



**CASE REPORT**

# Oman 2024 Voluntary National Review: A Case Report on SDG Implementation

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## ABSTRACT

**PURPOSE:** This study assesses Oman's progress towards achieving the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through an analysis of its 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR), aligned with Oman Vision 2040.

**DESIGN/METHODOLOGY/APPROACH:** The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative SDG scoring with a qualitative policy analysis. AI-assisted data extraction was validated by independent experts and SDG specialists to ensure accuracy and alignment with official indicators.

**FINDINGS:** Results indicate strong overall performance, with an SDG achievement index of 82.2% and 11 of 17 goals on track. Significant progress is evident in poverty eradication, education, health, water access, climate action, and institutional strength, while challenges persist in economic diversification, youth employment, gender leadership, and water sustainability.

**ORIGINALITY/VALUE OF THE PAPER:** This paper offers a novel, first-of-its-kind analysis of VNRs, integrating AI-driven analytics with expert validation to provide a structured, evidence-based, and replicable framework for SDG evaluation.

**PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS:** Findings support targeted policy reforms, improved data systems, and strengthened partnerships to accelerate Oman's sustainable development trajectory.

**KEYWORDS:** *United Nations; Sustainable Development Goals; Voluntary National Review; AI-driven Analytics.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Sultanate of Oman's 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR) presents a comprehensive assessment of the nation's progress towards achieving the United Nations (UN) 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), fully aligned with Oman Vision 2040. The report highlights significant advancements in social services, economic reform, environmental protection, and institutional development, demonstrating the country's commitment to sustainable and inclusive growth. On the international stage, Oman positions itself as a bridge-builder between East and West, leveraging its strong diplomatic reputation to foster global partnerships for sustainable development. Through the 2024 VNR, Oman reaffirms its dedication to advancing the 2030 Agenda, guided by the principles of inclusivity, innovation, and resilience outlined in Vision 2040. The VNR was prepared under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy and the National Committee for Monitoring the Achievement of the SDGs of Oman in 2024. The VNR reflects a comprehensive whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. It is developed through broad consultations and youth engagement. The report highlights Oman's efforts to integrate sustainability into decision-making, strengthen institutions, and enhance partnerships. It notes strong progress across most goals, with further action needed in economic diversification, youth employment, water security, and climate mitigation. (Voluntary National Report Oman, 2024).

### VNR Framework Approach to assess Oman's Progress towards the 2030 Agenda

A VNR is a self-assessment process through which UN Member States review and report on their progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs (United Nations, n.d.). These reviews are voluntary, country-led, and inclusive, allowing each nation to share experiences, identify challenges, and highlight best practices (United Nations Volunteers, 2024).

VNRs are essential because they promote accountability and transparency in the implementation of the SDGs, allowing countries to demonstrate their commitment and progress openly. They help governments track progress, identify gaps, and strengthen policies, ensuring that national development strategies remain aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, VNRs facilitate knowledge sharing among nations by enabling the exchange of experiences, innovations, and lessons learned. They also encourage multi-stakeholder participation, bringing together government institutions, civil society, the private sector, and academia in a collaborative effort to advance

sustainable development. Finally, the VNRs serve as the foundation for the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) reviews, providing evidence-based insights that guide global discussions on accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs.

## Objectives of VNRs

- Assess a country's progress towards achieving the SDGs.
- Identify key challenges and barriers to implementation.
- Share lessons learned and innovative approaches.
- Mobilise support, partnerships, and policy coherence for sustainable development.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Oman's (VNR) assesses national development performance using both quantitative and qualitative data, aligning national priorities with the SDGs. Drawing on available indicators and national statistics, the VNR evaluates progress towards SDG targets and identifies areas requiring further action. Available indicators and national statistics are used to evaluate whether SDGs are achieved, on track, moderately off track, seriously off track, or show no progress. The analysis also examines whether the country is facing data gaps or methodological challenges.

Due to incomplete or inconsistent data, some assessments rely on proxy indicators or qualitative descriptions of progress. Each Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is rated on a 0–5 scale to measure Oman's progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Give below is the scale used for SDG analysis.

- 0 – No Progress:** No measurable progress or data available.
- 1 – Severely Off-Track:** Very little advancement; major gaps persist.
- 2 – Off-Track:** Limited progress with minimal improvement.
- 3 – Moderately Off-Track:** Some progress achieved, but key challenges remain.
- 4 – On-Track:** Noticeable progress made; close to achieving the target.
- 5 – Achieved:** Goal fully met with sustained performance and monitoring in place.

This scale helps to quantify Oman's SDG performance, showing where strong progress exists and where further policy actions are needed.

VNRs are vital tools for evaluating and accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda. They enable countries to reflect on achievements, recognise shortcomings, and strengthen collective action for a more sustainable and equitable world.

## Explanation of Analysis (Applied to Oman's SDG Report)

This analysis applies the VNR framework to Oman's SDG Report. Initially, the report was processed using an AI tool to extract, summarise, and categorise data related to the 17 SDGs. The AI provided preliminary insights into Oman's progress, challenges, and measurable indicators. Following the AI review, the information was cross-verified by two independent human experts to ensure factual accuracy, contextual relevance, and alignment with the official UN SDG indicators. This validation step strengthened the reliability of the data interpretation.

Finally, a team of SDG experts conducted an in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis to identify key challenges, potential solutions, and policy-level recommendations. The comprehensive approach, integrating AI-driven insights with expert validation, provides a balanced, evidence-based assessment of Oman's progress towards achieving economic growth, highlighting strategic areas for improvement, innovation, and sustainability.

## RESULTS

### Overall Progress

Table 1 presents Oman's progress across the 17 SDGs, with ratings assigned to each goal based on the report's findings. The ratings reflect the extent of progress made, highlight areas where challenges have been addressed, and identify those that remain unresolved.

**Table 1: SDG Progress Scoring from (0-5)**

<b>SDG 1: No Poverty: Score: 5</b>	
<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman's commitment to eradicating poverty is rooted in its national development vision and social welfare system, which ensure equitable access to services and opportunities. The government prioritises inclusive growth, human capital development, and social protection as key pillars of sustainable development, fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring hidden or relative poverty among vulnerable groups (e.g. informal workers, remote areas).</li> <li>- Sustaining poverty eradication amid economic diversification and potential labour market shifts.</li> <li>- Ensuring continued support for vulnerable groups, including low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.</li> <li>- Managing regional disparities in income and service access between urban and rural areas.</li> </ul>



<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extreme poverty eradicated since the early implementation of the SDGs.</li> <li>- Universal access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure for all residents.</li> <li>- Increased government spending on basic services, reflecting strong social investment priorities.</li> <li>- Education remains a top budget priority, reinforcing the link between learning opportunities and poverty reduction.</li> <li>- Equal land ownership rights (100%) guaranteed by law for both men and women, promoting equity and asset security.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited long-term monitoring data on relative poverty and income inequality trends.</li> <li>- Need for further development of targeted social safety mechanisms to adapt to evolving economic and demographic changes.</li> <li>- Continued vigilance required to prevent poverty risks arising from external shocks (e.g., climate change, inflation, or global market fluctuations).</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 2: Zero Hunger: Score: 4</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman places food security at the heart of its national development agenda, recognising the vital role of the agriculture, fisheries, and water sectors in achieving sustainable growth. These sectors are considered strategic pillars of economic diversification, contributing to employment generation, social stability, and national resilience. Government policies prioritise the sustainable management of renewable natural resources to secure long-term food availability and stability.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hunger is largely eradicated, but malnutrition and dietary balance still require attention.</li> <li>- Need for sustained food security amid climate pressures and water scarcity.</li> <li>- Persistent low levels of child malnutrition requiring ongoing intervention and monitoring.</li> <li>- Strengthening nutrition education and awareness, particularly in vulnerable communities.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hunger eradicated and food security ensured through an integrated national food security strategy, effective market regulation, and comprehensive nutrition programmes.</li> <li>- Significant government investment in agriculture, fisheries, water management, food safety, and reserve systems.</li> <li>- Agricultural productivity enhanced, reducing reliance on imports and ensuring stable food supply chains.</li> <li>- Steady decline in child malnutrition and improvement in nutritional outcomes.</li> <li>- Contribution to GDP and employment from food-related sectors continues to rise, reinforcing social and economic stability.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete eradication of malnutrition remains pending despite overall success in ending hunger.</li> <li>- Need for further diversification of agricultural production to meet evolving dietary needs and reduce import dependency.</li> <li>- Continued efforts required to sustain food security systems amid global market fluctuations and climate challenges.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being: Score: 4</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman considers public health a national priority and a cornerstone of sustainable development. The government has established a robust healthcare system that ensures universal access and continuous improvement in quality and efficiency. Health policies are closely aligned with the SDGs and Vision 2040, focusing on preventive care, health equity, and service excellence.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most targets nearly achieved, yet non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and road traffic injuries remain persistent.</li> <li>- Access and quality in specialised health services need strengthening to meet final 2030 targets.</li> <li>- Sustaining progress towards the remaining 2030 health targets, particularly in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and lifestyle-related conditions.</li> <li>- Enhancing road safety awareness and injury prevention to further reduce accident-related deaths.</li> <li>- Managing the growing burden of chronic diseases as life expectancy increases.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most SDG 3 targets achieved, with strong performance in maternal and child health, infectious disease control, and epidemic preparedness.</li> <li>- High immunisation coverage and declining mortality rates from diseases such as tuberculosis and from road traffic accidents.</li> <li>- Universal health coverage achieved, supported by extensive investment in hospitals, clinics, and healthcare infrastructure nationwide.</li> <li>- Life expectancy continues to rise, reflecting the success of healthcare policies and public health initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final targets for certain indicators (e.g. NCDs, accident mortality) still to be met.</li> <li>- Need for greater health system resilience to address emerging public health threats.</li> <li>- Continuous workforce training and capacity building required to maintain high-quality, equitable health services nationwide.</li> </ul>

**SDG 4: Quality Education: Score: 4**

<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education is one of Oman's foremost national priorities, forming the foundation of human capital development under Vision 2040. The government continues to invest heavily in the education sector to ensure inclusive, equitable, and high-quality learning opportunities for all. Education is also recognised as a key driver of innovation, productivity, and social advancement.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High literacy and access, but education labour market mismatch persists.</li> <li>- Further improvement in learning outcomes, digital readiness, and vocational pathways is needed.</li> <li>- English language proficiency gaps persist among students, affecting international competitiveness and access to global opportunities.</li> <li>- Ensuring consistent teaching quality across all regions, especially in remote and rural areas.</li> <li>- Adapting curricula to meet the demands of the digital economy and future labour markets.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Substantial improvements in learning outcomes, with marked gains in fourth- and eighth-grade test scores.</li> <li>- Gender parity achieved in enrolment, with girls outperforming boys in most proficiency areas.</li> <li>- 100% of teachers are fully qualified, supported by continuous professional development and training.</li> <li>- Low pupil-teacher ratio (12.6:1), ensuring better classroom engagement and learning quality.</li> <li>- 97% of children complete primary education and adult literacy stands at 98%, among the highest globally.</li> <li>- Strong integration of digital skills, sustainability, and global citizenship across curricula.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Occasional recruitment of underqualified teachers, particularly in specialised or technical subjects, may impact overall education quality.</li> <li>- Need for continuous curriculum reform to balance academic excellence with vocational and innovation-focused skills.</li> <li>- Further efforts required to bridge performance disparities between schools and sustain high learning outcomes nationwide.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 5: Gender Equality: Score:3</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman has prioritised gender equality as part of its national development agenda, enshrining women's rights in legislation and aligning policies with Vision 2040. The government recognises that empowering women through education, healthcare, and legal protections is essential for social inclusion, economic growth, and sustainable development.</li> </ul>

<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women's representation in leadership and politics remains limited.</li> <li>- Low representation of women in politics and leadership, including 10.7% of parliamentary seats, 0.8% of local council seats, and 17.9% of department-head positions.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress/Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child marriage nearly eradicated, with only 1.2% of women marrying before age 15.</li> <li>- Reproductive healthcare coverage is nearly universal (99%), ensuring maternal health and well-being.</li> <li>- Strong legal frameworks exist to prevent discrimination and promote gender equality.</li> <li>- Women have access to education and form a qualified workforce, contributing significantly to social and economic development.</li> </ul>
<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Persistent gaps in public-sector parity and executive leadership positions for women.</li> <li>- Ongoing challenge to translate legal rights into practical empowerment across all sectors.</li> <li>- Ensuring sustainable progression in women's political, economic, and social participation to meet 2030 SDG targets.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation: Score: 4</b>	
<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water security and sanitation are central to Oman's sustainable development agenda, given its arid climate and limited natural freshwater resources. The government has prioritised efficient water management, investment in infrastructure, and advanced technologies to ensure universal access to safe water and sanitation in line with Vision 2040 and the SDG framework.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water scarcity is Oman's most critical environmental risk.</li> <li>- Need for sustainable groundwater management and efficiency in desalination.</li> <li>- High freshwater withdrawal at 128% of available resources, reflecting water scarcity and pressure on natural supplies.</li> <li>- Need to balance growing demand with limited renewable water sources amid climate stress.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress/Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Universal access achieved: 100% of the population has access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation services.</li> <li>- Comprehensive wastewater management: All household and industrial wastewater is treated safely.</li> <li>- Nationwide infrastructure coverage: Every region benefits from clean water supply and modern sewage systems.</li> <li>- Legal and regulatory progress: New laws introduced to regulate drinking water quality and sewage treatment.</li> <li>- Technological innovation: Establishment of Oman's first artificial rain (cloud-seeding) station to enhance groundwater recharge.</li> <li>- Environmental quality: Around 75% of water bodies originate from high-quality natural sources.</li> <li>- Integrated water resources management (IWRM): Implementation level reached 79% as of 2020.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Significant data gaps in water-related statistics hinder comprehensive and up-to-date monitoring of progress.</li> <li>- Long-term sustainability risks remain due to over-extraction and dependency on desalination.</li> <li>- Need to further strengthen water conservation culture and efficiency technologies to secure future resilience.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 7: Affordable Energy: Score: 4</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman recognises the strategic importance of transitioning to a sustainable energy sector for economic diversification, climate mitigation, and long-term national resilience. Energy policy is aligned with Vision 2040, prioritising renewable generation, energy efficiency, and decarbonisation to support sustainable development goals.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accelerating renewable energy deployment to meet the 30% target by 2030 and ensuring reliable energy transition financing.</li> <li>- Ongoing reliance on fossil fuels as many renewable projects are still under development.</li> <li>- Scaling up renewable infrastructure to meet the 2030 target requires continued investment, capacity building, and regulatory support.</li> <li>- Ensuring energy system resilience during the transition to intermittent renewable sources.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewable energy target: 30% of electricity generation planned from renewables by 2030.</li> <li>- Major investment in clean energy: Over USD 35 billion secured for solar, wind, and green hydrogen projects.</li> <li>- Rising contribution of clean energy to GDP and growth in renewable sector jobs.</li> <li>- Net-zero roadmap: Efficiency and security plan in place with a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.</li> <li>- Strategic programmes launched to expand solar, wind, and green hydrogen capacity across the country.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data gaps hinder comprehensive monitoring of energy production, efficiency, and emissions.</li> <li>- Need to accelerate full deployment of planned renewable projects to reduce dependency on oil and gas.</li> <li>- Ensuring integration of renewable energy into the grid while maintaining affordability and reliability.</li> </ul>

### SDG 8: Decent work and Growth: Score: 3

<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman views economic diversification and job creation as central to Vision 2040. Policies aim to reduce reliance on oil, strengthen the private sector, and create inclusive employment opportunities, particularly for youth and women. Legislative and institutional reforms support investment, skills development, and labour market flexibility to achieve sustainable growth and decent work for all.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Addressing youth unemployment, boosting private-sector job creation for nationals, and diversifying away from oil dependency.</li> <li>- Youth unemployment and underemployment remain high despite policy interventions.</li> <li>- The labour market is still adjusting to diversification and digital economy requirements.</li> <li>- Limited progress in ensuring full employment with decent pay across all sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress/Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic growth: Real GDP growth targeted at 5% annually; public debt declining and credit rating improved.</li> <li>- Inflation controlled: Annual inflation reduced from 2.8% in 2022 to 0.2% in April 2024.</li> <li>- Investment environment: Legislative and institutional frameworks encourage domestic and foreign investment in diversified sectors.</li> <li>- Private sector and workforce development: Initiatives underway to enhance women's participation, digital skills, and job opportunities for nationals.</li> </ul>
<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SDG 8 targets only 57.6% achieved, making it the weakest pillar relative to other goals.</li> <li>- Continued need for job creation, skills training, and private-sector absorption of Omani nationals.</li> <li>- Further reforms required to fully integrate women and youth into the workforce and achieve equitable, sustainable economic growth.</li> </ul>

### SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure: Score: 4

<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman prioritises industrial development, innovation, and infrastructure as key drivers of economic diversification and sustainable growth under Vision 2040. The government recognises that modern infrastructure, technological advancement, and an enabling business environment are critical to boosting productivity, attracting investment, and fostering innovation.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expanding innovation capacity, improving R&amp;D output, and fostering stronger private-academic partnerships to sustain industrial growth.</li> <li>- Global innovation ranking improvements remain a work in progress.</li> <li>- Need to further strengthen linkages between academia, research, and industry to accelerate knowledge-based growth.</li> <li>- Ensuring sustainable infrastructure development aligned with environmental and social standards.</li> </ul>



<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrastructure expansion: New ports, roads, and digital networks are being developed nationwide.</li> <li>- Special economic zones and investment incentives established to attract private and foreign investment.</li> <li>- National innovation plan implemented to enhance R&amp;D outputs and improve the business climate.</li> <li>- Sector growth: Logistics, food processing, and technology startups are expanding rapidly.</li> <li>- Improved access to finance for SMEs through new laws, funds, and support mechanisms.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some ambitious R&amp;D and innovation targets have not yet been fully realised.</li> <li>- Continued effort required to scale industrial clusters and enhance global competitiveness.</li> <li>- Ensuring long-term sustainability and inclusivity in industrial and technological development.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities: Score: 4</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman places social equity and inclusion at the core of its development strategy. Policies under Vision 2040 aim to reduce inequality through welfare programmes, regional development initiatives, and the promotion of equal rights. The government aligns its social protection and empowerment initiatives with international human rights conventions to ensure justice, equality, and social cohesion.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring balanced regional development and equal opportunities across all governorates, and further empowering marginalised communities.</li> <li>- Limited availability of detailed data on income and wealth distribution restricts comprehensive monitoring of inequalities.</li> <li>- Ensuring that regional and sectoral development continues to reach all vulnerable populations.</li> <li>- Maintaining the effectiveness of social protection programmes amid economic and demographic changes.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low overall inequality by international standards due to extensive welfare policies, universal subsidies, and free education and healthcare.</li> <li>- Balanced regional development through new funding formulas and local initiatives.</li> <li>- Social inclusion: Active measures support women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>- Legal and institutional frameworks implemented to follow international agreements such as the CRC, CEDAW, and CRPD.</li> <li>- Social protection programmes: Social Security Law No. (84/87) and initiatives like the Tamkeen Program provide financial and economic empowerment to needy households.</li> <li>- SDG 10 ranked among the highest-performing goals (over 90% of targets achieved).</li> </ul>

<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued need to enhance monitoring and reporting systems to capture all dimensions of inequality.</li> <li>- Ensuring that social protection and empowerment programmes fully adapt to emerging needs of marginalized groups.</li> <li>- Sustaining long-term equity in opportunities and access to resources, particularly for women, disabled persons, and low-income households.</li> </ul>
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### SDG 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities: Score:4

<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman recognises urban planning and sustainable development of cities as key drivers of quality of life, economic growth, and environmental stewardship. Vision 2040 emphasises smart, resilient, and inclusive urban development to ensure access to housing, infrastructure, and essential services for all citizens.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managing urban growth sustainably, improving transport systems, and enhancing housing affordability and disaster resilience.</li> <li>- Ensuring sustainable growth in rapidly urbanising areas.</li> <li>- Integrating climate resilience and energy efficiency into all new urban projects.</li> <li>- Maintaining affordable housing supply amid population growth and urban expansion.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress/Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full urban service coverage achieved across municipalities.</li> <li>- Smart city initiatives implemented, including metro planning, green building codes, and mass transit improvements.</li> <li>- Housing expansion for low-income groups under social housing laws.</li> <li>- Waste management and recycling programmes integrated into municipal planning.</li> <li>- Disaster preparedness measures included in city infrastructure planning.</li> <li>- High SDG dashboard score: over 90% of targets achieved, reflecting strong municipal and urban governance.</li> </ul>
<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuous monitoring is needed to maintain service quality and infrastructure efficiency.</li> <li>- Scaling smart city technologies nationwide remains an ongoing task.</li> <li>- Balancing urban development with environmental conservation in high-growth areas.</li> </ul>

### SDG 12: Responsible Consumption & Production: Score:3

<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman recognises sustainable consumption and production as essential for environmental protection and long-term resource efficiency. Policies under Vision 2040 aim to promote waste reduction, efficient resource use, and sustainable industrial and consumer practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scaling up recycling to meet the 80% diversion target, reducing industrial and food waste, and encouraging sustainable consumption patterns.</li> <li>- Rising production costs – approximately USD 47 per cubic metre – present financial and sustainability challenges.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waste reduction measures implemented, including a national target to divert 80% of municipal waste from landfills by 2030.</li> <li>- New standards introduced for chemicals, packaging, and industrial processes to promote sustainability.</li> <li>- Energy efficiency improvements are reducing energy consumption per unit of GDP.</li> <li>- Municipal recycling infrastructure expanding, supporting more sustainable waste management.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moderate realised effects on overall consumption and production patterns, with policies not yet fully reflected in measurable outcomes.</li> <li>- Continuous need to strengthen monitoring and reporting of resource efficiency indicators.</li> <li>- Ensuring long-term behavioural change among businesses and households to achieve SDG 12 targets.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 13: Climate Action: Score: 4</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman prioritises climate action as a central pillar of sustainable development and Vision 2040. The government integrates mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction across sectors, recognising that environmental stewardship underpins long-term economic and social resilience. Oman's policies are guided by a long-standing environmental governance framework and commitments to global climate agreements.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementing the national climate law, achieving net-zero by 2050, and strengthening adaptation to extreme heat and drought.</li> <li>- Maintaining progress on emission reductions while sustaining economic growth.</li> <li>- Strengthening adaptation measures to address climate variability, water scarcity, and extreme weather events.</li> <li>- Continuing to expand climate literacy and behavioural change across all sectors of society.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Net-zero by 2050 commitment established, with actionable strategies embedded in Vision 2040.</li> <li>- Climate governance: Climate Council and sectoral bodies coordinate mitigation and adaptation efforts.</li> <li>- Disaster risk reduction strategies implemented at national and local levels.</li> <li>- Historical environmental leadership: Ministry of Environment (1984) and Environmental Affairs Council (1979) established early in the region.</li> <li>- Biodiversity and resource management: National Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan developed to ensure sustainable use and equitable benefits.</li> <li>- Climate education: Environmental and sustainability principles are mainstreamed into school curricula, teacher training, and student assessments.</li> <li>- GHG emissions: Estimated 90 million tons CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent in 2021; ongoing measures aim to reduce emissions.</li> <li>- Disaster resilience: Mortality/missing rate due to disasters approximately 64.4 per 100,000 population in 2021.</li> </ul>

<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for enhanced climate data and monitoring to track progress accurately.</li> <li>- Long-term financing and implementation of large-scale mitigation projects remain ongoing.</li> <li>- Ensuring that all sectors achieve net-zero targets in line with Vision 2040 and international commitments.</li> </ul>
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### SDG 14: Life Below Water: Score: 3

<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman recognises the ecological and economic importance of its marine and coastal resources. Policies aim to protect biodiversity, ensure sustainable fisheries, and conserve critical marine ecosystems in line with Vision 2040 and international commitments, including the Ramsar Convention.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Combating marine pollution, overfishing, and preserving coastal and coral ecosystems amid rising sea temperatures.</li> <li>- Ensuring sustainable fishing practices across all coastal regions.</li> <li>- Expanding MPAs and enhancing biodiversity conservation to meet international benchmarks.</li> <li>- Monitoring and improving marine water quality to prevent pollution and degradation.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress/Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protected marine areas (MPAs): Coverage reached approximately 21% in 2023.</li> <li>- Marine conservation measures: Establishment of marine sanctuaries and fisheries regulations.</li> <li>- Legal and international frameworks: Accession to the Ramsar Treaty (2012) and national laws safeguarding coastal and wetland ecosystems.</li> <li>- Early efforts show a strong foundation for marine protection and sustainable resource management.</li> </ul>
<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data gaps hinder comprehensive assessment of marine ecosystem health.</li> <li>- Need for long-term enforcement and management of protected areas and fisheries.</li> <li>- Continuing efforts required to balance economic use of fisheries with ecological sustainability.</li> </ul>

### SDG 15: Life on Land: Score: 4

<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman places strong emphasis on terrestrial ecosystem conservation and biodiversity protection as key pillars of sustainable development under Vision 2040. Policies focus on preserving forests, deserts, mountains, wetlands, and wildlife habitats while integrating conservation into broader economic and social planning.</li> </ul>
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<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expanding protected areas to 100% of targets, combating desertification, and enforcing conservation laws effectively.</li> <li>- Maintaining and expanding protected areas to cover remaining unprotected critical habitats.</li> <li>- Ensuring long-term ecological monitoring to track species and habitat health.</li> <li>- Balancing land-use development with conservation goals, especially in rapidly developing regions.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress/Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protected areas: By 2022, 70% of targeted land and marine areas are designated as protected.</li> <li>- National biodiversity strategy and multiple conservation laws implemented.</li> <li>- Forest and wildlife programmes: Reforestation initiatives, protected wildlife corridors, and habitat restoration projects advanced.</li> <li>- Regulatory enforcement: Effective implementation of wetlands law and other environmental regulations, recognised internationally (e.g., UNESCO environmental awards).</li> <li>- On-track performance: Data and VNR analysis indicate Oman is meeting its land conservation and biodiversity targets.</li> </ul>
<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some ecosystem pressures from urbanisation, agriculture, and tourism remain ongoing risks.</li> <li>- Need to further strengthen community engagement and awareness in biodiversity conservation.</li> <li>- Continuous updating of data and reporting systems to ensure adaptive management of natural resources.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 16: Peace, Justice &amp; Institutions: Score:4</b>	
<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peace, stability, and strong institutions are central to Oman's national development and foreign policy. The country views peace as a foundational value for coexistence, economic growth, and social cohesion, aligning with Vision 2040 and the 2030 Agenda. Oman's efforts extend domestically through governance and justice systems, and internationally via diplomacy and conflict mediation.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing to improve transparency, digital governance, and citizen participation while maintaining strong institutional accountability.</li> <li>- Sustaining long-term institutional integrity amid evolving global and domestic challenges.</li> <li>- Ensuring continuous improvement in transparency, accountability, and social justice measures.</li> <li>- Maintaining capacity for proactive global peace mediation while addressing domestic priorities.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High SDG dashboard performance: Over 90% of targets achieved.</li> <li>- Peace and stability: Crime rates are low, and the country maintains long-standing social and political stability.</li> <li>- Governance and institutions: Strong justice frameworks, e-government initiatives, and transparency measures.</li> <li>- Global diplomacy: Active role in regional peace efforts (e.g., Yemen, Iranian nuclear agreement) and hostage-release facilitation.</li> <li>- Cultural initiatives: Global Tolerance Exhibition and Shared Human Values Initiative promote intercultural dialogue.</li> <li>- Anti-corruption and rule of law: Efforts to combat money laundering, terrorism financing, and human trafficking in coordination with international bodies.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Unsolved Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued need to strengthen mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on justice and institutional performance.</li> <li>- Balancing domestic governance reforms with international peace initiatives.</li> <li>- Ensuring full inclusion of marginalized groups in institutional decision-making.</li> </ul>
<b>SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals: Score: 4</b>	
<b><i>Justification</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oman considers strategic partnerships, domestic and international as essential for achieving sustainable development. Vision 2040 and the 2030 Agenda prioritise collaboration with governments, international organisations, the private sector, and civil society to mobilise resources, share knowledge, and ensure inclusive growth.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Challenges</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobilising sufficient financing for SDG projects, strengthening data systems for monitoring progress, and deepening international cooperation.</li> <li>- Continuously scaling partnerships to cover all sectors and regions, ensuring no stakeholder is left behind.</li> <li>- Maintaining strategic balance between domestic priorities and international commitments.</li> <li>- Ensuring that partnerships effectively translate into measurable SDG outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Progress/ Solutions</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International cooperation: Active engagement with the UN and regional economic fora; co-chairs various UN economic platforms.</li> <li>- Domestic partnerships: Use of public-private partnerships (PPP) to finance infrastructure and development projects, supported by a new PPP law.</li> <li>- Alignment with SDGs: National planning and policies are coordinated with UN frameworks to ensure SDG coherence.</li> <li>- Financial and logistical support: Oman consistently fulfils obligations to international organisations, reinforcing credibility and influence.</li> <li>- Global reputation: Long-standing diplomatic consistency and prudence have earned Oman respect and trust in international affairs.</li> </ul>

<b>Unsolved Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of PPP projects and international collaborations.</li> <li>- Strengthening data sharing and reporting mechanisms to track partnership contributions to each SDG.</li> <li>- Expanding engagement with civil society and local communities to complement government-led partnerships.</li> </ul>
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Source: Data Analysis is conducted by authors referring to the data source given on the link: [https://www.economy.gov.om/library/Voluntary\\_National\\_Report\\_2024spread\\_English\\_2.pdf](https://www.economy.gov.om/library/Voluntary_National_Report_2024spread_English_2.pdf)

## Major Challenges

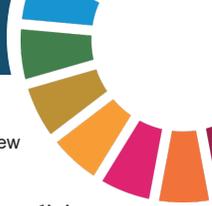
- **Economic diversification and fiscal sustainability:** Oman’s economy remains structurally tied to oil revenues. The VNR identifies diversification as a “national challenge,” requiring rapid implementation of non-oil strategies in upcoming five-year plans. While fiscal consolidation has stabilized public finances, sustaining growth will depend on deepening private-sector development and diversifying income sources.
- **Employment and skills gaps:** SDG 8 is the weakest-performing goal, with only 57.6% of targets achieved. Youth unemployment, underemployment, and the limited participation of nationals in private-sector jobs persist. Although Oman is expanding vocational training and entrepreneurship programs, aligning education outputs with market needs remains a key obstacle.
- **Environmental and climate vulnerabilities:** Oman faces acute water scarcity, arid conditions, and rising climate pressures on agriculture and coastal zones. The VNR highlights new laws and technologies (e.g. artificial rain, waste-diversion goals, renewable energy expansion) but acknowledges the difficulty of balancing economic growth with climate adaptation and emission reductions.
- **Geographic and social inclusion gaps:** Despite decentralization reforms, disparities between coastal urban areas and interior governorates continue to challenge equitable development. The VNR also shows progress in gender equality, but women’s representation in political and managerial leadership remains modest relative to other indicators.
- **Exposure to global shocks:** Oman remains vulnerable to external risks such as COVID-19, regional instability, and oil price fluctuations. These shocks have negatively affected development programs and fiscal balances. The VNR stresses the need for resilience measures, diversified income streams, and social protection to buffer against future crises.

## Key Lessons Learned

- **Strong Political Commitment Drives SDG Progress:** High-level political support, Vision 2040 alignment, and institutional coherence are critical for achieving SDGs.
- **Integration of SDGs into National Planning is Effective:** Linking Vision 2040 with the 2030 Agenda ensures strategic alignment across policies, legislation, and investment priorities. Embedding sustainability and “no one left behind” principles in decision-making strengthens inclusivity.
- **Social Investments yield Tangible Results:** Targeted investments in education, health, and social protection lead to measurable outcomes: high literacy, universal health coverage, reduced poverty, and near-zero child marriage.
- **Economic Diversification Requires Continuous Effort:** Transitioning from oil dependence to a diversified economy (logistics, tourism, manufacturing, renewable energy) is possible but needs sustained policy, private-sector engagement, and labour-market reforms.
- **Environmental Stewardship and Climate Action must be Integrated:** Oman demonstrates that renewable energy, water management, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation benefit from long-term planning and legal frameworks.
- **Data and Monitoring Systems:** Institutionalising open SDG data portals and conducting regular surveys improves tracking, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making.

## Notable Contribution

- Vision 2040 provides a clear, sustainability-driven roadmap focused on diversification, equality, and environmental stewardship.
- Second VNR (2024) shows strong national performance, with an SDG achievement index of 82.2% and 11 of 17 SDGs on track ( $\geq 75\%$  of targets achieved).
- Zero hunger achieved, supported by a robust food security strategy and nutrition initiatives.
- Education excellence: 100% of teachers are qualified, student–teacher ratio is low (12.6), and enrollment and literacy rates are among the highest globally (adult literacy 98%).
- Gender equality progress: Near elimination of child marriage ( $< 1.2\%$ ), 99% reproductive health coverage, and strong legislative frameworks promoting women’s rights.



- Sustained GDP growth, supported by fiscal reform and diversification policies; public debt reduced below 60% of GDP by 2024.
- Renewable energy leadership: Target of 30% renewable power by 2030; over US \$35 billion invested in green hydrogen and other clean technologies.
- Circular economy progress: National waste diversion target (80% by 2030) backed by 67 recycling plants operating nationwide.
- Universal water and sanitation access, supported by a new Water Law (2023) and innovative projects like rain enhancement stations.
- Climate leadership: National Committee on Climate Change (2023) and net-zero target by 2050; Oman recognised with multiple UN environmental awards.
- Biodiversity protection: 70% of targeted land and marine areas protected by 2022; Oman is a Ramsar Convention member (wetlands protection).
- Modern legal frameworks: Social Housing Law (expanded) and PPP Law (2022) encourage inclusivity and private-sector participation.

## Recommendations

- **Jobs & Skills:** Accelerate private-sector job creation through targeted incentives, apprenticeships, and vocational training aligned with Vision 2040 priority sectors.
- **Women's Leadership:** Introduce leadership targets or quotas where appropriate; enhance childcare availability and flexible work arrangements to increase women's workforce participation.
- **Labour Market Reform:** Further modernise employment laws to improve flexibility, fairness, and inclusivity.
- **Education & Skills Development:** Strengthen English proficiency, vocational training, and teacher development to improve global competitiveness.
- **Social Protection & Equity:** Expand regional and community-level support programmes, particularly for vulnerable groups, to ensure no one is left behind.
- **Water Security:** Strengthen groundwater protection, implement pricing and efficiency measures, scale water reuse, and pilot non-thermal desalination technologies.
- **Climate Adaptation & Finance:** Establish a national climate finance framework; prioritise heat-health initiatives, flood resilience, and coastal defences.
- **Energy Transition:** De-risk renewable energy and green hydrogen projects, invest in energy storage and grid flexibility, and publish transparent energy performance data.

- **Land & Biodiversity:** Continue to expand terrestrial protected areas, enforce conservation laws, and support community engagement in ecosystem stewardship.
- **Data Systems & Monitoring:** Institutionalise open SDG data portals with disaggregated indicators; conduct regular household and labour surveys to track progress.
- **Enhance SDG Data Integration and Performance Tracking:** Strengthen national statistical systems to systematically measure, monitor, and report progress across all 17 SDGs and 234 performance indicators. It is highly recommended to Oman to measure SDG performance on these indicators and show case evidence in facts and figures.

## CONCLUSION

Oman's 2024 VNR highlights strong progress on sustainable development, driven by high-level political commitment, integrated SDG planning, robust institutions, and impressive social and environmental outcomes. Eleven SDGs are on track, and the overall SDG index stands at 82.2%, reflecting successes in education, healthcare, poverty reduction, gender equality, and international cooperation. Challenges remain in labour-market development, economic diversification, and resource management, requiring continued vigilance and adaptive policies. Overall, Oman's trajectory is positive, with Vision 2040 providing a clear path to closing remaining gaps and achieving the 2030 SDG targets.

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