

Analysis of the Work Plan Book:

**“The Socio-Economic Development
Plan for Negev Bedouin: 2017-2021
(Government Resolution 2397)”**

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The study was commissioned by the Department for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bedouin Society in the Negev at the Ministry of Economy and Industry and funded with its assistance.

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Jerusalem | April 2021

Abstract

Background

In February 2017, Israel's cabinet approved Government Resolution 2397 on a five-year socio-economic development plan for the Bedouin population in the Negev for the years 2017 to 2021. The resolution aims to close gaps between the Negev Bedouin population and the general Israeli population and is focused on four core areas: (1) education and social and communal services; (2) economy and employment; (3) infrastructure development; (4) strengthening the local authorities. Twelve government ministries are partners to the resolution and its implementation. The Ministry of Finance played a horizontal role while all other participating ministries submitted work plans. The Department for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bedouin Society in the Negev, currently at the Ministry of Economy and Industry (hereinafter: the Department), which is in charge of implementing Resolution 2397, asked each of the relevant government ministries to present a detailed work plan, including indicators and objectives for the implementation of the plan. In January 2018, the Department issued a book comprising the proposed work plans, which serves as a unique tool for long-term inter-ministerial planning. It also serves as a basis for monitoring the implementation of Government Resolution 2397.

In January 2020, the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute was asked by the Department to examine ways for improving the upcoming five-year development plan for the Negev Bedouin for the years 2022 to 2026. This report is an account of the second part of the examination conducted – an analysis of the work plan book (hereinafter: the Book). The first part of the examination presented a review of the best practices and principles of operation for formulating work plans in the public sector. The third part will present insights gained through interviews with representatives of the government ministries involved in the implementation of Government Resolution 2397.

The Goal of the Book Analysis

The goal of this analysis is to examine to what extent the Book meets the acceptable criteria of structure and content for work plans and serves its purpose as a tool for planning, following up, and monitoring the implementation of the government resolution. The analysis is intended to contribute to the groundwork in preparation for the next five-year plan for the years 2022–2026.

Method

The analysis of the Book's structure and content was conducted from October 2020 to January 2021 and done on two levels. Initially, on the first level, each of the work plans submitted by the partners to the resolution was analyzed. The quality of each work plan was examined in light of the specified key elements deemed essential for such plans: a description of the current situation; goals and objectives; tasks; output indicators; outcome indicators; and budget. Subsequently, on the second level, the Book was analyzed as a whole and the extent to which it served its purpose as a supporting tool in the implementation of Government Resolution 2397 was examined. The analysis on both levels was based on the commonly accepted standards for plans of the type under discussion, as emerging from the comparative international review presented in the first part of the examination¹, as well as on the guidelines delivered by the Department to the partners. The goals and objectives of the work plans outlined in the Book, as emerging from communication with the Department staff, held mainly in April 2020, were also taken into account in the analysis.

The work plans were analyzed by two researchers. To test inter-researcher reliability, one of the researchers was labeled a primary encoder and the other, a secondary encoder. Inter-researcher reliability ranged between 80% and 100% agreement. In cases of disagreement, the primary encoder settled the disputed point following reexamination.

Findings, Conclusions, and Directions for Action

The analysis findings are presented below, classified according to the levels of analysis of the Book's structure and content.

It emerges from the quality analysis of the work plans that there is **a variance between the work plans in terms of the constituting elements and the presentation accuracy of each element**. For the most part, the plans comply with the following standards: 68% of the plans describe the current situation and the needs the plan is intended to meet; 88% of the plans specify goals or objectives set by the relevant ministry in line with the objectives of Government Resolution 2397; 72% of the plans define output indicators, and in most cases (83%), the indicators are properly defined. However, other standards are met by a lower percentage of the plans: 64% alone of the plans include a detailed budget; only 56% of the plans define the indicators as required; and finally, the tasks element is missing in all plans.

¹ Lento, T., Dolev, H. & Levi-Zohar, A. (2021). *Work plans: A tool for implementing government resolutions – An international review*. RR 855-21. The Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute.

The analysis of the Book examining its suitability to purpose, namely, the extent to which it serves as a supporting tool in the implementation of Government Resolution 2397, shows that given the five-year range of the plans and the specified indicators therein, to which the partners are committed, the structure of **the Book supports the monitoring of the government resolution implementation and the long-term partners' commitment** for the five-year period. It further emerges from the analysis that thanks to the Book's structure, which is organized around four core areas, and the common language developed by the Department, **the Book contributes toward achieving the objective of promoting collaboration** between the partners to the resolution. At the same time, the structure of **the Book falls short of supporting the objectives of transparency, accountability, and strengthening trust in the government among the Negev Bedouin**. Notwithstanding the attempt to make the Book accessible to the reader, inter alia, by publishing the Book in both Hebrew and Arabic, it was found that **the Book is inaccessible to the reader and, moreover, incomplete** (with some of plans presented still not finalized while other plans, yet to be formulated, are missing).

In view of the analysis findings, some directions for action are suggested in conclusion in anticipation of the upcoming five-year plan and the drafting of the accompanying work plan book, as detailed below.

1. Defining clear-cut standards regarding the optimal structure of work plans and their constituting elements.
2. Distributing guidelines through joint training; in addition, assisting the partners and providing individual professional support as needed, offering advisory and quality control services to ensure the submission of optimal work plans.
3. Encouraging the ongoing use of a work plan book covering a five-year period in support of long-term implementation by the partners and at the same time, considering the option of using a digital platform, which enables work plan flexibility and annual updating.
4. Structuring work plans around core areas, promoting collaboration between the relevant partners in each area, and highlighting such collaborative endeavors in the book while encouraging mutual discourse and shared learning as well as lesson-learning from partners' successes with the aim of furthering cooperation.
5. Publishing a work plan book and expanding its circulation so as to enhance governmental transparency. Publishing the work plan book in both Hebrew and Arabic and ensuring its accessibility to a wide target audience.