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Arab NGO Network for Development  
لمنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية

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## OPENING WORD

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The events witnessed in the year 2015 at the level of the region and neighbouring area were life changing. The developments from Libya, Tunisia, Yemen and the Gulf all the way to Syria, Iraq, Egypt and surroundings were painful and dangerous. Its blazing fire spread reaching several European countries from terrorist acts and an unprecedented flow of refugees exceeding tens of thousands on a journey of death, seeking shelter to protect them from the brunt of wars and fighting. In addition to the enormous human and material losses due to these events, there are significant expenses on economic, social and cultural level which may require decades to restore. This requires countless effort, resources and energies which require work starting today to provide and prepare them.

The storms throughout the region were accompanied by important developments on the international scene which will have repercussions on the lives of the people of the world in the coming decades. Whereby, the Financing for Development summit held in Addis Ababa adopted an action plan to help finance the development efforts in the world. In addition, the United Nations General Assembly convened in New York to approve an action plan for the year 2030 on Sustainable Development. Finally, held recently in Paris, the climate summit which adopted a policy document after a tremendous struggle.

Under these regional and international developments “the Arab NGO Network for Development” sought to be active to ensure the presence and participation of civil society from the region. Hence worked on organizing parallel regional trails with coordination with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Arab League to follow up on regional and international developments and placing notions that reflect the developmental interests of the peoples of the region at the current time with an attempt to explore the aspirations of upcoming generations in the future. The network was also engaged at the international level with “the International Group for Civil Society to reflect on the issues of sustainable development”, which is an area for independent organizations that adopt an intellectual approach looking for development alternatives to the existing model, as it considers the existing model as the depth of inequality and exacerbates social and economic crises such as poverty, unemployment and marginalization. Several documents have been issued by the International Group confirming this context.

Many activities have been organized by the network during the year 2015, ranging from meetings, conferences, and organizing visits of delegations to international organizations influential in decision making for the region. This is other than the publications issued as a contribution to open dialogue about the development model and priorities of the region. The report placed at your hands gives an intense summary about it, in order to document it first, and to demonstrate the situations that resulted from each of these fateful stations in the region and its people.

For the companions of the long march of the network, members and partners, activists and martyrs of the civil society in the Arab countries we dedicate this report.

Ziad Abdel Samad  
Beirut on March 21st, 2016

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ANND: CALLING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AMID A SHRINKING CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE

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The year 2015 has been important at the global level. The international community adopted a new multi-stakeholder development agenda. In the new Agenda 2030, private sector stepped ahead, but left behind the adoption of a legally binding instrument on Human rights and businesses. This fact raised serious concerns at the level of civil society. The latter called for the adoption of efficient accountability mechanism for all the actors by enhancing monitoring and advocacy as well as transparency. Moreover, civil society has to actively engage at national, regional and international processes related to the sustainable development framework, highlight any violations that occur, call for remedial action and propose rights-based alternatives instead. Nevertheless, **increasing shrinking civil society space is another important concern.** Enabling environment for civil society is significant but is systematically challenged at national levels with repressive policies on freedom of association, assembly, and expression of opinion. Lack of access to timely and accurate information is common. Furthermore, access to resources is scarce and is exacerbated, as the donors' priorities in the region continue to focus on security, humanitarian intervention to help refugees and the integration of those who succeeded to cross the borders towards more secured countries.

Acknowledging these challenges, the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) and its members during 2015 remained vocal in their call for a new rights-based sustainable development paradigm. This was reflected by their engagement in the process since 2013 and at various levels. ANND enabled a platform for Arab CSOs to discuss and **develop an indigenous regional perspective for the Agenda 2030** in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and with the participation of the Civil Society Directorate of the League of Arab States. A Third regional meeting addressing the regional High level forum on sustainable development were organized, as well as a meeting addressing the financing for development process, where

a declaration reflecting a CSO position were elaborated and a set of recommendations were adopted. Moreover, ANND was an active participant of the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO) annual meeting that focused on Agenda 2030. ANND contributed to the submission of this **regional approach into the global approach**, being a reference point for Regions Refocus and actively engaging at the Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives. In the following years, ANND will continue monitoring the implementation at national and regional level, raise awareness on the goals and targets as well as the indicators and establish an e-platform that will be dedicated to monitoring SDG implementation.

During 2015, **European Union adopted a new European Neighborhood Policy.** This was based on the assessment of a decade of implementation. An online consultation process was launched on March 2015, inviting all stakeholders, including civil society to provide inputs. In this process, ANND restated the need for a genuine partnership and called for the adoption of a policy framework that enhances sustainable development and peace in the region based on the International Human Rights standards and ensuring mutual accountability. Both at its Third **Regional Dialogue on EU-Arab partnership** held in Beirut and during the Civil Society Forum organized in Brussels at European Economic and Social Committee ANND brought together European policy and law makers, European and Arab civil society representatives together. This opened channels of dialogue and enabled direct advocacy for policy changes. A delegation of CSO representatives undertook an **Advocacy Week in Brussels** meeting with officials at European Parliament, European Commission and European External Action Service. They raised key concerns on issues of trade, aid, energy, development and on the role of private sector and civil society. The regional and Brussels meetings provided as well an occasion to disseminate the outcomes of ANND research

on Public-Private Partnerships (undertaken for Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco) and on the regional paper on EU Energy investments with cases from Tunisia and Egypt.

**ANND continued the assessment of the role of the international financial institutions and their impact.** This covered principally IMF and WB, the European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Given that the results of policies/programs implemented and projects funded by the IFIs do not always bring positive developmental results nor address inequalities and poverty, ANND's work shed light on necessary revisions on IFIs policies. At annual conferences of EIB, EBRD and WB and IMF a delegation from the region was present focusing on region specific needs and necessities. ANND developed positions on transparency and climate change policies of the EBRD and EIB respectively and published three sectorial analysis to raise further awareness on their impacts and key civil society asks. This cover energy, climate change and agribusiness.

During 2015, **ANND actively engaged at Universal Period Review** as a tool to shed light on the impacts of social and economic policies. Monitoring of enjoyment of human rights conditions and advocacy at national and international level gain momentum for Lebanon; as the review session took place in November 2015. ANND coalition-building was successful with the engagement of 80 civil society organizations in developing several joint reports on economic and social rights, civil and political rights and thematic reports on labor rights, child rights, women's rights, Palestinian refugee rights, access to justice...etc. A compilation of all submissions was published and launched at a press event. Together with the participation of Ministries, Parliamentarians, Foreign embassy representatives, international organizations a meeting was held on Human Rights Day. ANND stressed that UPR should be a process for enhancing national dialogue among different actors in the society and be an accountability tool.

In all of the above national, regional and global processes ANND put a clear emphasis on the need to enhance the accountability of diverse actors. ANND believes that achieving social justice and development effectiveness requires at the forefront mutually accountable actors. Lack of accountability worsens inequalities, permits violations, fuels conflicts and social tension. In this regard, during 2015 **ANND worked on developing a resource tool for development practitioners and civil society.** It covers the accountability of governments, IFIs, private sector and civil society, defines key concepts, key mechanisms. The manual focuses as well accountability within post-2015 framework. Moreover, ANND actively contributed to the development effectiveness process within **CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness**, organized national workshops and research papers on implementation of Istanbul principles.

During 2015 ANND launched the work on the **Third Arab Watch Report**, first with the selection of the theme, namely the Informal sector with a focus on labor. This subject is a key challenge in the Arab region and requires an in-depth research and rights-based alternatives that the Arab Watch report aim to bring out. National and regional experts were contracted in 2015 to start fieldwork and analysis. Moreover ANND hold several meetings with key institutions that work on the subject, including International Labor Organization.

2015 marked a deterioration of the refugee crisis which received top attention, without any tangible solutions towards peace and prosperity for Syrian people. A huge influx of refugees in Lebanon and Jordan created further pressure on socio-economic conditions and resulted in severe human rights violations. ANND continued its engagement with **Syrian Refugees with Disabilities in Lebanon** to raise awareness, build their capacities, and advocating about their rights.



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## FIRST SECTION: ABOUT THE THIRD ARAB WATCH: THE INFORMAL SECTOR

### Background:

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) founded in 2011 a monitoring tool for strengthening civil society's role in monitoring social and economic policies with a Human rights based approach.

The most important results of the monitoring function are reported in the Arab Watch on Economic and Social Rights, a periodical report issued by ANND once every two years and focused on national, regional, and international policies and factors leading to the violation of economic and social rights.

The first report was launched in October 2012. It included 4 thematic papers and 20 national reports focusing on the "right to work" and "the right to education." The second report, published in 2014, dealt with social protection systems as human right and as a redistribution tool, contributing to achieving a measure of justice and social security. The report included 13 national reports, completed in a participatory manner by experts committed to the advancement of economic and social rights. Contributors to this discussion included CSOs, trade unions and academics.

Regarding the improvement of the effectiveness of CSOs in monitoring the impacts of public policies, especially in economic and social development, this track is important because it promotes the debate within CSOs and other stakeholders (trade unions and the private sector) in order to find alternative views about policymaking in general. Its goal is to put economic and social rights at the center of the current debate about national reform. The significance of the Arab Watch lies within the integrated field work and research on public policy through building relationships among CSOs, researchers and academics, and that the success of this effort depends on the value added to the action of a coalition of a variety of talents, including those hired by grassroots organizations involved in this research.

### Meetings and workshops in 2015:

1- The report's advisory board met during February 2015 and selected "informal work" as the major theme of the report from among three proposals – the other two were "wages





policy” and “the right to food.”The informal labor issue is important because no work has been conducted on it in the Arab region from a human rights perspective or in terms of proposing solutions. It is a vast subject and can be linked explicitly with the theme of gender equality, especially since the proportion of women working in the informal sector is very high. In addition, it will build on the first Arab Watch Report of 2014 and follow-up it , particularly in terms of the right to work and the right to social protection.

**The most important thing mentioned in the advisory council’s meeting:**

- To deepen the report’s impact and reception, there is a need to work on the development of easy tools and brief position papers based on the results of the report and to be circulated to policymakers at the national level, the organization of national workshops, and the development of articles and position papers in order to get to the parliamentarians.
- The need to work on an executive summary that is concise, practical, and simple for the best use of the report in lobbying and advocacy campaigns.

- The need for consultative consultation to strengthen scholarly and thematic aspects.

The goal is to prepare 13 national reports dealing with informal work in 13 Arab countries. Moreover, the report contains a preliminary chapter analyzing the regional context and contributing to the framing of national reports, a comparative report addressing the different aspects of the informal sector, and a scholarly chapter about related qualitative and quantitative indicators.

- 2-** After the February 2015 meeting, ANND’s working group embarked on holding a series of meetings with institutions dealing with informal work, such as the International Labor Organization and the Issam Fares Institute at the American University in Beirut. It prepared background papers to coordinate with partners. Regional and national experts and leading researchers were selected according to specific criteria. Dr. Samir EL-Aita; wrote the main thematic paper that would streamline action and shed light on key issues of informal work.

- 3-** On November 1, 2015, the first meeting of the working group for the release of the third edition of the Arab Watch on Economic and Social Rights was held. In this meeting, the following points were agreed:

**\* Definition and principles of informal work, legal frameworks, and development tracks:** informal work is not marginal; it has become primary since it constitutes approximately 70-80% of employment. In addition, there are irregular institutions and regular institutions hiring irregular employees.

**\* Economic and social aspects of informal work:** participants underscored the need to focus on the fact that informal work is the outlet for women in the Arab region. They agreed that the report should address the volume of informal work of women who do not enjoy economic and social rights including social protection, and the problems they face in terms of the absence of any employment contract or other infringements on their rights, not least sexual harassment.

**\* The role of civil society and trade unions:** Participants stressed the importance of CSOs playing their role in defense of the right to decent work and the fight against poverty, not formalizing it. The issue should not be raised regarding contradictions among trade unions, other groups, and their organization; what is lacking is awareness of and understanding problems.

**\* Preliminary proposals about the methodology and indicators related to informal employment:** A detailed initial proposal was presented about the methodology of indicators that can be used to research papers. The methodology was finalized by the end of the year.

**THE MOST PROMINENT CHALLENGES:**

- 1-Identify terms and differentiate between informal work and the informal sector.
- 2-A rights-based approach, including which rights and why.
- 3-Research according to statistics, which are difficult to obtain or take more time in analysis, or choose to have the Watch based on the literature and some field interviews.

**ACCOMPLISHED STEPS:**

- 1-Contracting with national experts.
- 2- Contracting with regional researchers.
- 3-Completing the methodology paper by the end of the year.
- 4- Completing the reference paper and making it available to the researchers.
- 5- Defining a set of indicators making them available to the researchers.

**NEXT STEPS FOR 2016:**

- 1-Conducting fieldwork/interviews.
- 2-Completing first drafts of the national reports.
- 3-Holding national workshops.
- 4-Holding a regional discussion.
- 5-Reviewing the reports.
- 6-Carrying out the final editing.
- 7-Design and layout.
- 8-Printing, launching and distribution



## SECOND SECTION:

### THE 2030 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA'S TRACK

#### 1. THE BACKGROUND:

The post-2015 development agenda's track was a focus for ANND during the last three years, as the deadline for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was ending without the effective achievement of the goals. Therefore, it became necessary to reconsider the goals, despite them being noble and sublime, the steps taken towards the application of these goals were without social participation and without paying attention to local contexts. Hence, global and regional initiatives have refocused their efforts on the preparation of a post-2015 development agenda rooted in and confirming fundamental human rights values, equality, and sustainability. The new millennium has seen the spread of many acute, multidimensional crises. These crises have made our global society vulnerable to the absence of security and stability ensuing from free and merged markets.

Moreover, all these crises resulted in the emergence of new risks to the environment and the future of our limited supplies and resources, such as water and energy. The impact of these

crises has also led to worsening poverty, inequality, and hunger in the world. The failure of the international community in addressing these changing realities was the product of the weakness of global governance systems in parallel with the absence of accountability and equitable distribution mechanisms.

Accordingly, parallel efforts have been made to identify priorities and ways to finance the development of these efforts. ANND worked to enhance the participation of Arab organizations in the global development dialogue. ANND aimed at enabling a platform for civil society organizations to interact with international developments, and participate in developing a viewpoint that would contribute to the making of a development agenda and determining the desired development model. This model was supposed to introduce fundamental changes in adopted policies and achieve higher equity levels, peace, and progress in the realization of human rights.



## 2. ACTIVITIES AND PAPERS IN 2015:

In this context, ANND, in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the participation of the civil society administration at the Arab League, organized a regional meeting on the post-2015 development plan in Beirut, on Thursday, April 30, 2015. This meeting built on the results of two previous activities organized by ANND, ESCWA, and the Arab League during 2013 and 2014 and issued position papers on Arab CSO intended results from the post-2015 development agenda.

The meeting aimed to follow-up on the latest developments in the ongoing global debate and update the position of Arab CSOs on the post-2015 development agenda before presenting it at the second session of the High-Level Arab Forum on Sustainable Development, held on May 5-7, 2015 in Bahrain and as well at the Conference of Addis Ababa, held in July 2015. The recommendations issued at the end of the regional consultative meeting on the post-2015 development agenda are available at <http://www.annd.org/data/item/pdf/198.pdf>.

In addition ANND:

- presented the Arab States regional report based on the summaries of regional consultations organized on post-2015 for the Regions Refocus 2015 report: <http://www.daghammarskjold.se/regions-refocus-2015-report/>.
- participated in a workshop organized by Regions Refocus and hosted by Ford Foundation in New York to present regional reports on the development agenda.
- presented the results of consultations during the high-level conference in Bahrain in May 2015.
- prepared an article about women's rights within the framework of the development agenda, which was published in the monthly newsletter.
- prepared an article on the Financing for Development Conference, which was published in the monthly newsletter.

- prepared a position paper on "The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda between Aspirations and Reality" after the adoption of the Agenda 2030

- ANND has also been active in a thinking group consisting of CSOs, contributing to the development of several papers about the track, translated them into Arabic for distribution to organizations in the region, worked on their distribution in consultations, and published them on its website.

- ANND collected all the position papers issued on post-2015 in a single publication to constitute a reference for the Arab CSOs; it published it in a CD, which is being distributed in various activities hosted or attended by ANND. The publication is available at <http://www.annd.org/data/item/pdf/311.pdf>.

## 3. THE MOST PROMINENT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ANND and its partners were involved in the post-2015 track, kept up with the most prominent events, and provided a different view by Arab CSOs.

- ANND was considered as a reference in this track by various regional and international bodies following up the track – at the level of UN agencies and institutions, the Arab League, and others.

## 4. CHALLENGES:

- The group following up the international track remained, despite its importance, very limited because of national challenges faced

- Arab media did not keep up with the international track; this created limitations on awareness raising on the process and its outcome

- The need to broaden participation in the future work plan for the implementation of the development agenda and cooperate with various interested partners and stakeholders.

## 5. THE NEXT STEPS FOR 2016:

ANND developed a two-year project in partnership with the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) in order to strengthen the role of the Arab civil society in controlling and monitoring the new development agenda's mechanisms. The project includes:

- Research and monitoring of facts and initiatives taken at the national and regional levels.
- Deepening the knowledge about the sustainable development objectives and indicators contributing to monitoring progress.
- The establishment of an electronic monitor through which enables experience and information sharing and monitoring the progress in the implementation of the agenda in different countries

## ANND PARTICIPATING IN THE ARADO ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

The Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO) organized its 15th General Annual Conference in partnership with a large number of the United Nations agencies that are concerned with the development affairs of the Arab Region (UNDESA, UNDP, UNEP, UN-ESCWA, ILO), as well as international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank (WB), Transparency International (TI), the European Training Foundation (ETF), Malaysian Institute of Integrity (IIM), and the Arab Thought Forum.

Overall the Conference addressed the general orientation for the 2030 developmental agenda in terms of focusing on strengthening partnerships with various stakeholders in the development process of the Arab region, hence creating a significant opportunity for dialogue between representatives of governments and official bodies of Arab and international development organizations, private sector companies, and Arab civil society organization. This reflected openness towards various authorities and a desirable step to move towards a more participatory level in the field of making development policies in the Arab region. ANND participated effectively

in the conference through a delegation of 20 representatives from Arab civil society organizations and specialized experts in development, trade and economic policies to provide interventions during the various sessions. In this context, the Arab Network was keen to participate effectively in the conference through a delegation of 20 representatives from Arab civil society organizations and specialized experts in development, trade and economic policies to provide interventions during the various sessions.

Although the conference formed a step forward in terms of the adoption of the developmental goals with an additional commitment from Arab governments for the need to make the necessary efforts to implement it, the statement which was adopted by the conference remained at the level of general goals and directions of development without being able to put forward practical alternatives and proposals or make recommendations about specific policies. This may be due to the large number of participants and representatives which kept discussions in a general direction, hence not allowing an opportunity to discuss specific details. Therefore there is a need to follow up on the recommendations through the work of various organizations and competent general policy-making authorities, to elevate the dialogue to a deeper level, for the individual recommendations to be supported by researches formulated on evidence and proof based on data and thus being able to turn them into concrete recommendations on the general policy level.



## SECTION THREE:

### MONITORING THE EU-ARAB PARTNERSHIP IN LIGHT OF CHANGING PRIORITIES AND REVISING THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY (ENP)



Since the beginning of the Arab uprisings, ANND has organized several activities on the EU-Arab partnership.. It met with senior officials in the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European External Action Service, called for a reconsideration of EU priorities and poli-cy approaches of cooperation and partnership in political, economic, social, and cultural contexts.

In this context, ANND continued to monitor EU Arab partnership in 2015, taking into consideration important changes, such as revision of the European Neighborhood Policy a decade after its initiation and the worsening migration crisis and organized several related activities.

It issued, in collaboration with the Euro-Med NGO Platform and Solidar, a briefing on the ENP revision, tackling 10 elements the new ENP should cover. The summary focused on the need for greater accountability, a human rights approach in EU policies, and coherence in development policies, especially policies on immigration, trade, and development effectiveness.

For the public consultation on ENP review launched on March 2015, ANND provided an input, supported by its members from Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Tunisia and Palestine. The input stressed that the focus of the new ENP framework should adopt a comprehensive approach to growth; one that is sustainable, job generating, inclusive and re-distributive. <http://www.annd.org/english/data/latest/file/221.pdf>

ANND members at national level undertook consultations to identify national priorities and is-sues with regard to EU partnership

ANND, in collaboration with the Euro-Med NGO Platform, sent a letter to EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Ms. Federica Mogherini, specifying challenges facing a genuine EU-Arab partnership and the ENP. The challenges included shrinking civil society's space, inequality, and the immigration crisis between the two shores of the Mediterranean. A re-sponse to this letter was received from Hugues Mingarelli, European External Action Service Managing Director for North Africa and Middle East. In follow-up to these initiatives, several advocacy meetings were held in March 2015 with the Office of the Commissioner for

Enlarge-ment and ENP to emphasize civil society's important role, regional dialogues, and mechanisms of structured dialogue. In addition, ANND was engaged in dialogue at the EU level, including the Policy Forum for Development and the Southern Civil Society Forum.

ANND organized the Third Regional Conference on the EU-Arab partnership on October 30-31, in cooperation with the EuroMed NGO Platform, Solidar, and Bankwatch. The event brought together European and Arab CSOs and members of the European Parliament to discuss key issues, relating to the revising the ENP and its economic, social, and cultural aspects. The conference was an opportunity to launch reports on decent work, social protection, the freedom of assembly, and the enabling environment in Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia according to indicators for ENP assessment and in the framework of a project of ANND, the Euro-Med NGO Platform, and Solidar.

On the level of EU institutions, ANND organized the annual advocacy week to Brussels, where it met with European officials. It organized meetings and dialogue on immigration and trade policy issues, the civil society's role, and the new ENP. ANND issued a policy paper emphasizing that no prosperity can exist without social justice and equality and a new model of development, no stability can be attained without peace and the promotion of regional integration. It pointed to the absence of a reflection of the real needs of partners without civil society's participation, and without taking into account the framework of human rights in the new ENP.

During the visit, ANND organized, in cooperation with the Euro-Med NGO Platform and Concord, a forum hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels. It concluded specific sessions to discuss peace and investment policies in the field of energy. Moreover, ANND issued, while in Brussels, a press release in conjunction with the launch of the new ENP. The statement revealed that the communication focuses on promoting societies' resilience and stability, which constitutes a regression and constraints on the previous ENP objectives of achieving prosperity, development and peace. It also constitutes a regression from international agreements and documents

upheld by the European Union, such as the development agenda 2030, which includes broader and more comprehensive objectives than the EU document.

**A prominent achievement:**

was the consolidation of ANND's role as an essential partner in this track and the dialogue session bringing together participants from the Arab region with European institutions on the one hand, and European CSOs on the other.

**A major challenge:**

during the year security situation in Europe significantly deteriorated, which led to human rights values being put on hold for the sake of security. On the other hand, there are challenges related to European partners: the ability to get to the representatives and actors in the EU remains limited to some representatives of certain political parties without others.



## SECTION FOUR:

### THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW MECHANISM: MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS

During 2015, ANND organized a number of activities related to the mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on the Arab regions level.

In Lebanon CSOs, including ANND, presented reports to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for Lebanon’s second review. ANND led the submission on economic and social rights, which was referred several times especially in terms of the right to work and education in the summary of stakeholders report prepared for the interactive dialogue. During a press conference organized in Beirut ANND launched the publication compiling civil society submissions and disseminated it to various stakeholders at national and international level in several occasions.

Moreover, ANND participated in the pre-session for Lebanon’s Universal Periodic Review in Geneva on October 8, 2015 and presented to the representatives of missions a summary of recommendations relating to social and economic rights. On November 2, when the actual review session was held in Geneva, ANND organized a side event to cover economic and social rights, women’s rights, the rights of Palestinian refugees, and civil and political

rights. ANND also organized in collaboration with OHCHR a meeting with foreign embassies in Lebanon to inform them of civil society’s priorities relating to the conditions of human rights and the recommendations directed to the Lebanese delegation during the UPR. In addition, a national conference was organized to inform all relevant stakeholders on the results of the review. The conference was a unique opportunity to involve members of parliament, government representatives, UN officials, and civil society representatives.

ANND organized a capacity-building session for Syrian organizations in Lebanon, including training about the UPR process, reporting, monitoring, and advocacy.

In Sudan, ANND prepared a report about economic and social rights. ANND will continue its engagement in related follow up activities, including Geneva level advocacy in 2016.

In Libya, ANND took part in a training session for over 20 Libyan civil society organizations on June 2015 and delivered a capacity building session on how to engage in UPR and undertake advocacy at national and international level.



## SECTION FIVE:

### WORKING WITH GLOBAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS



ANND continues its active participation in policy monitoring and advocacy vis-à-vis financial institutions, with a special focus on the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group (WBG), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

#### 1. ACTIVITIES AND PAPERS IN 2015

Highlighting that the process for the adoption of new sustainable development goals provides a good time for rethinking what role the EIB can play within the revision of development frame-work and with its climate change policy specifically, ANND provided input for the EIB Consultation launched on March 2015. The input together with members from Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Bahrain and Iraq stated that

the EIB lending should reflect new development paradigm. The bank's focus on environment-friendly lending cannot be restricted to policies focusing on curbing CO<sup>2</sup> emissions; the bank should also encourage environment-friendly production and consumption through controls of resources used in its investments to increase production, lower the environmental cost, and develop peripheral areas.

On February 2, 2015, EIB organized its annual workshop for CSOs in Luxembourg, which focused on the revised EIB transparency policy. ANND took part in the consultation of Transparency Policy review, with a submission reflecting challenges on transparency of EIB's engagement in the Arab region.

A delegation from Arab CSOs participated in the annual conference of the EBRD in Tbilisi, Georgia, on May 14 and 15, 2015. The delegation presented a paper on the implications of the bank's policies and interventions in the Arab region and their impact on the region's development track. The delegation asked the bank to give importance and priority to local communities mainly affected by its projects, in line with previous promises by the bank to involve a larger number of stakeholders.

ANND published three analytical papers on EIB and EBRD policies in the Arab region, including topics such as climate change, energy, and agribusiness. The three papers were presented and distributed during EBRD's annual conference to raise awareness of risks in policies and provide specific recommendations.

As every year, ANND participated in the annual conference of the WBG and the IMF, which was held in Lima, Peru, on October 6-9, 2015. On the sidelines, WBG organized a conference for civil society. ANND organized, in collaboration with the conference's coordinators, a panel discussion on IMF proposals to Arab countries to lift oil subsidies, given the decline oil's global prices. Participants in the discussion were Reem Abdel-Halim (economist), Dr. Samir Aita (ANND's representative), and Mr. Ahmad Awad (director of the Phoenix Center for Economics & Informatics Studies). Ms. Daniela Gressani represented IMF, and Mr. Ziad Abdel-Samad (ANND's executive director) moderated session. The session focused on IMF's call for the removal of oil subsidies in Arab countries in light of falling global oil prices and for the use of funds allocated to subsidies in short-term investments to decrease budget deficits. ANND refuted this policy because of its negative repercussions on the purchasing power of

citizens and the provision of primary materials they need. The policy also does not safeguard social justice according to a policy of wealth redistribution.

Mr. Ziad Abdel-Samad (ANND's executive director) took part in one of the conference's sessions, which focused on states called "vulnerable." He highlighted the fact that criteria used to assess the level of vulnerability were not realistic; for example, while Lebanon is host to a large number of refugees, the refugees kick-started the Lebanese economy, hence decreasing the impact of the refugees.

## 2. THE MOST PROMINENT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ANND and its partners were involved in the track, kept up with the most prominent stages, and provided a different view about Arab CSOs.

## 3. CHALLENGES

- Expanding participation and interest in this track.



## SECTION SIX:

### THE TRACK OF DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS



The track of development effectiveness has been a focus for ANND for the past 10 years. ANND believes in the importance of the track, its relevance to development policy, and its impact on basic options in the development process.

In this context, ANND organized, in cooperation with the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE)'s secretariat, workshops during the World Social Forum focusing on a definition of the international track and considering problems hindering CSO activity in the Arab region and their tight enabling environment. ANND worked, in cooperation with its national members and partners, to develop three national reports on Istanbul Principles during conferences in Tunisia, Egypt, and Iraq. The reports were written according to a unified methodology and the same questions.

ANND also launched work to prepare a guide on mutual accountability to serve as a reference tool for civil society and development practitioners. The guide sought to play a fruitful role in CSO monitoring and advocacy of the development effectiveness process. It would enhance CSO knowhow to better implement mutual accountability principles in favor of all stakeholders, especially as part of the post-2015 development agenda.

The guide is important because accountability is still seen as a one-way, perpendicular relationship between the two concerned parties: the donor asks for accountability – buys commitment, so to speak – from recipients regarding allocated resources. The guide is based on the Paris declaration about aid effectiveness; the declaration considers mutual accountability one of five conditions of aid effectiveness. Accountability has developed from a unilateral to a bilateral, comprehensive process.

ANND participated in events organized by CPDE on immigration and its repercussions for development effectiveness. A workshop was held in Istanbul; the expert Anas El-Hasnawi participated. ANND also attended annual meetings in Brussels on strategic planning for this track.

Results of research, fieldwork, and participation in international activities were transferred to a large group of ANND members and partners through a regional workshop held in Cairo on December 18-19, 2015 to decide the features of follow-up of this track.

## SECTION SEVEN:

### SUPPORTING SYRIAN PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES PROJECT

ANND implements, in partnership with the International Organization on Disability and through EU funding, a three-year project to empower Syrian persons with disabilities and wounds who are affected by crises. The project helps emerging groups of Syrian refugees know and voice their rights and claim integration. The objectives of the project is to empower individuals with disabilities, their organizations, CSOs, and informal groups, to develop their networks, technical skills, and organizational capabilities to represent and support persons with disabilities and the war wounded. The project also strengthens the capacity of organizations of persons with disabilities, CSOs, and informal groups administer the process of collecting and disseminating information on services provided to persons with disabilities and wounds, and enables them to engage and work actively with involved authorities to provide basic services thereof.

#### ANND'S ROLE AND IMPORTANCE IN THIS PROJECT:

ANND plays important role in this project; it does not only work on enhancing awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities among displaced persons but also trains them about how to defend and advocate for these rights. This is in addition to providing direct provision and technical support needed through field training courses. Through its regional and domestic relations, ANND helps these groups spread wider and deliver their voice and demands quicker to CSOs and associations working in the provision of services to persons with disabilities and wounds. ANND's network of relations helps create opportunities for advocacy for these groups on domestic and regional levels.

#### PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN 2015:

- Primary exercises on disability: groups were trained on the concepts of disability, the types of disability, the laws that protect the rights of persons with disabilities, the stages of advocacy, and empowerment.

- Training of trainers: methods and concepts of lobbying, appropriate methods of training, the coach's characteristics and responsibilities, and planning for and managing a training session.

- Awareness courses about the rights of persons with disabilities: through personal experiences with disabilities, lectures, and public readings about disabilities, and open dialogues about the rights of person with disabilities and the importance of their role and their integration in society.

- Empowerment and support sessions during which ANND creates official groups with specific identities and goals, and trains them about the importance of using social media and how to distribute services.

- Self-supporting groups: groups to support and back displaced Syrians in general and person with disabilities in specific to speak about and share with others problems and pressures they suffer.



- Publishing field stories about the experiences of persons with disabilities through ANND's electronic bulletin, which is available at:

<http://enewsletter.annd.org/arabicItem.php?itemId=593&newsletterId=44>

### ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROJECT:

- This project gave the opportunity for groups of persons with disabilities to know their rights and know how to carry out advocacy in order to obtain these rights.
- This project helped these groups break their isolation and share their experiences with others; it helped them change their view of many things and become again active members of society.
- The ability to deliver their voice correctly and claim access to the best services.
- The ability to build a series of relationships and networks with international and local organizations:

Partnership with Beyond about teaching persons with disabilities to use Brail

Partnership with the International Organization on Disability to attain its support with regard to the provision of white sticks to persons with visual disabilities.

- Work independently and promote their ideas using social media; an example is the Facebook page of Haq group.
- Groups are ready to apply what they have learned when they return to their country.
- Create and promote private messages advocating the rights of persons with disabilities.

### PROJECT CHALLENGES:

- A large number of participants in groups moved abroad because of poor living conditions.
- Lack of coverage for the project and poor meeting of the basic needs of displaced Syrians.
- Limited movement of groups and classes, and poor access to the largest number possible of displaced people due to security measures and hardships in acquiring necessary legal and identification papers.

• Reducing aid and services provided by international and local associations, which directly affects the lives of people.

### LESSONS LEARNED:

- The inability to deal with the subject of rights when basic needs are not enough.
- The importance of assistance and the development of relations among groups and among service providers.
- The independence of the people in the creation and preparation of activities they want to do.

### ANND'S ADDED VALUE:

• The project's team has worked from the beginning to integrate ideas and values in which ANND believes in, which relate to the concepts of accountability, and the role of civil society, as well as the values related to the concept of service as a right. The team helped deepen the vision of participants and their rhetoric, and contributed to the activation of exchange and sharing among individuals and communities targeted by the project.

### FUTURE PLANS:

In addition to the completion of the organizational structure of the groups, the project in the coming period will work on:

- 1-** Spreading further the project and increasing the number of groups.
- 2-** The completion of a directory of services in Lebanese areas.
- 3-** Designing and implementing advocacy plans by groups.
- 4-** Organizing dialogues among groups and decision-makers in service providing organizations.
- 5.** Providing financial grants to groups based on projects that groups will develop.

You may access the project's activities and images through the webpage on the Facebook or through its special page on ANND's website: [www.annd.org](http://www.annd.org)

## SECTION EIGHT:

### The Third Study Week on Trade and Investment Policies In the Global South

#### CONTEXT:

For the third successive year, ANND organizes a Study Week on trade and investment policies in the global south. The aim of this week was to set up a working group which would have the capacity to monitor the developmental initiatives in the trade and investment field in the Arab region. Moreover, the purpose of this trip was also to enhance civil society advocacy on economic policies in the region by building capacities and raising awareness on the elected priority-issues.

#### PROGRESS IN 2015:

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), along with the South Centre and Third World Network, organized the 3rd Study Week on development initiatives at the global level. As in former occasions the study week provided to the group of 11 participants from the Arab region, the opportunity to have discussions and debates with high-level specialists on the common priorities-issues for the Global South on macro-economic, trade and investment policies.

Participants were specialized activists from the Arab region, who have knowledge and experience on the said topics. The first session of the first day was introductory, in which every participant presented himself and the organization s/he come from, with their perspective on how this study week will contribute to their work and their expectations from it. A historical brief was presented on the last three years and how the study week enhanced the networking between the participating organizations. Mr. AbdelSamad, emphasized that the aim is to establish a solid communication amongst the participants that would aid in consolidating the efforts in future common working projects. Mr. Vice, vice president of South Centre, briefed the participants about the South Centre and its mandate. Dr. AKUZ Yilmaz, Chief Economist at South Centre Dr. Akuz, chief economist, at South Centre gave the participants a global

overview of the economic situation since the financial crisis. Through his presentation elements on the North-South relationship were evident, with critique on the austerity policies as well as violation of resources for developing countries. Dr. Akuz was also critical about the Bretton Woods institutions. A projection of the global economic performance was also evident in Dr. Akuz presentation in which potential growth rates were indicated. The presentation has set the global information of the economy and development necessary for the study week and contributed to the analysis of the challenges facing developing countries.

During the study week, many meetings took place with Geneva Based organizations including a meeting with UNCTAD Globalization and Development Strategies Division which aimed to analyze the current economic development paradigm and discuss recommendations for developing countries.

The group also visited the OHCHR premises in Geneva and met with Mr. Faraj Feninch the Chief of the Middle East and North Africa Section OHCHR. Mr. Fenniche introduced the work of OHCHR work in the region. In addition, representative officers from the office of Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon presented their work; it was followed by an interactive discussion on the

Human rights issues in the region where participants showcased their views and that of their organizations on the HR situation in each of the countries.

The Study Week group met with FIAN representatives to discuss their active role in the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights resolution (OEIWG). FIAN, as part of the civil society Treaty Alliance were highly active throughout the

deliberations of the first session of the OEIWG groups and were active simultaneously inside and outside the UN by having constructive additions to the content and the debates and by fueling the outreach outside the UN.

#### PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS:

ANND conducted an evaluation session during the Study week and distributed evaluation forms for the participants to fill in.

The evaluations showed that the participants were satisfied with the content and the quality of the speakers and acquired good knowledge of economic and social policy process which they have identified as relevant to their work in CSOs in the region. However they have identified time management as a problem given that the content within the time frame was very limited. They all agreed that they will highly recommend the study week for others.

Moreover, the objective of such projects is establishing a solid communication amongst the participants that would aid in consolidating the efforts in future common working projects. So far many of the study week participants engaged with ANND and with other participants in joint research activities.

#### DIFFICULTIES:

The main Difficulty we face each year is in recruiting new candidates that respond to the selection criteria, and this necessitate more efforts to expand the outreach and enhance the publicity. This year, ANND started the announcement for the study week 5 months before, created a facebook page, and enhanced the publicity using different ANND media tools (website, newsletter, social media outlets).

#### PLANS FOR 2016:

The study week is maintained as a main activity in ANND programs. More consideration will be given to time allocation in light of this year experience and the strategy of increasing the outreach to ensure the best candidates will be maintained.



## SECTION NINE:

### Communication Mechanisms



This section includes the most important achievements and challenges ANND knew in media and communication during 2015. ANND is interested in communication in response to the urgent need for ANND to develop strategies and methods it uses domestically, in terms of coordination tools among member associations and partners in ongoing projects, or abroad, in terms of the expansion of communication between ANND and its audience in countries where it operates and beyond.

The interest in the means and methods of communication and media stems from ANND's work to keep pace with the massive expansion of the IT world in terms of rapid availability of resources and news in digital and social media, and to reach and interact with its audience and partners through these media.

ANND based its communication processes in 2015 on the platforms that the Network has been using to disseminate its messages. These

platform include:

**Websites:** ANND's central website ([www.annd.org](http://www.annd.org)) is the hub and resource center that all the Network's material are published on. ANND also operates the Civil Society Resource for Development in the Arab Region portal ([www.csrdar.org](http://www.csrdar.org))

**Newsletter:** ANND also continues to issue its periodic e-newsletter that carries the coverage of the network and its members' participation in major events, in addition to research and policy material that are being written on a monthly basis.

**Social Media:** In 2015, ANND still engages on social media platform that play an important role in widening the reach of our communication channels to a greater audience, and to keep up with the rapidly changing dynamics of online communication. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn

have been an efficient way of covering the network's conferences and events, as well as in advocating with our publications and statement.

## ACHIEVEMENTS:

### Website and Newsletter:

In 2015, we were able to reactivate the CSR DAR website with its valuable material. The network is still working on increasing the level of engagement from its members to keep providing regular updates.

As for annd.org, the website's design and interface have been changed in 2015. A new layout for the website has been created for various reasons. The structure of the site was revamped to insure ease of access to the Network's research material. Technical issues that faced the old website such as site crashes and bugs that impeded access to information have been removed. The media content (photos, videos, interactive discs) were highlighted and uplifted for their aesthetic and informational value including adding a video gallery for ANND's events coverage as well as its informational videos. The communication department also worked on strengthening the links between the website and other electronic platforms such as social media, for easier content sharing. On the other hand, our website's Content Management System (CMS) was revamped for easier and more efficient publishing.

ANND's newsletter was uplifted visually and technically. The Content Management System (CMS) was revamped and its connection to social media platforms was made more organic. ANND also worked on enhancing participation from its members and partners in writing the newsletter.

### Publications:

The network's publication have also received some improvements in 2015. Design standards for ANND's material have been uplifted to ensure clarity and visual attractiveness. Their structure on the website has been customized as well to provide clear portals for different material.

### Social Media:

Social media has taken more attention from the Network's dissemination techniques in 2015. It has become an integral part of the network's website and newsletter; as well as improvements on each platform individually

### Facebook:

Enhancing the frequency and timing of different posts on a case-by-case basis.

Working on enhancing visual standards for Facebook posts.

### Twitter:

Improving the live coverage of conferences and events.

Involvement of members, partners and donors through tagging and sharing from different Facebook accounts.

This was done in addition to working on the development of internal means of communication in terms of the use of multimedia in participatory work (Google group, Google Docs, Web seminars) to strengthen the flow of information with the network.

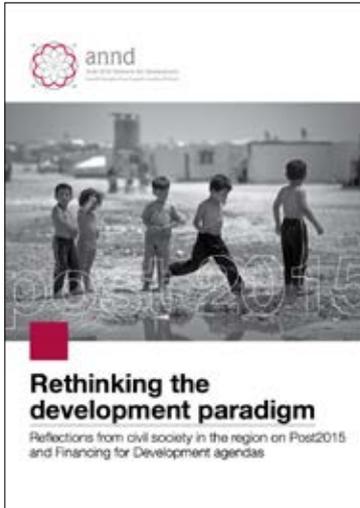
The Network has also worked on designing informational animated videos to further illustrate its messages in audiovisual tools. A video on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development was created in collaboration with BankWatch. it can be found here:

<http://www.annd.org/arabic/video.php#sthash.BYKgmzZR.jPB5dPlc.dpbs>

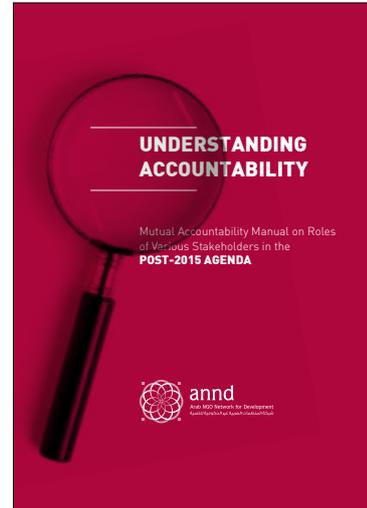
## Next steps for 2016:

- Work on media content to explain the content of reports issued by ANND (graphics, awareness campaigns).
- Sustaining the work on the layout and the ease of browsing the ANND website.
- Working to improve the coverage of ANND's activities in visual and print media.
- Working to motivate partners to participate in activating the CSR-DAR site.
- Working on the establishment of stand-by sites (microsites) under the umbrella of the website for some of the new programs.
- Continue to work on increasing the participation of members and partners in the websites and periodicals.

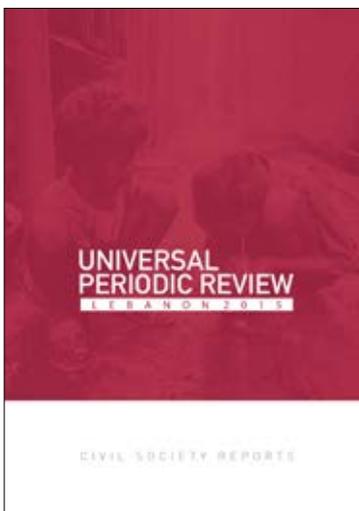
## PUBLICATIONS IN 2015



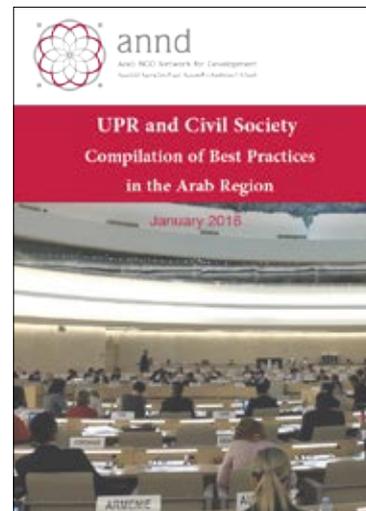
Post 2015:  
Rethinking The  
Development Paradigm



Understanding  
Accountability



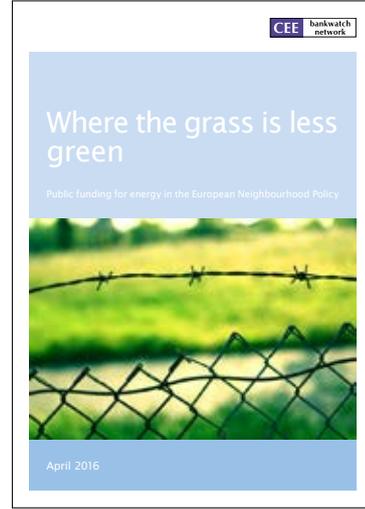
Universal Periodic Review  
Lebanon 2015



UPR and Civil Society:  
Compilation of Best Practices  
in the Arab Region.



Popular Solidarity In The Arab World: From The Renaissance To The Arab Spring



The EU and Energy in the Arab region



## FINANCIAL REPORT

**Project:** All Projects

**Currency:** USD

**Date:** December 31, 2015

DESCRIPTION	INCOME
Cumulatif results from previous years	71,989
From Funders	
Open Society Foundation	149,554
Bank Watch	101,274
Handicap International	81,238
Solidar	25,969
Civicus	24,179
Christian Aid	30,110
Diakonia	76,844
IM Swedish Development Partner	40,500
IBON International	62,983
CNCD 11.11.11	13,136
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)	18,718
Oxfam GB	9,929
Geneva Institute for Human Rights	2,010
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Lebanon	1,742
Membership Fees	800
Others	36,016
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>746,991</b>

DESCRIPTION	Expenses
Administrative cost	117,152
Networking	52,768
IT & communication	37,883
ANND projects and activities for the year 2015	553,768
Solidarity	2,282
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>763,853</b>

<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>-16,862</b>
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