Jordan Journal of Nursing Research, Volume **2**, No. **2**, **2023**
DOI: https://doi.org/10.14525/JJNR.v2i2.01

Jordan Journal of Nursing Research

Journal homepage: https://jjnr.just.edu.jo/jjnr/

EDITORIAL

The Economic Modernisation Vision: Why Do Nursing Matter?

Rowaida AlMaaitah, RN, MPH, DrPH [1]

1 *Advisor for HRH Princess Muna Al-Hussein for Health and Community Development, President of the Board of Trustees at Yarmouk University Prof. at Faculty of Nursing/ JUST. Email: maaitah@just.edu.jo*

The 21st century has seen extraordinary progress coupled with very complex challenges. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other major global crises on people's health, economic and social well-being, as well as environmental challenges continue to be major threats to health and human security, as well as to sustainable development. With such challenges, post-2015 development agendas cannot tolerate any further delays in actions and solutions.

According to national and international health care organizations, Jordan's health care system enjoys a good reputation, has a strong health care infrastructure that attracts health tourists from all over the region; pioneers medical education and is doing well on several indicators, including mortality, fertility, access to primary health care, physician availability, vaccinations, among others.

However, the health care sector as a whole has faced significant challenges recently, which include the political burdens in the region, disparity in health care quality between public and private sectors, limited digital transformation, overburdened medical education sector, the tendency to focus on treatment rather than on preventative health care, dispersed insurance and coverage system, as well as lack of measurement of health outcomes and budgetary restrictions.

Like many countries worldwide, restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic have also particularly impacted the Jordanian economy, hampering movement and business operations. To enhance the economy and ensure better quality of life, His Majesty King Abdullah II called for a comprehensive national economic development for the country on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday last January 2022. His Majesty said: “Devise a comprehensive vision and a roadmap for the coming years that guarantees unleashing Jordan’s potential to achieve sustainable, comprehensive growth that doubles job opportunities, expands the middle class and improves living conditions to ensure a better quality of life for citizens”. His Majesty added: “We must also do everything possible to advance the medical sector and reclaim Jordan’s position as a prime medical tourism destination in the region.” (Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, (January 30, 2022)).

June 2022 marked the official launch of the vision of economic modernisation under the patronage of HM. With a slogan like "A Better Future", Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision is centered on two strategic pillars: accelerated economic growth by unlocking Jordan's full potential and a better quality of life for all citizens, while sustainability plays a central role in the future (The Royal Court, 2022).

The vision constitutes a national roadmap across government and will be implemented in three phases over ten years, with 366 initiatives in a variety of sectors. By maximizing Jordan's potential, it is able to achieve comprehensive and sustainable growth and create new jobs.

The Economic Modernisation Vision identifies five growth drivers based on their interdependency. These

include high-value industries, future services, destination Jordan, smart Jordan and sustainable resources.

The health care sector falls under the 'future services" growth driver. The following ten priority initiatives are included in the health care sector in Box 1.

Box 1. Priority initiatives of the health care sector

1. Define and adopt national health care quality measurement, data monitoring and bench marks.
2. Launch a framework for sector's governance reform and financing schemes.
3. Deploy and achieve Universal Health Coverage and health security specifically streamlining coverage funds.
4. Improve primary care family health model.
5. Develop best-in-class fit-for-purpose competent health workforce and set actionable and implementable goals.
6. Design and deploy health/medical tourism development program.
7. Launch health care system financing programme addressing efficiency and effectiveness scenarios.
8. Launch digital transformation of the health care system, beyond electronic medical records, including setting up a national Health Information System and improving access through technology.
9. Launch integrated health manufacturing scheme and support local manufacturing.
10. Develop sub-segment plans, cascaded from national sector strategy and developed alongside concerned line ministries, to focus on the development of key sector components.

Why does economic reform matter to nursing?

On an international scale, the COVID-19 pandemic has raised the public health's profile and highlighted the links between public health and other policy areas, such as social, environmental and economic factors that impact health and daily-life conditions. Furthermore, the global commitment to the sustainable-development goals and the notion of well-being economy governments pushed for addressing the social determinants of health (SDoH) and for more-integrated policymaking focusing on people's well-being (Green et al., 2021).

Taking action to address the social determinants of health (SDoH) is part of the health professionals' role, which has the potential to influence prevention, treatment and trajectory of illness (World Health Organization, 2019). According to WHO, the social determinants of health (SDoH) are defined as "the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live and age, as well as the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies and political systems." (World Health Organization, 2018).

Globally, the Health in All Policies (HiAP) provides a powerful mechanism which is becoming increasingly popular in achieving the SDGs and addressing SDoH (Green et al., 2021). The WHO defined the HiAP as "an approach to public policies across sectors that systematically takes into account the health and health system implications of decisions, seeks synergies and avoids harmful health impacts, in order to improve population health and health equity" (World Health Organization, 2013).

The role of nurses as leaders in influencing and guiding policy is becoming increasingly important, as more nurses are being experts in health-related issues and understand the importance of HiAP and SDoH impacts on health and well-being of people. Therefore, as the largest and most trusted group of health care professionals in the world, nurses do not only play a vital role in our health care system and society well-being, but also make the nursing profession a crucial part of the economy and key in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Fields et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic gave us the proof that low investments in health systems and particularly in the health workforce are including nursing workforce are detrimental to any economy as well as to global and health security. The World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and

Midwifery (SDNM) (2021-2025) identified 4 policy areas for proper investment in nursing and midwifery which include education, jobs, leadership and service delivery to optimize the contribution and impact of the nursing profession (World Health Organization, 2021).

Similarly, The International Nurses Day (IND) 2022 report with its theme on Nurses: A Voice to Lead-invests in nursing and respects rights to secure global health and was aligned with the (SDNM) 2021-2025 (International Council of Nurses, 2022). The 2022 IND reported that social investment has been demonstrated to be effective in the health system and health workforce; however, the number of studies that analyze the benefits/return on investment for nurses and midwives remain relatively small (Ref. ICN for International Nurses Day (IND), 2022). This is a call for nurse researchers to start conducting studies that highlight the positive return on investment for nursing interventions and contributions to health care services. The 2022 IND compiled evidence from the WHO and other studies regarding the benefits and return on investment from investing the 4 policy areas of SDNM, as shown in Box 2.

Box 2. Evidence on benefits and return on investment from investing in nursing education, jobs, leadership and service delivery

1. In addition to improved health outcomes for patients, significant reductions in mortality have been observed and a postgraduate education is associated with a higher rate of retention among nurses.
2. The benefits in investing in nursing jobs is estimated at 9 to 1 return on investment in health as well as improved public attraction to and retention of nurses as a result of increased nurse satisfaction and morale.
3. **Involving nurses in leadership positions increases quality and safety, leading to better outcomes for patients and a reduction in costs.**
4. Investing in nursing service delivery leads to improving access to highly qualified health care professionals and health care, providing cost-effective and efficient health services and utilizing nurses' skills and qualifications to their full potential through investing in nursing service delivery, in addition to **greater use of innovative delivery models for health services.**

Despite the fact that more evidence should be created by nurses in the area of return on investment (ROI), it is evident that there is a return on investment from investing in the nursing profession. It is only when we have an active critical mass of policy-competent nurses with high visibility and influence in policy and political platforms, policy makers will admit and realize that the return on investment in nursing is high in terms of enhancing the well-being of our societies as well as boosting economic growth. This definitely requires an optimal investment in nursing leadership and the role of nurses in influencing health and health-related policies to bring about the desired change towards a better healthy population.

Leaders of the nursing profession and nurses around the world need also to efficiently engage in national health as well as education and economy policy dialogues to enable them to collaborate with other professions and policy makers to lead change and influence health policy to achieve the SDGs and enhance economic growth and health security.

Since the nursing role must evolve as health care and further challenges evolve, a radical re-vamp of the nursing education, practice, research, leadership and advanced nursing practice needs to be convened to prepare nurses to meet the future challenges of health systems and to contribute to enhancing the well-being of our societies, as well as enhancing our economy. Nursing leaders and nurses will have also to stay on top of new trends and developments, as well as taking advantage of new technologies in health care, to ensure that the nursing profession remains at the forefront of the health system.

Let us strive together on achieving the Economic Modernisation Vision by continuing building and investing in a stronger and resilient nursing profession to strengthen the health care sector as well as enhance economic growth and nation building.

REFERENCES

Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein (January 30, 2022). https://www.kingabdullah.jo/en/letters/letter-jordanians-60th-birthday

Fields, L., Perkiss, S., Dean, B.A., & Moroney, T. (2021). Nursing and the sustainable development goals: A scoping review. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, *53* (5), 568-577. https://doi.org/10.1111/jnu.12675.

Green, L., Ashton, K., Bellis, M.A., Clemens, T., & Douglas, M. (2021). Health in all policies: A key driver for health and well-being in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health. 18* (18), 9468. doi:10.3390/ijerph18189468. PMID: 34574390; PMCID: PMC8468680. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8468680/

International Council of Nurses. (2022). *Nurses: A voice to lead-invest in nursing and respect rights to secure global health*. Geneva, Switzerland.

The Royal Court. (2022). *Economic modernisation vision: Unleashing potential to build the future*. Amman, Jordan.

World Health Organization. (2013). *Health in all policies: Seizing opportunities, implementing policies*. http://213.219.61.110/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=5416E4680AD46606C1257B730038FAC1&parentdoctype=book&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/5416E4680AD46606C1257B730038FAC1/$file/HiAP%20web%20version%20-%20FINAL.pdf

World Health Organization. (2018). *Health in all policies as part of the primary health care agenda on multi-sectoral action*. https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_1

World Health Organization. (2019). *Adelaide statement II (2017) on health in all policies*. Government of South Australia. https://www.file:///C:/Users/PROO% 20400/Downloads/WHO-CED-PHE-SDH-19.1-eng.pdf

World Health Organization. (2021). *Global strategic directions for nursing and midwifery (SDNM) (2021-2025)*. https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/344562. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.