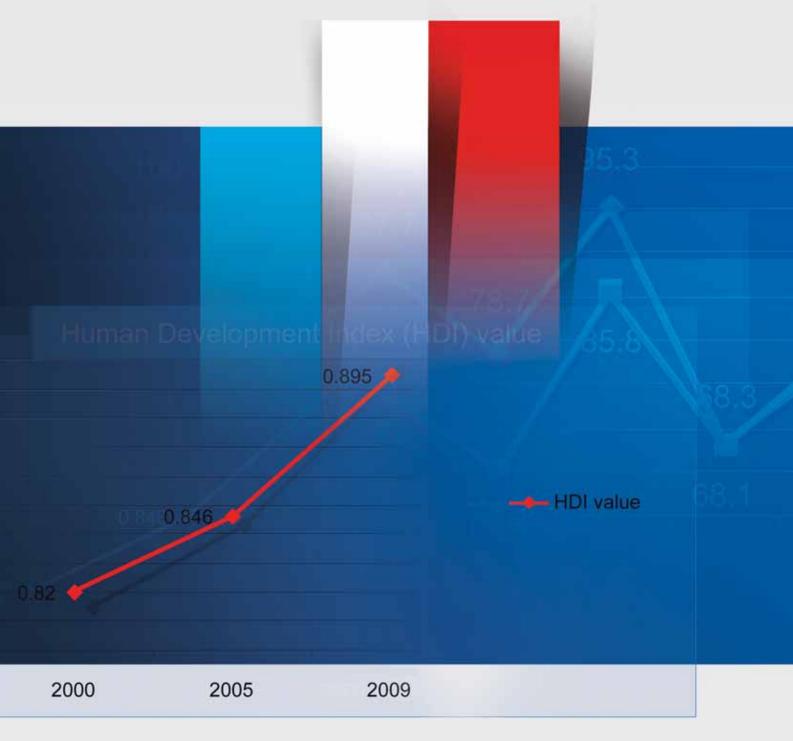




## Human Development Achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain A Ten-year Review



Compiled by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in the Kingdom of Bahrain February 2010

Human Development Achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain A Ten-year Review

Team for the preparation of

Human Development Achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain A Ten-year Review Research & Statistics: Sayed Aqa, Merium Kazmi Contributions by: UN Agencies referred to in this report



صاحب السمو الملكي الأمير خليفة بن سلمان آل خليفة حفظه الله ورعاه 🛛 صاحب السمو الملكي الأمير خليفة بن سلمان آل خليفة حفظه الله ورعاه رئيس الوزراء الموقر His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa The Prime Minister





رئيس الوزراء الموقر His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa The Prime Minister

صاحب السمو الملكي الأمير سلمان بن حمد آل خليفة حفظه الله ولي العهد His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa The Crown Prince



Presentation of the UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honour to H.R.H. Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain by UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, July 2007

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## Foreword

The Government of Bahrain, its leadership, and people should be proud of their excellent achievements in sustainable human development. The ambitious and forward looking National Charter, as well as plans and policies of the past 10 years have transformed this island nation from an oil dependent economy to a successful and diversified economy in the Middle East and North African region. Inspired by the vision of His Majesty the King and leadership of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister, Bahrain continues to strive towards even greater success.

Since becoming a UN member state in 1971, Bahrain has had notable social and economic accomplishments where women's empowerment, protection of human rights, managing environmental challenges, quality of education, and improvement of living standards of its citizens are considered high priority. This Report provides a strong statistical basis confirming human development successes in Bahrain.

In terms of human development indicators, the past ten years have underscored several important improvements in the quality of life. In the last decade, the Human Development Index (HDI) value for Bahrain rose from 0.820 in 2000 to 0.895 in 2009. According to the 2009 Human Development Report, Bahrain ranks 39 globally. Unlike its GCC counterparts, Bahrain has been able to translate, economic growth into improvement of quality of life for its citizens. There are currently five UN agencies present in Bahrain, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP ROWA), Nations Information United Center's Sub-Regional Office (UNIC), UNIDO's Technology Promotion Regional Office, and the Regional Office of World Meteorological organization (WMO). Additionally about 15 other Non Resident UN agencies are cooperating with a number of ministries and national institutions out of their headquarters or regional offices. This report also outlines briefly the key achievements of UN agencies in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the leadership of Bahrain on its successful efforts to meet the socio-economic and political challenges of an ever changing global environment, particularly over the past ten years. Implementation of government plans and accomplishment of the goals set in the Economic Vision 2030, will continue to stimulate growth and private sector productivity resulting in improved quality of life for the people of Bahrain.

Bahrain serves as a successful model of sustainable human development in the region. Building on these accomplishments, the United Nations and the Kingdom of Bahrain are committed to an even stronger partnership to further consolidate human development gains, in support of the Kingdom's national priorities.

Sayed Aqa UN Resident Coordinator UNDP Resident Representative

I. Introduction: Summary of Key Achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the United Nations System



1. The reform agenda introduced in the National Charter by His Majesty the King has created a thriving economic and political environment to maintain the country's competitive edge in the global arena.

2. H.R.H. Prince Khalifa bin Salman al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain was awarded the UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honour by UN Secretary General for his efforts in improving the lives of the urban poor through better housing policies and urban development. (July 2007)



3. Bahrain was recognized for its outstanding efforts and achievements in promoting education and culture with the Avicenna Medal, presented to H.R.H. Prince Khalifa bin Salman al Khalifa. (October 2009)

4. UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) value for Bahrain has risen from 0.820 in 2000 to 0.895 in 2009, making it to be among the group of High Human Development (HHD) countries of the world.<sup>1</sup> According to the 2009 UNDP Human Development Report, Bahrain ranks 39 globally (UNDP September 2009).

5. Bahrain served as the venue for the global launch of the world first ever Global Assessment Report on disaster risk reduction, demonstrating Bahrain's leadership in this priority global agenda. Recognizing Bahrain's leadership, the UN Team in the Kingdom worked together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to organize a successful visit of UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon, to the Kingdom of Bahrain in May 2009. By providing generous support to the launch, Bahrain has demonstrated its commitment to world efforts in reducing global disaster risk.



6. Bahrain has improved its United Nations e-Government readiness rankings, jumping to the top of the Arab world and to the third spot in Asia and 13th place globally. (February 2010)

7. Establishment of the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education to reward projects and activities of individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations for excellent models, best practice, and creative use of information and communication technologies to enhance learning, teaching and overall educational performance.

8. Jointly with UN-HABITAT, the Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa HABITAT Award is to recognize outstanding efforts by individuals, organizations and institutions in the implementation of the HABITAT Agenda and to promote international and South-South cooperation through the exchange and transfer of lessons learned.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the 2009 HDR, countries are classified in one of the four categories: Very High Human Development (VHHD), High Human Development (HHD), Medium Human Development (MHD) or Low Human Development (LHD).



9. The election of H.E. Shaikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa as the President of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on 8 June 2006 is a clear demonstration of Bahrain's achievement in women's development.



10. The establishment of regional offices in Bahrain for United Nations agencies which include the World Meteorological organization (WMO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) and the Investment and Technology Promotion Office (ITPO) of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

11. The leadership of Bahrain has introduced a number of labour market reforms of which the abolishment of the "sponsorship" system in 2009 is a successful development. Another important gain is maintaining reduced levels of umployment levels - below 4 percent.

## **II. Background Situation**

Bahrain owes much of its sustained economic development to the Government's sound human development choices. The ongoing diversification strategy which not only has catapulted Bahrain from a largely oil dependent economy, but with its diverse and educated workforce has positioned Bahrain as the Gateway to the Gulf. At the heart of this success is the National Action Charter introduced in 2001, and its implementation by the Government. With the Bahraini population strongly backing the reform agenda introduced in the Charter by His Majesty the King, a thriving economic, social and political environment has been created to maintain the country's competitive edge in the global arena. The most recently formulated Economic Vision 2030 will continue to safeguard Bahrain's achievements and prepare the country for further sustainable human development.

### **Politics**

Bahrain is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature and an independent judiciary. His Majesty Shaikh Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa is the country's King and Head of State since October 2002. The executive branch is lead by the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa. The legislature comprises the elected house (Chamber of Deputies) and appointed house (Consultative Council) of 40 members each who serve four-years term. Administratively, the country is divided into five governorates and municipalities. Elections were held in 2002 and 2006 for the Chamber of Deputies. The next round of elections is expected to be held in late 2010.



H.R.H. Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa Leading Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030

With overwhelming approval of the Charter by the public, political and social reforms were introduced including freedom of expression and the right to organize. Bahraini women were granted more political rights – the right to participate and vote in municipal and parliamentary elections. Social reforms also encouraged the consolidation of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other community associations.

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## Economy

During the 1970s and early 1980s, Bahrain experienced very high levels of growth. Income from oil accounted for approximately 80 percent of Government revenues during 1974-75 alone. The collapse of oil prices in the 1980s resulted in considerably slower economic growth and development in the region.

Revenues from oil and natural gas currently account for 11.1 percent of GDP and provide about 76 percent of Government income. Although Bahrain was the first Gulf state to discover oil, the government decided to diversify its economy. The expanding banking center is the main component of the country's economic diversification strategy and consequently the largest contributor to GDP at 27.6 percent. The country is also believed to have the largest concentration of Islamic financial institutions

in the Middle East. With its highly developed communication and transport facilities, as well as strong regulatory system, Bahrain is home to numerous multinational firms with businesses in the Gulf region. Based on the global indicator of people living under US\$ 1 day, Bahrain does not suffer from extreme poverty. However, there are families who are unable to meet their daily subsitence levels without Government support.

Continued strong growth hinges on Bahrain's ability to acquire new natural gas supplies as feedstock to support its expanding petrochemical and aluminum industries. Employment, especially among the young, and the depletion of oil and underground water resources are long-term economic challenges that the Government continues to address.

The Government is seeking to expand employment opportunities by promoting private-sector growth. However, in the long term, specifying specialized niche areas, and matching today's education with tomorrow's job needs will ultimately be the key to success.

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### **Status of Women**

Political changes in 2000 gave women the right to vote and participate in the electoral process. For the first time, in May 2000, His Majesty the King appointed six women to the 40-member Consultative Council, the upper house of Bahrain's bicameral legislature. In 2006, ten women were subsequently appointed to the new Consultative Council. Female candidates ran for elections in the municipal and parliamentary elections in 2002. Only one female candidate won a seat in the parliament in the 2006 elections. However, this was a successful process for women leadership and empowerment as it created broad public awareness regarding leadership roles for women in society. Other gender reforms in the political arena include the appointment of female ministers in the cabinet. Furthermore, the first female judge was appointed to Bahrain's constitutional court in 2007.

Established in 2001, the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) in Bahrain is a national body dedicated to addressing women's concerns in the country. One of its key projects includes Economic and Political Empowerment of Women which is implemented in close collaboration with the UNDP. The project aims to raise awareness and build capacity of women in leadership and decision-making roles and expand the role of women in economic activities and policy decision making both in the public and private sectors.

In May 2000, His Majesty the King appointed six women to the 40-member Consultative Council, the upper house of Bahrain's bicameral legislature. In 2006, a total of ten women were subsequently appointed to the new Consultative Council.

## Kingdom's Partnership with the United Nations

The Kingdom of Bahrain recognizes the value and relevance of the UN for supporting its human development priorities. The government further considers the UN as a source of technical expertise and guidance on policy development as well as a facilitator in implementation of its developmental efforts. In addition, it recognizes the catalytic role and multi-lateral coordination functions of the UN Resident Coordinator. The Resident Coordinator plays a strong role in advocating the relevance of the UN system in developing synergies within UN agencies to more effectively coordinate UN operational activities for development in the Kingdom of Bahrain. These interventions are characterized by a mix of policy advice, introduction of best practices, and institutional strengthening. UN interventions in Bahrain also have strong linkages with the private sector, NGOs and other regional and international organizations.

The UN coordinates its activities through a consultative process within the framework of the Government's priorities and the Kingdom's Economic Vision 2030. The UN's guiding principle is national ownership of interventions and programmes for strengthening national capacities and achieving maximum results for sustainable human development.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the first UN agency with presence in Bahrain. As soon as Bahrain became an independent country and a member state in the United Nations, a UNDP office was established in Manama in March 1972.

The UNDP office in Bahrain is one of 166 UN global development networked offices, mandated to advocating for positive pro-developmental change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources. The prime aim is to help people build a better life by working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.

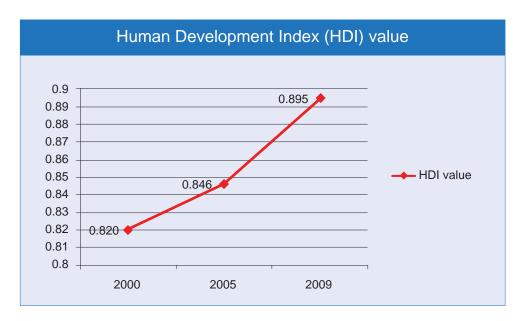
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Currently, there are 5 UN agencies present in Bahrain. These are UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP ROWA), United Nations Information Center's Sub-Regional Office (UNIC), the Investment and Technology Promotion Office (ITPO) of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Regional Office of World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Additionally, about 15 other United Nations agencies that have no physical offices in Bahrain are cooperating with and supporting a number of ministries and national institutions out of their headquarters or regional offices.

## III. Achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Key Human Development Indicators (2000-2009)

Sustainable human development in a country is measured though progress in four key areas. These areas are:

- a. Life expectancy at birth
- b. Literacy rate of population ages 15 and above
- c. Combined secondary and higher education enrolment ratio and
- d. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in terms of purchasing power parity

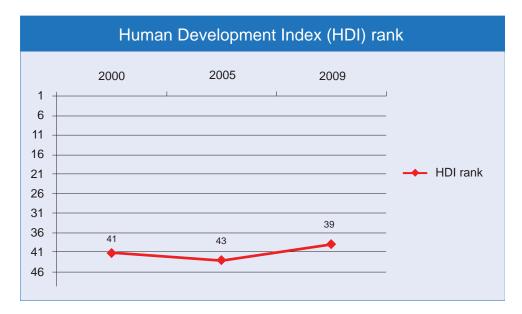


These achievements are demonstrated in the form of Human Development Index (or HDI) where a value approaching "1" reflects advanced human development levels in the country. The chart above shows Bahrain's HDI values for years 2000 – 2009.

In the last decade, the Human Development Index (HDI) value for Bahrain rose from 0.820 in 2000 to 0.895 in 2009. According to the 2009 Human Development Report, Bahrain ranks 39 globally.

The position of a country is determined in a global list of countries based on the value of its HDI. This is called HDI rank. While HDI rank is more popular, the most important trend showing a county's real achievement is its HDI value (chart above).

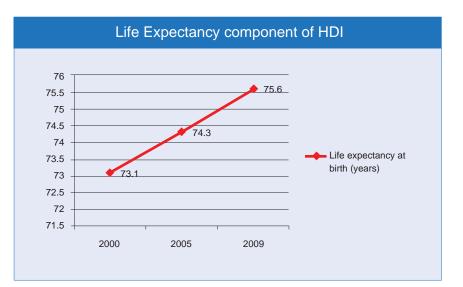
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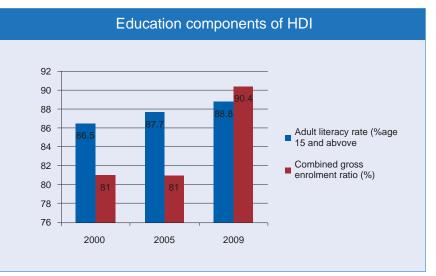
From 2005 to 2009, the HDI rank for Bahrain has increased rapidly, rising two levels to 39 from 43. HDI rank of a country in the global list may change due to fluctuating performances of other countries. However HDI value of a country is affected only by development in the country and no outside factor.

From 2005 to 2009, the HDI rank for Bahrain has increased rapidly, rising two levels to 39 from 43.

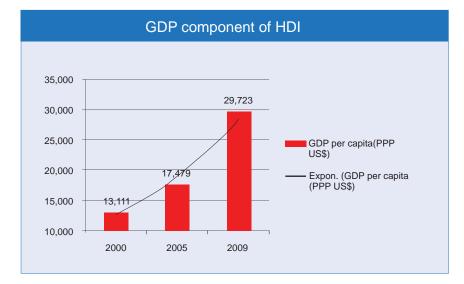
Bahrain has also made steady progress in improving the health situation of its population and this is reflected in the increase of life expectancy of Bahrainis from an average of 73.1 years in 2000 to 75.6 years in 2009.



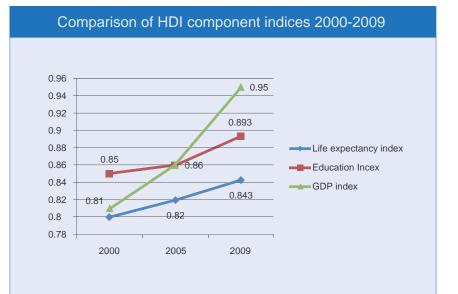
Similarly literacy rates have improved from 87.7% to 88.8%. The most significant improvement has been achieved in the provision of quality education facilities for the people of Bahrain. Combined gross enrolment in education has improved by almost 10 percent from 81% in 2000 to 90.4% in 2009.

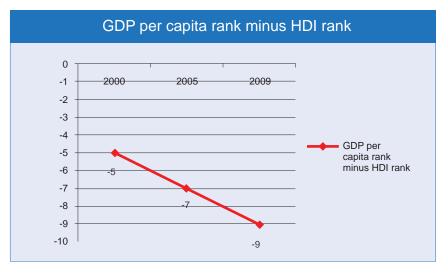


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Gross Domestic Production (GDP) per capita (goods and services) has also increased by an impressive level of almost two fold in the last decade. These figures indicate GDP in term of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) to indicate a more realistic comparison between countries. A comparison of the individual components of the HDI indices over the last five year period (2005-2009) suggests that improved income levels have largely contributed to the rapid increase in HDI. GDP per capita rose from USD 17,479 in 2005 to USD 29,723 in 2009 (USD 12,244 difference) compared to a USD 4,368 difference from 2000-2005.

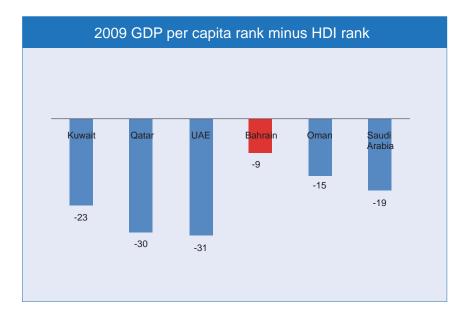




The difference between Bahrain's GDP per capita rank and HDI rank shows whether the country has been able to translate economic performance into human development (quality of life). A positive figure indicates a country's HDI performance is higher than their income level and the higher the figure, the better. Bahrain's translation of GDP into human development over the past

decade has a declining value. However, as we will see later, Bahrain is doing much better than its peers in the region.

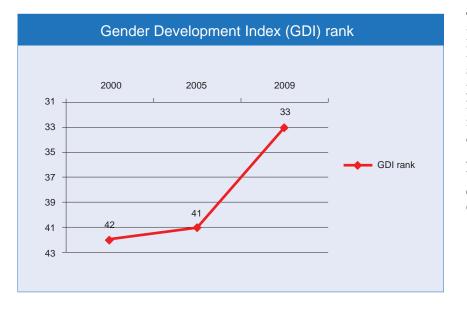
A comparison of the individual components of the HDI indices suggests that improved income levels have largely contributed to the rapid increase in HDI.



Bahrain's performance is the best in comparison to other GCC countries. Other GCC countries have been less successful in translating their GDP gains to actual human development. In 2009, Qatar with the highest GDP per capita in the region at USD 74,882 has a rank value of -30.

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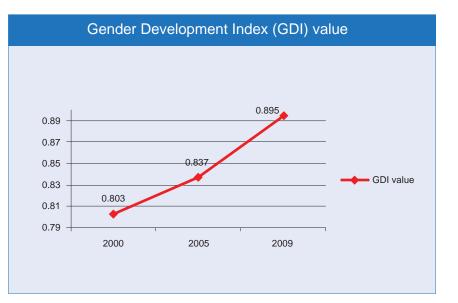
Gender Development Indicators for Bahrain (2000-2009)



The Gender Development Index (GDI) rank for Bahrain has increased steadily over the past 10 years, particularly over the 2005-2009 time period, indicating sustained improvement in gender disaggregated components of the HDI, namely in life expectancy, education and GDP per capita levels.

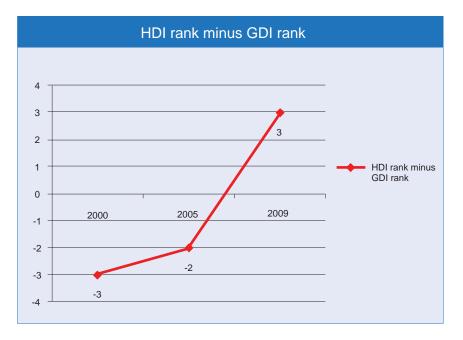
Bahrain's HDI and GDI values are identical in 2009 (0.895). This means that in terms of human development, there is no gender discrimination in Bahrain.

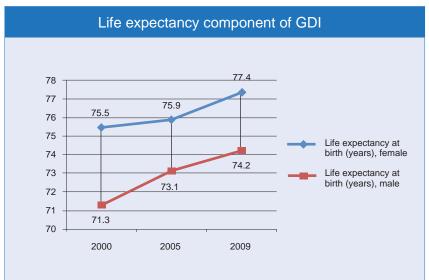
It is very interesting to note that Bahrain's HDI and GDI values are identical in 2009 (0.895). This means that in terms of human development, there is no gender discrimination in Bahrain.<sup>2</sup> GDI is calculated in the same manner as HDI for female population of the countries excluding data on male population.



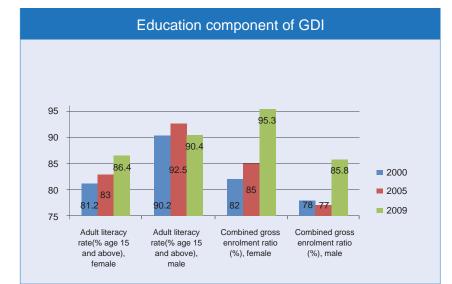
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>The difference between a country's HDI rank and GDI rank indicates whether there has been equitable investment in human capabilities between men and women. A negative number indicates that GDI rank is lower than HDI rank. Therefore a country's position in terms of gender differences is lower than in terms of average development. Greater the gender disparity in basic capabilities, lower a country's GDI is compared with its HDI.

Comparison of the HDI and GDI ranks (as embedded in the HDI rank minus GDI rank value which for Bahrain is 3) suggests that in addition to an overall improvement in basic capabilities, Bahrain has concurrently improved previously existing gender disparities in the three dimensions of the HDI (life expectancy, educational attainment and In 2000 and income). 2005, Bahrain's HDI minus GDI rank was -3 and -2 respectively.

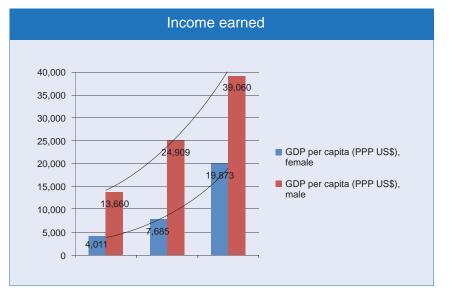




This chart indicates that in Bahrain and as portrayed by global standards women continue to outlive their male counterparts.



As a member of the resource rich GCC, Bahrain has generally performed above average in terms of educational attainment, irrespective of gender. In 2009 alone, combined gross enrolment ratio for women rose to 95.3 percent compared to 85.8 percent for men.



As is still the case in many parts of the world, women in Bahrain earn far less than their male counterparts. In 2009, women in earned Bahrain USD 19,873 compared to USD 39,060. This is mainly due to (a) there are significantly less woman than men in the work force and (b) woman on average earn less than men.

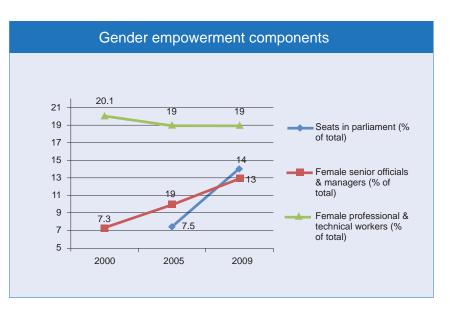
Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is determined based on number of women in senior management positions and in the legislative bodies. There is no data available for Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) calculations in the 2000 HDR for Bahrain. GEM rank for Bahrain available from 2004 and onwards suggests that although there has been overall improvement in women's political and economic

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) rank 2000 2004 2005 2009 31 36 41 46 46 GEM rank 51 56 61 66 68 66 71

empowerment, further women's partcipation in the public domain will contribute to the overall success in sustainability of human development in Bahrain.

GEM rank for Bahrain available from 2004 and onwards suggests that although there has been overall improvement in women's political and economic empowerment, further success in women's partcipation in the public domain will contribute to the overall sustainability of human development in Bahrain.

This graph suggests that in terms of senior female officials and managers (in addition to professionals and technical workers), Bahrain has shown steady improvement. The percentage of senior female managers has almost doubled from 7.3 percent in 2000 to 13 percent in 2009. UNDP is partnering with the Supreme Council for Woman (SCW) to address the gaps in women's access to public domain.

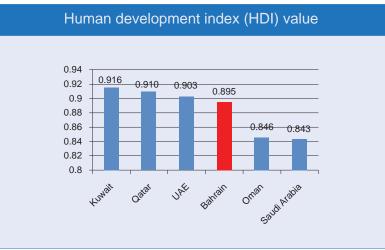


Bahraini women voted in 1973, and ran for elections in May 2002 after an amendment to the constitution. That year no women were elected to a seat in parliament. Only one woman was elected in 2006. However, in May 2000, His Majesty the King appointed six women to the 40-member Consultative Council, the upper house of Bahrain's bicameral legislature. In 2006, ten women were subsequently appointed to the new Consultative Council. It is hoped that this, along with a better share of women in senior government, as well as in the private sector management positions, will improve in the years to come.

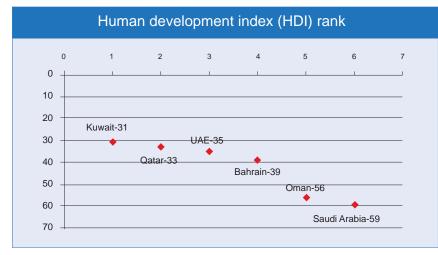
In May 2000, His Majesty the King appointed six women to the 40-member Consultative Council, the upper house of Bahrain's bicameral legislature. In 2006, ten women were subsequently appointed to the new Consultative Council.

## IV. Select Human Development Indicators for the GCC (2009) : A comparison

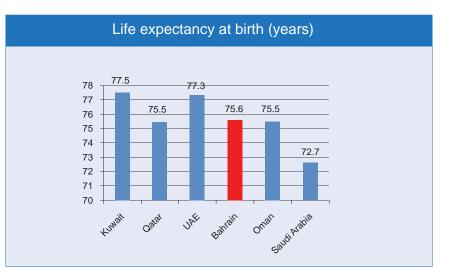
In the current HDR (2009) Bahrain borders between very high human development (VHHD) and high human development (HHD) with an HDI of 0.895.



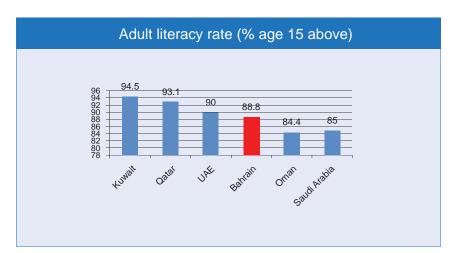
# Bahrain's global HDR rank is presently 39.

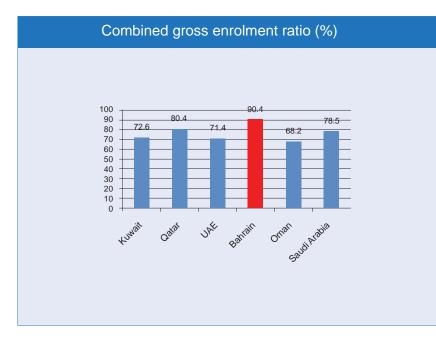


Life expectancy rates in Bahrain, Qatar and Oman are largely similar in comparison to oil producing Saudi Arabia. UAE and Kuwait share high levels of life expectancy rates at approximately 77 percentile.

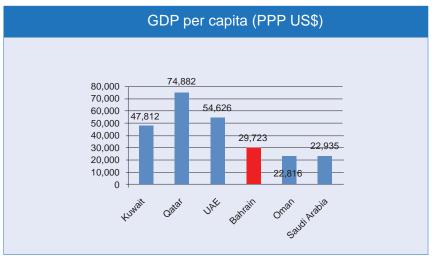


Calculation for adult literacy rates and other components of HDI includes all people living Bahrain. not in just Bahraini nationals. It is therefore, important to improve literacy rates and other conditions of the workers in Bahrain to achieve higher HDI values and and an overall global ranking.





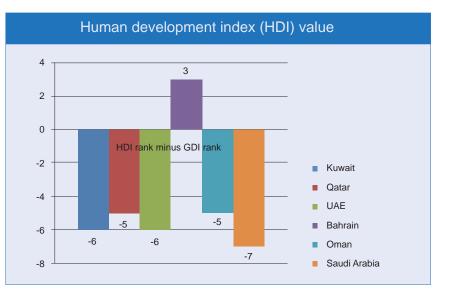
Bahrain's combined gross enrolment ratio is 90.4 percent in 2009, making it the highest amongst GCC countries by a large margin. The closest to Bahrain is Qatar, approximately 10 percentage points behind Bahrain.

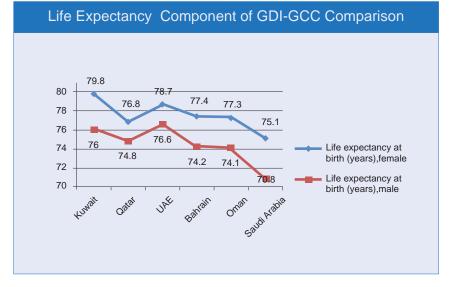


While Bahrain's GDP per capita ratio has improved over the years, other GCC countries have gained in comparison. One of the reasons that other GCC countries have ranked higher than Bahrain is their very high domestic products that is attributed to oil and gas. In 2009, UAE, Qatar and Kuwait ranked higher than Bahrain mainly due to this.

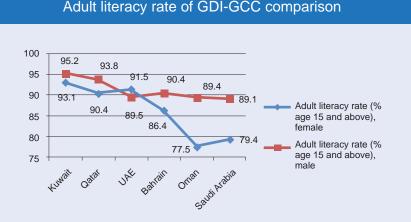
A comparison of the HDI and GDI ranks (as embedded in the HDI rank minus GDI rank value) suggests despite that overall improvement basic in capabilities, there still exists gender disparities in the three dimensions of the HDI (life expectancy, educational attainment and income) for all GCC countries, except Bahrain. Bahrain which It is performs the best at +3.

The gender gap in life expectancy is largely simlar across GCC countries with woman consistently outliving their male counterparts

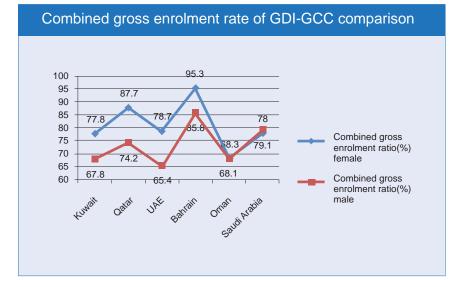




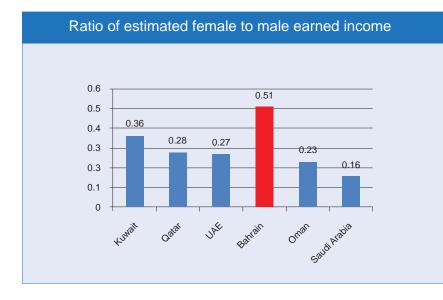
The gender gaps in adult literacy are largely small for countries like Kuwait, Qatar, UAE and Bahrain. Oman and Saudi Arabia show the largest literacy gaps among the GCC.



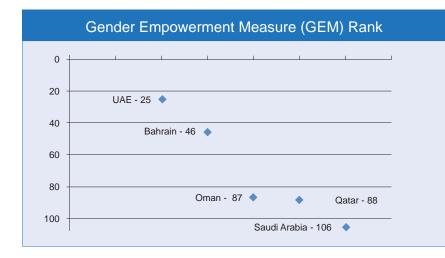
#### Adult literacy rate of GDI-GCC comparison



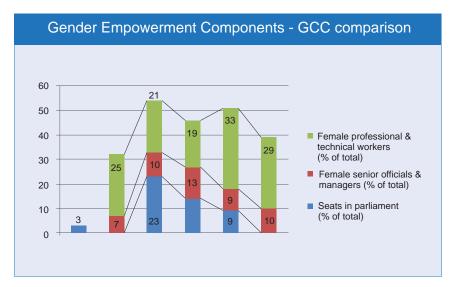
Bahrain is ahead of its GCC counterparts in terms of its achievements in education for men and women. A ninety five percentile female enrolment rate is impressive by any standards



The ratio of estimated female to male earned income for Bahrain is 0.51–the highest in the region.



There are no female parliamentarians in Qatar or Saudi Arabia. Kuwait lacks data for a number of key GEM components. Bahrain performs best in terms of having the highest percentage of female senior officials and managers in the work place with 13 percent. Remaining GCC countries have a larger female work force at a lower level. UAE has a percentage larger of female seats in parliament at 23 percent, followed by the Kingdom of Bahrain with 14 percent of seats in the parliament occupied by women.



Bahrain performs best in terms of having the highest percentage of female senior officials and managers in the work place with 13 percent.

## Women's Political Participation: A GCC Comparison

		Kuwait-VHHD	Qatar-VHHD	UAE-VHHD	Bahrain-HHD	Oman-HHD	Saudi Arabia-HHD
	Year women received right to vote	2005	2003	2006	1973, 2003	1994, 2003	Not received right
	Year women received right to run for election	2005	2003	2006	1973, 2003	1994, 2003	Not received right

## V. Future Suggested Priorities for Bahrain

1. Bahrain has improved its United Nations e-Government readiness rankings, jumping this year to the top of the Arab world and to the third spot in Asia and to the 13th place globally. Aiming towards building a knowledge-based society, the e-Government Authority of Bahrain and UNDP, in cooperation with United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), signed a Project Document to support the creation of the Arab Center for e-Content Development. The Center, which will be head-quartered in Bahrain, will help increase Arab e-Content and raise its quality to international standards (Nov 2009). This initiative has the potential to create thousands of jobs and very high revenue for the economy of Bahrain.

2. The government has already taken concrete steps to improve quality of education in the Kingdom. Further improvement in the capacity of educational and vocational institutions will equip new entrants with appropriate skills required by the future job market especially youth and woman. This is in line with the Economic Vision 2030 which recommends coordinated reforms to stimulate growth by enhancing productivity in the private sector and upgrading the skill sets of potential employees. Initiatives are already underway to create and sustain a market for knowledge-based jobs for young job seekers.

3. Bahrain will further excel by matching today's education with the future job market. This will require multi-sectoral approach to ensure growth of targeted industries and services and supply of qualified Bahrainis in those areas by educational institutions.

Bahrain will further excel by matching today's education with the future job market

4. UNDP Bahrain, the Consulative Council (Shura) and the Chamber of Deputies (Nuwab) signed a Project Document to support "Strengthening the Capacity of the Parliamentary Secretariats and Members of Parliament" which aims to build capacity of the Parliamentary Secretariat and Members of Parliament by improving management skills and producing a comprehensive training programme for all Secretariat Staff (Nov 2009). Parliamentary development plays a major role in political and social development of a country as it transforms street-arson politics to a more civilized and productive dialogue aiming at growth and stability of the country.

5. Considerable progress has been made in addressing environmental challenges in the country. However, as a small island state, Bahrain will potentially suffer more than other countries from the impact of climate change. Bahrain faces ongoing deterioration of coastal and marine environments, increasing demand for energy and water, air pollution, wastemanagement and the deterioration of agricultural lands. Rising sea levels, the possibility of exposure to tropical storms and the increased intensity and frequency of sand and dust storms are major climate climate change-related challenges facing and Bahrain. It is of paramount importance to implement both mitigation and preventive measures and enact adaptation policies to minimize the impact of climate change on the economy and population of Bahrain.

Further improvement in the capacity of educational and vocational institutions will equip new entrants with appropriate skills required by the future job market especially youth and woman.

It is of paramount importance to implement both mitigation and preventive measures and enact adaptation policies to minimize the impact of climate change on the economy and population of Bahrain. 6. Despite laudable achievements in gender equality in education and life expectancy, women in Bahrain face social and cultural challenges which hinder their development in areas of political and economic empowerment. Increased role for women in policy decision making will benefit Bahrain nationally and will further improve its international standing and leadership in women empowerment.

7. Adoption of the Bahrain Vision 2030, creation of the Bahrain Centre of Excellence and Bahrain Institute for Public Administration, among other steps has positioned Bahrain to continue its human development achievements in the new and ever changing global environment. Governance capacity should be strengthened to improve transparency and participation as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector. Capacity assessment of line ministries and providing capacity development support to ministries especially in the areas of strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation and devising measurable performance indicators should continue to be a high priority. Similarly, responsive local governance and effective participation of civil society in public life will also contribute to efficiency, stability and improve the Kingdom's international standing.

8. As His Majesty the King and His Royal Highness the Prime Minister have rightly singled out, national harmony is the corner stone for stability and sustainable human development in the Kingdom. Focusing on youth and nurturing a culture of dialogue, understanding and co-existence cannot be overemphasized. Dialogue within the society with active participation of youth and

Responsive local governance and effective participation of civil society in public life will also contribute to efficiency, stability and improve the Kingdom's international standing.

religious scholars will transform the society and will drain the source of energy to extremist and opportunists. A Dialogue approach is significantly different than the approach to negotiations. In this approach there is no blame or good side and bad side. Dialogue is a process of engaging and opening minds and hearts to listen and understand each other, and move on to achieve common goals that is better quality of life for all. Only through dialogue and harmony nations can excel in their Sustainable Human Development agendas for generations to come.

9. The United Nations can offer valuable expertise in all aspects of human development, and with its neutrality and convening power, it can facilitate confidence building so that all segments of the society support the government in achieving sustainable human with peace, stability and harmony as drivers for a healthy society for all.

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## VI. Key Achievements of United Nations Agencies in the Kingdom of Bahrain

#### International Labour Organization (ILO)

• The strategic framework for ILO's work with the Government of Bahrain is based on the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) which extends over the period 2010-2012 and focuses on socio-economic integration of the labour force participants, enhancement of an income security system and effective participation of the social partners in the economic development process.workers, and law enforcement.

#### Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Regional Office for the Middle East

- Successful engagement with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Process, including the development of a thorough follow up plan of action on the UPR recommendations.
- As part of implementing its UPR recommendations, Bahrain is currently undertaking a number of capacity building projects among various circles of the society, media, heath workers, and law enforcement.

Bahrain was the first country to undergo the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), and was recognized as a best practice with the support of UNDP, 2008.

#### **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

- Establishment of the University College of Bahrain in 1980s which eventually lead to the establishment of the University of Bahrain.
- Supported the Government of Bahrain in developing the first National Environmental Strategy (NES) which was published after receiving full endorsement from the Cabinet in October 2006.
- UNDP worked with General Organization for Youth and Sports to develop a National Youth Strategy and Action Plan targeting Bahraini youth in the age group of 15-30. (2006)
- Project initiated with Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs to provide and implement new urban housing plans which take into consideration sustainable living conditions such as environmental protection and national heritage. (2006)
- The Ministry of Education and UNDP embarked on a major effort to reform the existing system of public education, with the overall goal of enhancing the quality of education imparted to school-going youngsters, aged from 5 to 18 years. (2001)
- UNDP introduced "Microfinance" in Bahrain since 1999 by launching the Micro-Start Project as a pilot initiative. This success has introduced two new banks which provide similar services to the citizens of Bahrain through provision of Micro-Finance credit and services.
- Supported Ministry of Housing in preparing Bahrain National Land Use Plan and Housing Strategy, 1984-2001.
- Development of the National Social Strategy in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. (2000)

Launch of the 2nd Millennium Development Goals Progress Report for the Kingdom of Bahrain, where an update of statistics was conducted to analyze the progress of Bahrain's status within the goals and indicators of the MDGs.

- Bahrain was the first country to undergo the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), and was recognized as a best practice with the support of UNDP, 2008.
- In addition to supporting Bahrain's position papers at WTO negotiations, Bahrain foreign trade strategy was developed. This resulted in strengthening the country's position to benefit from the WTO rounds. (2004, 2009)
- Strengthening capacities of the University of Bahrain's scientific research department in sustainable development subjects including the creation of a Masteral programme in Sustainable Development. (2001)
- Strengthening Bahrain's Mariculture Center at Ras Hayan through the increase of knowledge and new practices in fish culture technologies in addition to expansion of Mariculture facilities and equipment (1984, 1988).
- Through capacity development in collecting, storing and analyzing development data from all regions of Bahrain and creating a wide range of indicators for the Urban Observatory at the Ministry of Housing. (2000)
- Production of the first (Achievements and Challenges of Human Development) and second (Education and Labour Market challenges of Human Development) National Human Development Reports in 2000 and 2001 respectively, through a participatory mechanism utilizing national capacities especially from the University of Bahrain.
- Launch of the 2nd Millennium Development Goals Progress Report for the Kingdom of Bahrain, where an update of statistics was conducted to analyze the progress of Bahrain's status within the goals and indicators of the MDGs. (November 2008)
- In collaboration with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the UNDP supported the launch the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Kingdom of Bahrain. (May 2009).
- An agreement with the e-Government Authority was signed in November 2009 to support the establishment of the Arab e-Content Centre.

In collaboration with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the UNDP supported the launch the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

#### **United Nations Environment Programme**

 Public Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wildlife, was established in 2003, under the auspices of the King's Court rather than a part of the Civil Service Bureau, emphasizing the important placed on the environment by the leaders of Bahrain. The Kingdom of Bahrain has also continued to promote wildlife conservation through the development and expansion of the Al-Areen Wildlife Park

- During the period 2000-2009, a number of key legislations have been passed, including:-
  - A decision on the prohibition of hunting dugong and sea turtles and dolphins of all kinds. (2003)
  - A decision on the making the Doha Arad area a protected natural marine area. (2003)
  - A decision on the requirements and environmental standards in the workplace. (2003)
  - A decision on the management of hazardous chemicals and one on hazardous wastes. (2003)
- The UN system in Bahrain has worked closely with the Government in the development of an Environmental Strategy which focuses on priority areas and identified activities for implementation.
- The Kingdom of Bahrain is a party to a large number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and continues to make every effort to meet its obligations, with UNEP providing technical assistance and guidance where necessary. This includes ongoing activities relating to ozone depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol and also the completion of the Second Communication under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- The Kingdom of Bahrain has also continued to promote wildlife conservation through the development and expansion of the Al-Areen Wildlife Park as well as continuing to implement Environmental Impact Assessments (under the regulatory framework established in 1998) as a key tool towards sustainable development.

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#### United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

- Bahrain was chosen by UNESCO Office in Doha and UNESCO Beirut Office to host the regional workshop on Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) in 2008.
- Bahrain is further investing in the development of its educational system in close cooperation with UNESCO Office in Doha: the Associated Schools Project Network in Bahrain is an example of this strategy.
- In cooperation with national experts, a document on "Environmentally Friendly Tourism in Arab Biosphere Reserves" was produced to encourage governments to tourist growth without endangering wildlife and heritage.
- The Ministry of Information, Culture and National Heritage in Bahrain was recently invited to a second consultative meeting on the establishment of the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH) as category-2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO.

• Bahraini participants recently attended a regional workshop in Kuwait on "Information For All" based on the concepts of information for all, information ethics, accessibility to information, and democracy which are already are promoted in Bahrain.

#### **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

• The UNFPA launched the Youth-to-Youth Peer Education-PEER Network in Bahrain with the cooperation of the General Organization for Youth and Sports by holding a two days "Training of Peer Educators Workshop".

#### **UN HABITAT**

- UN-HABITAT's flagship report, the State of the World's Cities is now available in Arabic, thanks to funding and support provided by the Government of Bahrain.
- The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon presented Bahrain's Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman al Khalifa with UN-HABITAT's top award for his efforts in improving the lives of the urban poor through better housing policies and urban development.
- The Kingdom of Bahrain has recently made a donation of one million US dollars to UN-HABITAT towards various activities including establishing innovative mechanisms for pro-poor housing finance.

#### United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Bahrain, Qatar & UAE

- UNIC arranged with advisors of senior leaders of the Kingdom of Bahrain to issue public messages on given International Days like Peace Day, Press Freedom Day, Human Rights Day and Habitat Day, etc.
- Coordinated with Al Jazeera Children TV to host the UN Secretary General and other UN senior officials in their talk shows targeting 50 million family audiences in the Arab world, EU, Africa & Asia. In addition, UNIC established with Al Jazeera's top talk show Bela Hodood (Without Frontiers) to host senior UN officials, Secretary General of ISDR, Director General of UNEP and others.
- In line with UNIC, Manama initiative, the Arabic Services of Major Western TVs and Radios (BBC, France 24, Radio Monte-Carlo, Al Hurra, Sawa Radio USA) special talk shows and other programmes are produced around UN international days, studies, reports or initiatives.

#### United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Gulf Area Office

- The strategic framework for UNICEF's work with the Government of Bahrain will be based on a Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2010-2012 to be signed jointly with its strategic partner, the National Childhood Committee in the Ministry of Social Development.
- Upon the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Bahrain conducted a review of its laws and regulations in light of international human rights standards and the Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC).

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#### United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Investment and Technology Promotion Office in Bahrain

- Since 2000, the Arab Regional Center for Entrepreneurship and Investment Training (ARCEIT) through the Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion (EDIP) Program with the crucial support of ITPO Bahrain, has organized 41 EDIPs which have resulted in assisting 1500 entrepreneurs in developing and growing their existing businesses. Similarly, 500 enterprises have been established and 13,000 jobs created.
- With the active support of ARCEIT, the Arab Gulf Program for UN Development Organizations (AGFUNDS) officially launched the "Creativity Bank".

#### United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC)

• A national assessment on drug abuse and its correlation to HIV/AIDS is being conducted in Bahrain. This research will help the Government of Bahrain develop a National Drug Strategy which will address the two fold issue of controlling supply and restricting demand of drugs in the country.

#### **United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)**

• In 2007, UNIFEM supported a study on women's rights based on Bahraini Shari'a Judicial Rulings. "Women's Rights in the Kuwaiti Personal Status Law and the Bahraini Shari'a Judicial Rulings" was published this year (2009) by Freedom House.

#### World Health Organization (WHO), Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

• The strategic framework for WHO's work with the Government of Bahrain is based on the Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) 2005-2010 and the biennial workplan (Joint Programme Planning and Review Mission) which is an operational plan developed between the Ministry of Health and the WHO Regional office based on the strategic directions stated in the CCS document and the country's health priorities.

#### World Meteorological Organization, Office for West Asia

Bahrain was the President of Regional Association II (Asia) for the past 2 consecutive terms (8 years) – constitutional body within the WMO.

## **VII.** Conclusion

The Government of Bahrain, its leadership and people should be proud of their excellent achievements in sustainable human development. The ambitious and forward looking plans and policies of the Government under the leadership of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister, inspired by visionary leadership of His Majesty the King in the form of the National Charter, puts Bahrain in a solid path of growth. The Vision 2030 lead by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince sets new standards for economic growth.

While natural resources may be limited, Bahrain has a highly educated and loyal population who will continue to move the country up the human development path. The political and social reform, women empowerment, upholding to the best of human rights standards and managing environmental challenges are all recipe for greater success.

As an active member state, the Kingdom of Bahrain has developed strong partnership with the UN system. This partnership has contributed to the achievements of the Kingdom in all aspects of human development including education, health, housing, technology promotion and entrepreneurship, environment, information and media, political reform, economic policies and others. The UN agencies have contributed to formulation of key national strategies and action plans. Building on this, the UN System is committed to further strengthening of its partnership with the Kingdom of Bahrain to respond to national priorities with the aim of making Bahrain a model of sustainable growth in the region and at global level. Addressing these suggested priorities, among other national plans and priorities, will help achieve this aim.



Human Development Achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain A Ten-year Review Compiled by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in the Kingdom of Bahrain February 2010