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### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL #7 AND #11 IN SAUDI ARABIA

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#### **ABSTRACT.**

This paper has reviewed the sustainable development goal number seven and number eleven in Saudi Arabia, and their alignment with vision 2030. The sustainable development goals were initiated to address the global challenges faced by the citizens of Saudi Arabia, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. In addition, the paper highlighted the actions taken by national entities to fulfil the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the progress that has been made in the SDG#7 and SDG#11, discussed the baseline tracking progress on the implementation of the two SDGs, identify some priorities and challenges, and list some infrastructure and planning or investment in the two SDGs. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has made significant progress towards the achievement of the SDGs seven and eleven. Likewise, key highlights in the paper have shown that Saudi Arabia's are fully focused and have determination in developing an extensive energy infrastructure and planning heavy investments.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Sustainability is a concept that is gaining traction in global and public development discussions [1]. The notion has found its way into a variety of expressions across a wide range of orders and settings [2]. Regardless of global advancement in a variety of fields, the present situation continues to face significant challenges to sustainable development and its turn of events. Sustainability advocates for an all-around shared regular vision of progress toward a society that is simplistic, secure, and environmentally sound for humankind [3]. Further than ecological security, the idea perceives the critical need to enhance living standard through methodologies that form financial development and address a huge spectrum of issues. While there is

widespread agreement that a more supportive society benefits everyone, opinions on what supportability entails and how it can be achieved vary [4]. Saudi Arabia has devised a plan for a more adjusted development and financial turn of events for their nation's development through the 2030 Vision and the 2020 National Transformation Program (NTP) [5]. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia have set the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in order to achieve its vision of being a developed nation. In addition, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are an aggressive arrangement of objectives coordinated at supplementing and supporting the accomplishment [6].

In this paper, the objective is to discuss the sustainable development goal number seven and number eleven in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all [7]. They address the global challenges faced by the citizens of Saudi Arabia, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The Goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that each Goal and target will be achieved by 2030 [8-10]. The complete list of the sustainable development goals is presented in the next section.

### ***Sustainable Development Goals***

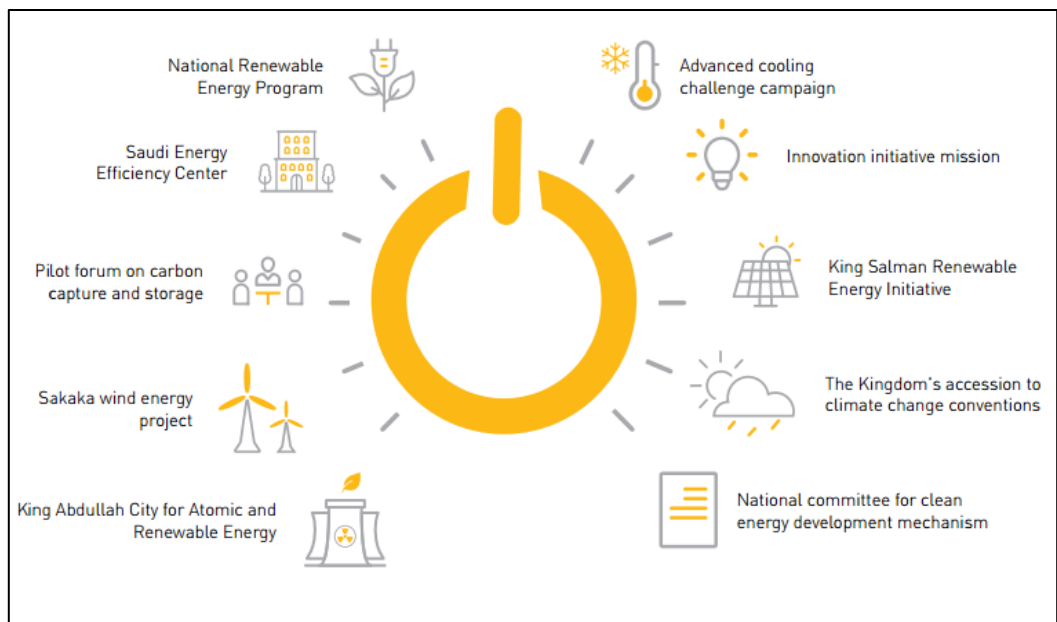
There are several sustainable development goals set by the government of Saudi Arabia [11]. The goals are: 1. No poverty: Economic growth must be inclusive to provide sustainable jobs and promote equality. 2. Zero hunger: The food and agriculture sector offer key solutions for development and is central to hunger and poverty eradication. 3. Good health and well-being: Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages is essential to sustainable development. 4. Quality education: Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. 5. Gender equality: Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. 6. Clean water and sanitation: Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. 7.

Affordable and clean energy: Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity. 8. Decent work and economic growth: Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs. 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure: Investments in infrastructure are crucial to achieving sustainable development. 10. Reduced inequalities: To reduce inequalities, policies should be universal in principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations. 11. Sustainable cities and communities: There needs to be a future in which cities provide opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more. 12. Responsible Production and Consumption. 13. Climate change: Climate change is a global challenge that affects everyone, everywhere. 14. Life below water: Careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future. 15. Life on land: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss. 16. Peace, justice and strong

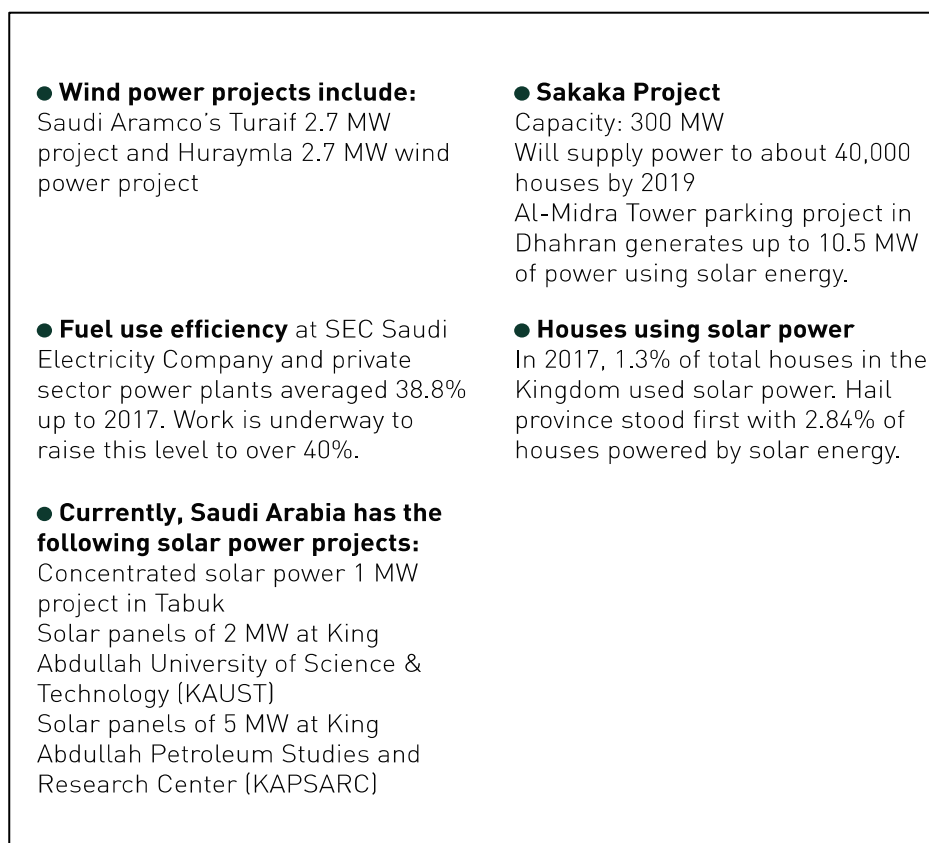
institutions: Access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels. 17. Partnership for the goals: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

***Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG#7)***

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. According to 2030 vision, Saudi Arabia aims to add (9.5) GW of renewable energy to local production by the year (1445H - 2023) as a first stage, 23.9 MW was produced during 2017. These are some of the programs and projects were made to reach the goals and the details of the projects is shown in Figure 1. In addition, with the companies’ hard work and the governmental tracking, the nation was able to achieve the progress shown in Figure 2.



**Figure . Program and Projects for SDG 7**

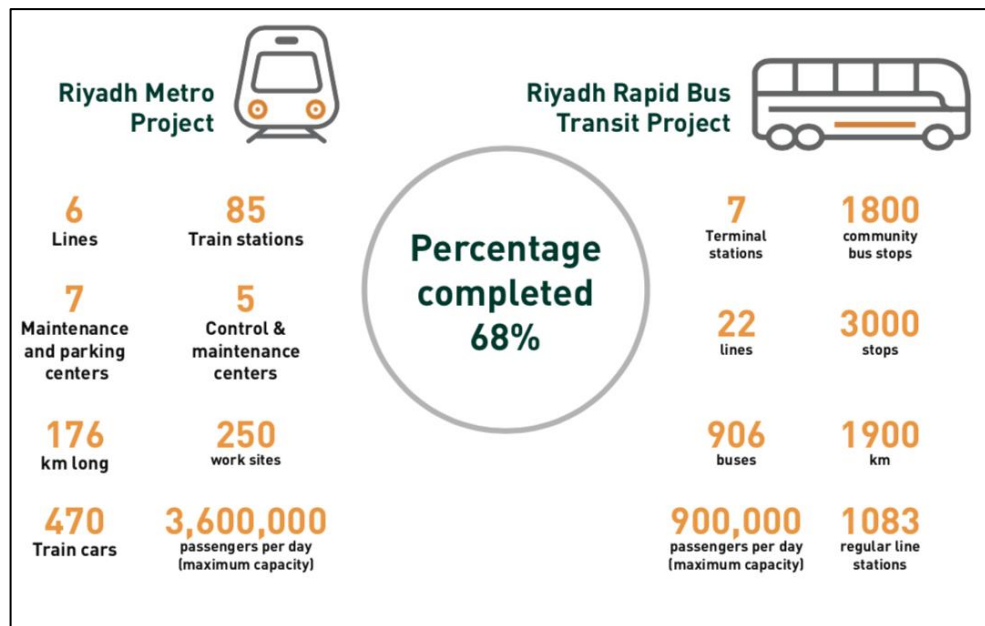


**Figure 2.**Progress shown for SDG 7

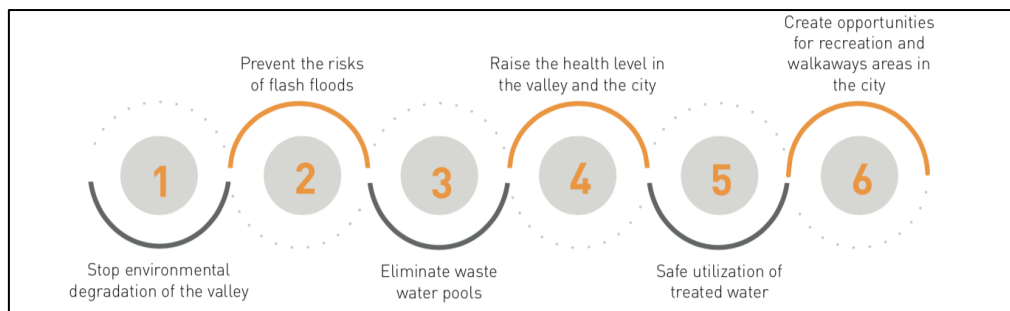
### ***Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG#11)***

This goal is about making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, which is relevant to the 2030 vision. To reach the goal, few programs were set. The programs are: Future Saudi Cities Program: The program seeks to promote sustainable urbanization in response to urban challenges that have emerged due to rapid growth and to support the country's urban strategy with the aim of attaining balanced development. In terms of objectives and output, Saudi Arabia's Future Cities Program is closely tied to Vision 2030 and to MOMRA's municipal transition program. International Cooperation: In order to achieve sustainable development in Saudi cities in the future, in line with the recommendations of the World Urban Forum, organized in cooperation with UN-Habitat, a detailed comprehensive study needs to be conducted on how Saudi cities can be prepared to ensure equitable distribution of development gains. The study should also address the challenges faced by cities in the course of attaining a developed and mature economy, along with a green ecosystem.

The program's key objective is to develop cities that are prosperous, productive, fair, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable, with sufficient and adequate infrastructure and high-Level of life quality. The other programs introduced under this goal were Riyadh Metro Project & Riyadh Bus Project, as shown in Figure 3 and Wadi Hanifah project outcomes, shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 3.**Riyadh Metro Project & Riyadh Bus Project



**Figure 4.**Riyadh Metro Project & Riyadh Bus Project

***Baseline for Tracking Progress***

Performance Measurement in the Public Sector: Evidence-based policy making is key to the achievement of the SDGs. Saudi Arabia is fully committed to strengthening the capacity of its public institutions to measuring results and tracking progress in the achievement of development goals. One example of this commitment is the establishment of the National Center for Performance Measurement (Aadaa), a government body responsible for measuring the performance of public organizations towards the achievement of Vision 2030 objectives. The Saudi Energy Efficiency Center (SEEC) is responsible for coordinating the efforts of government and non- government agencies in this regard. Active for over six years now, SEEC has developed a national program to conserve and raise energy efficiency. The program, entitled the Saudi Energy Efficiency Program, is designed to increase efficiency in three main sectors that together account for over 90% of national energy consumption: buildings, industry and land transportation.

### *Priorities*

The SDGs amplify key priorities of the national development agenda in the three dimensions of social, economic and environmental sustainability. Further work will be undertaken to ensure that sectoral and thematic policies and programs at the national and sub-national levels are further aligned with the SDGs.

### *Challenges*

There are major challenges that stand in the way to the achievement of The SDGs [12]. They are related to the availability of data and the capacity of statistical bodies to collect and disseminate SDG-related statistics, achieving more effective coordination among government and non-government institutions to ensure synergies rather than duplication of efforts, building on existing institutional frameworks rather than creating new structures and promoting the SDGs at the sub-national level. The challenges faced are:

1. Promoting the SDGs at the Sub-National Level: Promotion of the SDGs at the sub-national level implies adapting the SDGs, targets and indicators to local circumstances and integrating them into the planning and implementation of public policy at the sub-national level. The SDG framework has the potential to help local governments improve their planning and link their performance more firmly to evidence and results, through accelerating capacity building for local government structures.

2. Coordination of Multiple Actors and Sectors: Given the comprehensiveness of The SDGs, multiple stakeholders from the public, private and non-profit sectors play a vital role in turning the SDGs into practical tools for explaining sustainable development, managing implementation, ensuring accountability and reporting on progress. Therefore, it is important that all these actors are truly on board in a comprehensive approach and ensuring that sustainable development is not just a matter for specialized sustainable development designated focal points, but rather a whole-of- government affair. This underscores the need for strong coordination among government and non-government institutions to ensure synergies rather than duplication of efforts. Achieving effective coordination between all these actors is not easy. Efforts and resources are therefore needed to strengthen existing mechanisms of coordination and adapting them to the requirements of the SDGs.

3. Data Availability and Statistical Capacity: The adaptation and monitoring of the SDGs requires data and statistics that are accurate, timely, sufficiently disaggregated, relevant, accessible and easy to use. Although data availability and quality have steadily improved over the years, the analysis of the alignment of Vision 2030 with the SDGs revealed that in certain areas data are unavailable. Filling these gaps and ensuring that key measures are included in the official indicators will require improved methodologies and data collection systems. One of the key priorities identified in this review is the need to invest in strengthening data collection systems and the capacity of statistical bodies.

This will also require better coordination between data producers and users and innovative ways of producing and applying data and statistics.

4. **Building on Existing Institutional Frameworks:** With work underway to strengthen the implementation of the sustainable development agenda, it is important to avoid creating overlapping mechanisms through the establishment of new institutions where existing ones can play that role. This can be challenging because building upon existing institutional frameworks requires a better understanding of the SDGs by government officials and developing their capacity to deal with them. The establishment of the Vision 2030 infrastructure provides a great opportunity for further embedding the SDGs into the existing governance system, especially the planning and financing frameworks.

### ***Infrastructure & Planning/Investment***

The government has earmarked significant budgetary resources for investments in human resource development, including sectors such as healthcare, education, training and etc. The government has allocated more than a billion dollars for the construction of the King Abdullah City for Atomic and Renewable Energy through which it aims to generate 3.4 GW of renewable energy by 2020. It has also launched the Solar Power Project Plan 2030 which aims to generate 200 gigawatts by 2030 from various solar farms all over the country. In addition, a pipeline of large-scale infrastructure projects worth hundreds of billions of dollars have been announced, including the expansion of the national rail network, new metro lines and bus routes in Riyadh, Jeddah, Makkah and Medina, wastewater and desalination plants and etc.

### **CONCLUSION**

As this paper has demonstrated, Saudi Arabia has made significant progress towards the achievement of the SDGs seven and eleven. Key highlights in the report are Saudi Arabia's determination to developing an extensive energy infrastructure and planning heavy investments in renewable energy, and drawing roadmaps for a better infrastructure for roads, railways, airports, ports, water and sewage systems.

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