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Social and economic benefits, supporting sustainable development, measures taken and proposed for the implementation of resolutions and evaluation of the work of the Group of Experts (Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation)

Street's naming as effort to narrowing gaps between local authorities in the State of Israel

Submitted by Israel **

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This article reviews the treatment of streets naming in the state of Israel, in aspects of: processes related to local and central government interfaces, the legal infrastructure and the implementation on site and into the central government computer systems. The thread which runs through all aspects above is the importance of streets naming to the welfare of the population of Israel in general and to the efforts of narrowing the gaps between the various local authorities in Israel.

In September 2015, the UN general assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Aiming that countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. The effort of streets naming, particularly in disadvantaged municipalities relate to a significant number of the 2030 Agenda sustainable development goals: 1 – No poverty; 3 – Good health and well-being; 8 – Decent work and economic growth; 10 – Reduced inequalities, and 11 – Sustainable cities and communities.

In light of the SDG's adoption by the UN, the Government of Israel has made significant decisions aiming to deal with the challenges of the most disadvantaged population groups and local authorities in Israel. Among these are resolutions 922 and 959, which allocate budgets of 15 billion new Israeli shekel (4.2 billion USD) and 1.8 billion new Israeli shekel (0.5 billion USD) respectively, for the economic development of minority populations in Israel and for empowering the local authorities of minorities in Israel. One of the action items in both of those resolutions is the treatment of streets naming and house numbering in the local authorities of minorities, since it became clear that many of those disadvantaged municipalities suffer from a lack of streets names.

The absence of recognized, computerized and formal streets names creates many obstacles for the population living in these municipalities in aspects of directing emergency medical and rescue forces in urgent cases, as well as in more trivial aspects such as mail, goods and services delivery which are required for a healthy development of the population. Regarding the economic aspect, there are thousands of small businesses in Israel which are unable to break through the boundaries of small settlements, into the mass market of Israel, and vice versa.

The legal infrastructure of the processes of setting streets, roads and urban geographical names is set by section 235 of the Municipalities Ordinance of Israel and, by the Municipal Regulations (Giving Numbers and Names to Streets and Marking Houses by Numbers) – 1971. The two guiding principles of the legal infrastructure are, on the one hand – preserving the autonomy of the municipal government; and on the other hand – exercising the regulatory powers of the Minister of the Interior of Israel, in order to ensure that Municipal Authorities implement their obligation, and that there will be no harm to the public's order and the public's feelings, caused by the action of naming and numbering or, by the lack of it. The methodology of streets naming in Israel, given the infrastructure mentioned above, is a significant part of the relations between the central and the local governments and it is used as a tool, as described here, aiming to narrowing the gaps between the various local authorities in Israel.

The Author is the chairman of a Designated Advisory Committee for street naming operates under the Minister of the Interior of Israel.