capable of forming a new government that pleases the protesters, as well as the different and entrenched political components. This was not an easy task due to the deep conflict present among the different political parties on the ideological and practical levels including the diverse visions of the economic, fiscal and social situations, and on the other hand, due to the inability to envision the form the upcoming government will take, either a government formed by technocrats, techno-politicians, or solely politicians.

Following two adjournments, the mandatory consultations took place on 23 December and concluded with the appointment of Dr. Hassan Diab as PM. The designation was highly denounced by protesters who refused the process of the nomination as well as the profile of Hassan Diab, who is not perceived as an independent figure, and who is believed to have certain close ties with some political parties, which consisted the majority that nominated him. Certain political parties and components also refused his profile for similar reasons, and for lacking the Anti-hegemony Charter by not gaining the majority for enough of the Sunni votes during the parliamentary consultations.

Since his appointment, Diab has put strong efforts in trying to form a government before the end of the year, with ultimate claims of pleasing the protesters by nominating technocrats and independent ministers. However, sectarianism that is rooted in the system and among politicians has obstructed for years the formation of an effective government capable of taking the necessary measures to overcome the economic and financial crises within a clear vision, and will probably do the same this time. The main fact will remain contested by the protesters who will celebrate the new year in massive protests and festivities, while on the lookout for any attempts of forming a deceptive government.



2019 LEBANESE REVOLUTION
100 DAYS INTO THE REVOLUTION

Political Updates:

More than 100 days into the Lebanese Revolution and protesters are still calling for change, and are still faced with fierce. The long-awaited government was finally formed on 23 January 2020, almost one month after the Prime Minister (PM) was named, but unfortunately not conforming with the key demands of the revolution. The newly appointed 20 ministers are mostly subcontractors, but few are indeed independents. Even the formation of this government was done through consultations and settlements aimed to, as per the usual, please the political and sectarian leaders and norms. And therefore, this government has been officially rejected by the protesters and the revolution.

The formation of the new Cabinet triggered thousands of protesters to march a demonstration across Beirut, towards the Parliament on 25 January, marking the 100th day of the revolution.

Socio-Economic Updates:

The financial crisis has continued to grow further affecting the small and medium households who are threatened by the increasing inflation and exchange rate that reached 2000 LBP for 1 USD during the reporting period and whose incomes are mostly provided in Lebanese pound. While the official rate remains stable at 1507 LBP for 1 USD, the black market is parallel to more severe fluctuations with a minimum of 2000

LBP for 1 USD. Despite the statement made by the authorities of money changes in Lebanon asking not to exceed the 2000 LBP to 1 USD ratio on the same day the government was born, the informal exchange rate continues to fluctuate. The increase in this rate has had plenty of repercussions on businesses that are purchasing the USD from the black market where it is only available to be able to import the goods, and ultimately increasing the prices on the consumers to wealth their losses.

Moreover, the banks continue to informally hold a tight grip on all money withdrawal, particularly in USD, of all earnings and savings, with stringent limits reaching 100 USD per week. This is in addition to the new restrictive measures imposed on credit cards and debit cards holders, where the average limits of the former have been reduced by minimum the half, and the latter not at all allowed to be used outside of the country.

Human Rights Violations:

Violence has been on rise, and protesters were subjected to increased violations during the reporting period. Following the arbitrary arrest of protesters, hundreds gathered on 15 January outside the detention facility calling for the release of all protesters, and were subjected to excessive force by the riot police, including indiscriminate firing of tear gas. More severely, journalists and TV reporters were directly attacked by riot police.

As of mid-January, the protests have marked an unprecedented increase in violence and abuse. A footage was leaked showing the security forces beating the detainees while transporting them into a detention facility. Moreover, some of the released detainees shared stories of torture and abuse inside the detention facilities.

The recent statistics released by the Lawyers Committee to defend the demonstrators in Lebanon show that between 17 October 2019 and 31 January 2020, around 900 protesters were arrested and detained, including 49 minors and 17 women. And roughly 548 protesters were subjected to violence during the demonstrations or in the detention facilities.

Clashes between protesters and security forces and riot police were especially intense during the attacks; protesters ran on banks, and during protests and attempts to remove the massive walls and blocks unlawfully put in front of the parliament, and more recently in front of the Government Palace. As a result, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights shared in a statement their concern over the increased violence and claimed during the second half of January, and called on the authorities to establish a "transparent and inclusive dialogue with all segments of society" and to conduct a "prompt, thorough, independent, transparent and impartial investigation into alleged use of force violations committed during the latest outbreaks of violence and ill-treatment during arrest and detention".

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Connecting Civil Society Actors for Sustainable Development



► Relevance:

ANND believes in partnerships and networking as a main driver for change. Coming from a background that policy change at the national level is linked to the regional and international context, ANND considers that advocacy necessitates networking at the different policy levels and using combined strategies and approaches. As such, ANND supported the formation of Networks and Coalitions at National and regional Levels and joined important and influential Global Networks, that are:

The Tax Justice Alliance in Arab Countries, which was established in 2017 and includes seven members that are the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights, Social and Economic Rights Monitor – Palestine (Al Marsad), Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies- Jordan, the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights, the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Espace Associatif- Morocco and the Sudanese Development Call Organization (NIDAA). The Alliance forms a networking and coordinating framework for the achievement of tax justice in the Arab region through strategies and action plans based on advocacy, knowledge production, capacity building on the national and regional levels, and coordination. It organized in 2019 several side events at the Civil Society Policy Forum in the IMF/WB Springs and Annual Meetings and a Training of Trainers (TOT) on tax justice manual for CSOs in the Arab Region.

The Platform on Sustainable Development in Arab countries, which was established in 2018 and includes seven members that are Transparency International (TI), Disabled People International, Arab Chapter (DPI), the Arab Trade Union Confederation (ATUC), Habitat International Coalition, the Arab Women Center for Training and Research (CAWTAR), the Arab Network for

Democratic Elections (ANDE), and the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND). This platform focuses on the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in the Arab region and open channels for advocacy and engagement with policy makers and UN agencies interested in the implementation of the Agenda.

The Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is a joint initiative by Social Watch, Third World Network, Global Policy Forum, Arab NGO Network for Development, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, Society for International Development, Public Services International and Center for Economic and Social Rights. This initiative is a watch initiative, based on the experiences and analyses of the Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives. In the framework of this initiative, ANND contributes to different kinds of outputs, including contribution to Periodic spotlight reports assessing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and contribution to spaces for joint analysis, reflection and strategy development in order to enhance the policy advocacy role of (global) civil society, for instance through workshops, strategy and networking meetings.

The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), which aims to enhance cooperation among development stakeholders, based on shared principles, and to make it more effective. CPDE is a global network bringing together CSOs from different sectors across all the regions of the world. ANND, with its members and partners, has been member since the beginning of the development effectiveness process, and has been thus coordinating the work related to development effectiveness in the MENA region, and has been engaged with CPDE in its sectorial constituencies, such as the youth constituency, migrants' constituency and the feminist group, and in its different working groups such as the ones on private sector and enabling environment. ANND's

members and partners engage in CPDE's work on different levels, represent ANND in the governing bodies of the Partnership, and participate in the various advocacy channels on the international level. In regards to international advocacy, CPDE engages in Agenda -2030 related processes, channels related to the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, Financing for Development, and South-South Development Cooperation processes, among others.

CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation, which is a global alliance of civil society organizations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world, and Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) that is a network within CIVICUS but formed only of national associations and regional platforms from around the world, and focused on fostering greater cooperation across national and regional boundaries to create meaningful opportunities for networks to come together to participate in and influence global governance institutions and processes. ANND is one of the main partners of CIVICUS and AGNA in the Arab region, and constantly engages in their activities to strengthen the work of the network, promote human rights and democracy. To further strengthen this membership, one CIVICUS fellow has been placed since 2018 at ANND, for a two-year period.

Moreover, ANND is part of the Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD), which is a global platform supporting civil society and citizen actions for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. During 2019, through A4SD platform, ANND supported its Mauritanian member's active engagement in the monitoring of Agenda 2030. A webinar was organized in which ANND Programs Manager Ms. Zahra Bazzi and A4SD global

coordinator Mr. Oli Henmann provided key issues on sustainable development and HLPF process. The webinar was followed with a panel discussion and a civil society report was developed.

Through its membership to ESCR-NET, which is an international network for economic and social rights and ETO consortium, ANND engages in global efforts on raising awareness on and advance the implementation of States' economic and social rights and extraterritorial obligations.

ANND is also a member in the Our World is Not For Sale (OWINFS) Network serving as a watchdog to the World Trade Organization rules and decisions impacting socioeconomic rights in the world and developing countries and LDCs in particular. ANND has been actively engaged with the network in 2019 to advocate for the change of existing and foreseen WTO rules that limit development of policy space in related countries and in preparation for the Ministerial Conference (MC12) in 2020.

▶ The Key Achievements:

- The establishment of two regional networks, the Platform for Sustainable Development and the Tax justice Alliance in the Arab region are key achievements in joining the efforts of CSOs in the region on specific themes and process, which allow better exchange of knowledge and more opportunities to deepen the understanding around the topic at Stake.
- ANND engaged in the national networks like Our Work our Right, the Lebanon Policy and Research Network on Displacement, which allow using the information and knowledge developed by the network in joint coalition.
- ANND has supported the coalition building around the UPR at the national level. Coalition building for human rights monitoring mechanism is key for ensuring effective engagement of civil society groups. Since the first cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Lebanon, ANND has led a coalition engaged in comprehensive monitoring, composed of over 80 organizations reporting on economic and social rights and civil and political rights. With continuous information sharing, providing regular updates and briefs about the process and organizing consultation meetings, ANND ensures that coalition is not ad hoc, but engages in a structured monitoring. Given that Lebanon will have its third cycle review in 2020, in the last quarter of 2019, ANND started developing a work plan, contacting coalition members and forming various working groups that will develop 10 thematic reports
- At the end of the forum prior to the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, the participants set a common position with messaging for the AESD summit, which has served for future advocacy efforts on the

regional level. The final recommendations listed in the outcome document were addressed to the Arab officials gathered at the AESD Summit on 20 January in Beirut, Lebanon, And shared with the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the League of Arab States officials, the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), the United Nations, and the Arab Women Organization. Moreover, a trailer and summary video were produced and disseminated on ANND's website and social media platforms (youtube, twitter and facebook) and elsewhere.

► Highlights of 2019

Spotlight reports 2019

In 2018 and 2019, ANND contributed to periodic spotlight reports assessing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the structural obstacles in its realization in cooperation with the reflection group on sustainable development. This contribution included three national reports covering Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine. The Development of those reports provides important opportunities for coalition building and exchange at the national level. Furthermore, ANND has been engaged in the monitoring of progressing SDGs national implementation both in 2018 and 2019, assessing the VNR reports submitted from the region including Bahrain, Tunisia, Oman, Mauritania, Iraq, Algeria, Kuwait.

[Jordan](#)

[Lebanon](#)

[Palestine](#)

[Progressing National SDG implementation 2018](#)

[Progressing National SDG implementation 2019](#)
(To be published)

CSOs Forums and Dialogues

CSOs Forum prior to the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit

11 - 10 January 2019 - Beirut, Lebanon

In partnership with Oxfam International and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the platform organized on 10 and 11 January 2019 a civil society forum prior to the fourth Arab Economic and Social Development (AESD) summit. The forum was attended by 90 CSOs' representatives and regional and international experts, and held interactive dialogues and evolved around the following themes: a new rights-based sustainable development model (paradigm), an inclusive development model that ensures social justice, culture in the framework of the development model, the developmental State, and the role of civil society in development.





CSOs meeting prior to the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2019 8 April 2019 - Beirut, Lebanon

The civil society platform on sustainable development organized the “Second Civil Forum on Sustainable Development” on Monday 8 April 2019, prior to the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD) 2019. More than 60 participants from the Arab civil society experts and activists gathered in Beirut to discuss development policies related to Agenda 2030 with a special focus on SDGs 16, 13, 10, 8, 4 and 17 that are proposed on the agenda of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) as well as AFSD’s.

The Forum adopted the slogan «Stepping out of the Box» with the aim of seeking unconventional solutions to the challenges we’re facing. It concluded with a set of recommendations (available only in Arabic) addressed to the AFSD and HLPF on multifaceted inequality, the right to education and decent work, transparency and good governance, safe societies and access to justice, partnerships and paths to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Arado

ANND contributes to the organisation of Arado Annual Conference in 2019, and ANND experts contribute to the discussion that took place in 17 and 18 October in Marrakesh. The annual conference tackled the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable development and focused on Smart Infrastructure to achieve SDGs. ANND experts that participated in the event built their contributions on the work conducted by ANND and the regional discussions on the topic.

This event bringing together policy makers, UN agencies and civil society actors provides an important occasion for networking and advocacy.

UNDP –RBAS

The Regional Bureau for Arab States of the United Nations Development Programme and the Arab NGO Network for Development organized the “Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) Consultation: Citizenship in Arab Countries” in Amman, Jordan on 7-6 December 2019. This partnership between ANND and UNDP around one of the most known research papers produced at the regional level provided ANND members and partners with a significant moment to influence policy directions and inform the process of developing the new AHDR. The discussions tackled inequalities and challenges to development in the region. ANND experts were engaged in substantive discussions. The feedback from the main authors of the AHDR was very positive and considered the opportunity as crucial in providing input and informing the process of developing the report.

In 2019, ANND participated at the Diversity and Inclusion workshop organized by CIVICUS and has become since then engaged in this process, in addition to attending AGNA’s meetings and activities whenever possible. Moreover, ANND was actively engaged in the Global Accountability Week, which is a yearly week of campaign organized by CIVICUS to promote accountability and transparency policies among civil societies in the world. ANND contributed into social media content and campaigns by engaging its members and partners and sharing all the accountability practices from the region.

ANND took part, through CPDE, in the HLPF 2019, the Senior Level Meeting on development cooperation effectiveness, as well as Financing for Development meetings in 2019.

Moreover, ANND is engaged in the various monitoring and knowledge production work promoted by CPDE, especially in monitoring development partnerships

► Success Story:

from a rights based perspective. The Network's members and partners take part in these initiatives, especially when feedback from the national level is required. In this sense, ANND makes the linkages between its partners and members on a national level, and with CPDE on an international level. Some of ANND's partners and members have also implemented various projects in partnership with CPDE, such as projects related to the International Human Rights Day, or to strengthening development effectiveness on a national level.

an excellent moment of exchange and sharing with researchers and civil society members with different backgrounds." Said Alahyane-Morocco

Networking: The Study Week allows increased networking opportunities through exchanges and discussions organized on corporate accountability, the binding treaties and the efforts of the movement towards addressing human rights abuses (i.e. with Treaty Alliance), in addition to increased networking among the researchers themselves and understanding on different country context through sessions dedicated to researchers' presentations.

Prior to the EU-League of Arab States summit in Sharm El-Sheikh in February 2019, ANND issued a statement based on the outcome of the CSOs forum. On 27 March 2019, the European Commission officials informed ANND that the statement has been transmitted to the Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ms. Federica Mogherini, and promised an imminent reply from Ms. Mogherini after looking very closely to the points that ANND raised.

Four Arab women experts and speakers who attended the forum were invited by the host of "Douniana" television show on BBC Arabia to speak on agenda 2030, more precisely on the status of development given the current contexts in the Arab region, the willingness of States to implement the SDGs, and the tax regulations vis-à-vis development. The episode was aired on 18 January 2019.



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Influencing EU and IFI policy processes



► Relevance:

Policymaking in developing countries, including the Arab region, is tightly linked to global and regional factors and actors. Accordingly, ANND has identified the necessity to influence Global Actors such the EU and the International Financial Institutions as an integral part of its advocacy efforts.

ANND has been following on the implications of EU policies in the region since the launch of the Barcelona Process in 1995 and through the establishment of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in 2004. It is working at the national, regional, and European institutional levels to ensure policy coherence at the various levels of cooperation between the EU and the Arab region, including trade agreements, aid mechanisms, development policies, and policies that serve peace, democracy, and social and economic stability throughout monitoring and direct advocacy. Since 2018, the network has been engaged in the managing consortium of the structured dialogue with the EU: MAJALAT, which allows developing its advocacy and monitoring through a multi-stakeholder consultative process on the following priorities Governance and Rule of Law, Economic Policies and Social Dialogue, Migration and Mobility, Security and Counter-terrorism and Climate and Social.

ANND considers its research and advocacy work on International Financial Institutions a strategic choice due to the high impact of the programs and loans on socioeconomic rights of the citizens of the Arab region, and to the growing reliance on these institutions in exit-crises strategies of several indebted governments in the region. The network has always looked into the impact of the conditionality and austerity measures imposed by the Fund and their particular influence on social spending, labour rights, environmental rights and

fiscal policies. In the last few years, the scope of the involvement of civil society was enlarged and the topics tackled have increased. As such, ANND was engaged in 2019 – alongside its work on austerity and conditionality- in direct advocacy activities on the structural transformation of the IMF and the reality of change in the paradigm adopted, such as the change in regressive fiscal consolidation and the gendered impact of austerity.

▶ The Key Achievements:

- Improving the quality of advocacy at the level of IFIs, through producing a set of national and regional papers on consultations regarding Article IV of IMF's Articles of Agreement and providing a regional perspective based on national studies.
- Enhancing CSOs' participation in following up with the IMF policies and their impact on national policies by expanding the circle of researchers who write and monitor these policies, through their involvement and participation in direct dialogues with the IMF.
- ANND was able to introduce new priority topics linked to the policies adopted by the IMF such as right to food and agriculture and showcase the extent of their influence by IFI choices and recommendations.
- Strengthening channels of communication with the IMF by joining the group coordinating dialogue between with CSOs and the wide participation of ANND in regional consultations organized by the IMF.
- Increasing ANND's involvement in the structured dialogue with the EU through its engagement in the consortium organizing this dialogue since 2018. Accordingly, ANND participated in identifying the substantive priorities of the dialogue in the context of MAJALAT.
- ANND was involved in consultative processes with the EU on a number of policy issues (trade, external instruments, and development assistance), in addition to various advocacy activities. Civil society organizations from Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt presented their viewpoint and analysis concerning the ENP and partnership with the EU (In addition, ANND provided input on EU's External Financing



► Highlights of 2019:

In the light of ANND's work on monitoring IFI policies, programs and conditionality and their implications on human rights in the Arab Region, the network produced a policy paper entitled "**Review and Synthesis of the 2018 IMF Regional Economic Outlook: Fiscal Policy and Private Investment for Inclusive Growth**". The main purpose of this paper is to react to the policy recommendations of the IMF which were provided in its latest Regional Economic Outlook (REO) published in November 2018. The reaction is mainly addressing two key economic issues covered in the REO, which are: Fiscal policy for durable and inclusive growth in the Middle East and Central Asia, and private investment for inclusive growth in the Middle East and Central Asia, in addition to providing recommendations that should be promoted by the IMF to achieve inclusive and just growth and sustainable development in the region.
(link)

Participation in the Civil Society Policy Forum 2019 Springs Meetings in Washington DC 12-9 April 2019: ANND's delegation participated in several side events and met with numerous IMF and WB executives that are handling regional and international policy related mandate.

- Organization of "Review and Synthesis of the 2018 IMF Regional Economic Outlook: Fiscal Policy and Private Investment for Inclusive Growth" side event in collaboration with the Arab Alliance for Tax Justice in the presence of the IMF Middle East and Central Asia Department.
- Participation in the "Taxes, Taxes, Taxes: Shifting the IFI Narrative to Progressive Gender –Just Taxation" side event organized by the Global Alliance for Tax Justice (GATJ).
- Participation in the WG Executive Directors meeting.
- Participation in the MENA IMF Executive Director meeting.

Participation in the Civil Society Policy Forum 2019 Annual Meetings in Washington DC 18-15 October 2019:

ANND's delegation participated in several side events and met with numerous IMF and WB executives that are handling regional and international policy related mandate.

- Organization of a side event on "IMF and Right to Food: Conditionality on Food and Agriculture in the Arab Region" that showcased the findings of the research done by the network's partners and members in the context of the Arab Watch Report on Right to Food 2019. It should be noted that this topic in the Civil Society Policy Forum was newly introduced in 2019, which sheds light on the extent of the impact of IFI policies in the region and the necessity for CSO dialogue around it.
- Co-organization and participation in the "IMF conditionality reform in promise and practice: What does evidence show?" side event organized by Boston University Global Development Policy Center, Bretton Woods Project, ITUC and ANND.
- Co-organization and participation in the "Cutting to the core: Rethinking the IMF's way of doing Business to tackle Gender Inequalities" side event organized by ECSR net, OXFAM, Bretton Woods project and ANND.
- Co-organization and participation in the "IMF and Inequalities: Tensions between Structural Adjustments and Structural Transformation" side event organized by the members of the Reflection Group on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Society for International Development, CESR, DAWN, Global Policy Forum, Third World Network, Social Watch and ANND).

Organization of a Thematic Workshop on Economic Policies and Social Dialogue in the Southern Neighborhood – 7-6 April 2019 Beirut, Lebanon

The thematic workshop on Economic Policies and Social Dialogue 2019 is part of a series of five meetings held annually in the context of MAJALAT, each focusing on a different priority identified by the structured dialogue process. The 2019 workshop brought together 36 CSO representatives and experts from the Southern Neighborhood and focused on the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)'s trade and investment policies and their impact on economic and social rights and on human rights in general in the region. During these two days, participants had the opportunity to deepen discussions on the following topics:

- The overall framework of EU's relationship with the Southern Neighborhood and to what extent the current framework affects the effectiveness of regional cooperation and sustainable development at the regional and national levels.
- The European Union's policies coherence and their impact on EU external policies - specifically those affecting the Southern Neighborhood.
- The trade liberalization tools promoted by the EU in the region- following the Arab uprisings- through the European investment plan and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA), while examining their impact on economic, social, and environmental rights.
- The partnership's impact on the civil society enabling environment in Southern Neighborhood countries, by providing a critical look at the European Country Roadmaps for engagement with civil society.
- The impact of the growing role of the private sector in EU's development policies and its respect to human rights standards.





Organization of the Second MAJALAT Neighborhood South Seminar on Southern Neighborhood Policies – 4-3 September 2019 – Tunis, Tunisia

The Second MAJALAT Neighborhood South Seminar on Southern Neighborhood Policies was held on 4-3 September 2019 in Tunis, Tunisia in the presence of 90 representatives of civil society organizations from the Neighborhood South engaged in the political dialogue with the European Union. The attendees included representatives from workers' syndicates, social movements, youth and women's organizations and human rights and development organizations.

The seminar was divided into two days where it provided a space for CSOs in the region to discuss the developments at international, regional and national levels that affect them and to define main priorities and recommendations regarding EU policies and the above-mentioned priorities in the region. The recommendations were then addressed to the Brussels Civil Forum II that took place on 3-2 December 2019 where CSOs had the opportunity to discuss them with the European Commission (EC) and DG NEAR high level representatives and specialized representatives for each priority.



► Success story

Since 2011, ANND has organized advocacy visits to EU in Brussels, where representatives from Lebanon, Jordan, Tunisia, Palestine, Morocco, Egypt, and Syria have met with European officials to discuss issues of importance to countries and the region. Because EU staff and administrators do not regularly visit the region, the advocacy visits allow faster information transfer and assessment from the region to EU institutions. Furthermore, these visits allow direct communication with high level European representatives, from various bodies, such as the European Security and External Action Service, DG-NEAR, DG-DEVCO, the European Parliament, and the European Social and Economic Committee. These meetings have two main impacts: the first involves building the capacities of civil society representatives on the work and methods of the various EU bodies (legal, financial, political, and diplomatic); the second focuses on presenting national and regional analysis on key and specific topics according to the expertise and competence of each body. For example, issues related to the implementation of Agenda 2030 in the region and the role of EU development policy in this regard were highlighted in a direct meeting with the EC Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO). The visits also provided an opportunity to communicate with several officials such as the Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn, the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, and various concerned directorates (Directorate General of Trade, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, Directorate General for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Civil Society Division).

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