

## Amman City, Jordan



**HE Eng. Ahmad Malkawi**

**City Manager of Amman**

Eng. Ahmad Malkawi joined the Municipality of Amman staff in 1994 to serve as a civil engineer.

Since that time, Ahmad helped in directing different departments in the municipality, which encompasses all functions related to road construction, implementation and maintenance, emergency centers, environmental services, solid waste Management projects, parks, and the transportation project “BRT”. As well as the infrastructure projects financed by AFD, EBRD, WB, DFD, etc.

He was appointed to the position of Deputy City Manager for Public work in 2013, and then he promoted to the position of City Manager of Amman in March 2019, focusing on strategic planning, capital improvements, process and decision transparency, community engagement and departmental accountability.

He is the Chairman of the Supreme Committee for Strategic Planning and Performance Management and Chairman of the Awards and Institutional Excellence Committee.

### **AMMAN**

Amman is one of the Middle East’s thriving metropolises. It is the political, cultural, and commercial centre of Jordan and a successful regional economic powerhouse. Amman is home to more than 4 million residents, more than 42% of Jordan’s total population. Amman has grown to be a regional hub in the Middle East, providing a strong example of tolerance, progress, and peacefulness.

The city of Amman and other Jordanian cities are facing major challenges that hinder their development and growth. These challenges are compounded by the instability in the region. Water scarcity, high population growth rate and migration, economic and unemployment, climate change, inadequate infrastructure and public transportation, rising traffic congestion, and other environmental, social and cultural challenges.

Amman is characterized by its great urban expansion due to the influx of migrancy and refugee which has placed a huge strain on the city’s resources and infrastructure, including water, education, unemployment, transportation, housing, and medical services.

This has contributed to an 83% increase in public debt, a 30% increase in youth unemployment, a 40% increase in demand for water, and a 17% increase in rental costs<sup>1</sup>.

Despite these challenges, in Amman we are proud of our diverse identity, which we see as a strength. Diversity and tolerance are vital to our past, our present, and our future and Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), has managed to address many of these challenges and has increased its services provision. Thus, following the traditional ways of working will not produce the desired results and will not achieve our vision. Therefore, it was essential for us to think of innovative ways to break away from the daily work and to move towards long term evidence-based planning of the city's future, to enable us to move from a reactive approach to proactive approach in the implementation of plans and initiatives according to the best international practices.

As Amman grows it will need to balance the demands of growth, equity and environmental protection. Moving toward sustainable development can help achieve this balance, especially if all entities work together in solidarity. Good governance and collaboration are the basis for sustainable urban development and a best practice that is adopted clearly in all of Greater Amman Municipality processes, goals and plans.

Amman, under the guidance of His Majesty King Abdullah II, has joined other global cities around the world that are working to localize and streamline the SDGs into their strategies and plans. Amman has been working towards this end for over a decade, aligning all its projects and programmes with the SDGs to ensure that the local agenda is properly interlinked with the national agenda of Jordan, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Greater Amman Municipality is constantly striving to improve its performance and raise the level of its services by linking its strategic plans with the national goals, the UN SDG's, and the New Urban Agenda. Amman's commitment is evident through the provision of its comprehensive plans and strategies such as Amman Resilience Strategy, Amman Climate Change Plan, the Green City Action Plan, and the smart city road map. All these ambitious plans were taken into consideration within Amman strategic plan (2022-2026), that includes 4 priorities, the quality of life and the environment, transportation and infrastructure, investment, and finally the legislation, with focus on public transport, climate change, environmental diversity, waste management and urban planning, and the promotion of the role of community with participatory approach.

The Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) has been transitioning towards climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. It has developed a comprehensive Climate Action Plan and climate change measures to reduce exposure to environmental hazards and

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<sup>1</sup> Amman Resilience Strategy 2017

reduce GHG emissions. These strategies have the objective to achieve a resilient city and promote sustainability in the city.

The Municipality is currently working on major strategic projects facing the effects of climate change, including smart city applications and electronic transformation, as we have completed the automation of services as the first national institution to provide all its services electronically, renewable energy, improving the public transport system and implementing infrastructure projects for BRT that would provide an efficient and fast system. The public transport fleet in the capital to be environmentally friendly, high-specification and low-carbon, through buses running on electricity and diesel € 5.

As the national and regional centre for international cooperation, the city of Amman is crucial to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Jordan and the Arab region as a whole. In this context, the lack of urban data collection tools is one of the challenges of advancing its sustainable urban development. Addressing this challenge, UN-Habitat, ESCWA, and the United Cities and Local Governments - Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), in close cooperation with the Greater Amman Municipality, led the development of the first Voluntary Local Review (VLR) in the Arab region.

This VLR does not solely discuss the city's actions and performance against the selected SDG targets based on available data, but also analyses the consequent implications on policy and practice in order to improve Amman's performance against SDG 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 17. Its mechanism has become an essential tool for cities around the world in reporting and tracking SDGs progress. This review includes key messages to guide the sustainable urbanization of Amman in the coming years and emphasizes the long-standing commitment of the Greater Amman Municipality and the United Nations to continuously work together towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, while leaving no one and no place behind.

All of these efforts undertaken by GAM aim to achieve sustainability for the city of Amman, and to contribute to national efforts and to face the effects of climate change, as well as to contribute to the efforts made the international community to achieve the United Nations sustainable development goals, and will eventually and hopefully enable Amman to adapt, grow and respond effectively and efficiently in response to the city's changing needs and growth while ensuring high quality of life for our citizens.<sup>i</sup>

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